



## The Circuit: Stories from the Life of a Migrant Child

By Francisco Jiménez

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After dark in a Mexican border town, a father holds open a hole in a wire fence as his wife and two small boys crawl through.

So begins life in the United States for many people every day. And so begins this collection of twelve autobiographical stories by Santa Clara University professor Francisco Jiménez, who at the age of four illegally crossed the border with his family in 1947.

"The Circuit," the story of young Panchito and his trumpet, is one of the most widely anthologized stories in Chicano literature. At long last, Jiménez offers more about the wise, sensitive little boy who has grown into a role model for subsequent generations of immigrants.

These independent but intertwined stories follow the family through their circuit, from picking cotton and strawberries to topping carrots--and back again--over a number of years. As it moves from one labor camp to the next, the little family of four grows into ten. Impermanence and poverty define their lives. But with faith, hope, and back-breaking work, the family endures.

"A jewel of a book"--Rolando Hinojosa-Smith

"These stories are so realistic they choke the heart."--Rudolfo Anaya

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## **The Circuit: Stories from the Life of a Migrant Child** By Francisco Jiménez Bibliography

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## **Editorial Review**

From School Library Journal

Gr 6 Up-Francisco Jimenez was born in Mexico, entered California illegally as a very young child, and spent his boyhood alternating between migrant farm work and the classroom. This collection of autobiographical short stories was written years later, when Jimenez had become an established professor at Santa Clara University (CA), but they give immediate access to the feelings of the growing boy. Adrian Vargas reads in a lightly accented English, offering a voice that is evidently that of the full grown man remembering, rather than that of the youth he remembers. Each story is simple, direct, and redolent with the smells of the earth, the sounds of the ever-changing home with its growing number of siblings, and the amazing experiences each new schoolroom offers. The frustrations range from those specific to poverty and migrancy, including the inability to follow up on promises made by a good teacher because the family moves on the day the offer of trumpet lessons has been proffered, through the universal experience of an older brother saddled with an ignorant younger sibling who insensitively feeds his prized penny collection into the grocery store's gumball machine. Jimenez and Vargas both maintain a leisurely pace appropriate to storytelling that can reach a wide audience, giving the images constructed from words time to bloom in the audience's mind before wrapping each tale in a tight, often surprising, close. Highly recommended for both pleasure listening and for classroom use and discussion.

*Francisca Goldsmith, Berkeley Public Library, CA*

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## **Review**

... [a] moving book ... "The Circuit beautifully captures the rhythms of everyday life and the dreams and aspirations of a migrant family. Jimenez writes credibly in the voice of his young protagonist. Pancho is a compelling and memorable character, at the emotional center of a book that will appeal to both adult and teenage readers."

Jimenez's exquisite autobiographical short story *The Circuit* is widely anthologized. ... Like Steinbeck's classic *"Grapes of Wrath,"* Jimenez's stories combine stark social realism with heartrending personal drama.

An assortment of stories that remain independent, yet they intertwine ... "Jimenez" wrote the story in an honest and delightful voice. It's a wonderful representation of a culture that exists in the U.S. but is foreign to most Americans.

There are moments of wonder ... Francisco Jimenez is a master craftsman of words, with a simple yet crystalline style ... "The Circuit" speaks intimately of migrant life in the western United States—a life that might be known by its politics or sociology but here is given a human face.

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From the Inside Flap

A collection of twelve short stories presented from the perspective of a young boy, in which the author narrates his childhood experiences growing up in a family of Mexican migrant farmworkers.

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Willie Kelly:**

The publication untitled The Circuit: Stories from the Life of a Migrant Child is the book that recommended to you you just read. You can see the quality of the reserve content that will be shown to anyone. The language that author use to explained their way of doing something is easily to understand. The writer was did a lot of exploration when write the book, and so the information that they share to you is absolutely accurate. You also can get the e-book of The Circuit: Stories from the Life of a Migrant Child from the publisher to make you a lot more enjoy free time.

#### **Eileen Smith:**

Reading can called thoughts hangout, why? Because while you are reading a book mainly book entitled The Circuit: Stories from the Life of a Migrant Child your head will drift away trough every dimension, wandering in every single aspect that maybe not known for but surely will end up your mind friends. Imaging just about every word written in a reserve then become one type conclusion and explanation in which maybe you never get previous to. The The Circuit: Stories from the Life of a Migrant Child giving you a different experience more than blown away the mind but also giving you useful information for your better life within this era. So now let us show you the relaxing pattern here is your body and mind will likely be pleased when you are finished reading through it, like winning a game. Do you want to try this

extraordinary investing spare time activity?

**Chad Jones:**

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**Dennis James:**

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