

Librarian Book Talk Guide for *Bull Rider*
by Suzanne Morgan Williams,
Margaret K. McElderry, February 24, 2009.

Interest level – upper middle grade – ages ten to fourteen. Topic may lend itself to high school as well.

Genre – contemporary fiction, adventure, social issues – war and sacrifice.

Related topics: bull riding, rodeo, skateboarding, Iraq War, veterans' care.

Book Talk Synopsis: Fourteen year old Cam O'Mara is a ranch kid from the sage brush country of central Nevada. He is a skateboarder, not a champion bull rider like his brother Ben,.But when Ben joins the Marines and is seriously injured in Iraq everything changes. Despite his parents forbidding him to bull ride, Cam is determined to ride a monster bull named Ugly to give his brother hope for a new life.

One Line Hook: Bull Rider is about how one boy uses his family's ranching traditions to deal with the loss and grief brought on by war.

Related reads:

Heart of a Shephard, by Rosanne Parry, Random House, 2009.

Phantom Stallion Series, by Terri Farley, HarperCollins

Hoot by Carl Hiaasen, Alfred A. Knopf, 2002.

Summer Soldiers, by Susan Hart Lindquist, Delacorte Press, 1999.

Under the Blood Red Sun, by Graham Salisbury, Delacorte, 1994

About Suzanne Morgan Williams and Bull Rider:

After publishing eleven nonfiction books for children ages ten to fourteen, *Bull Rider* is Suzanne Morgan Williams' first novel. She draws on her extensive research experience to write "Real Books for Real Kids" whether those books are fiction or nonfiction. Suzanne loves writing for upper middle grade and middle school readers because they are old enough to ask big questions and young enough to still be awed by the answers they discover. She has the best job!