

THE SUPERKIDS LIBRARY

FIRST GRADE

Wilma Rudolph



Reading Warm-Up List

Story Words

Wilma Rudolph

brace

sports

learn

Olympic

won

woman

Sound-Out Words

illness

disaster

inspire

degree

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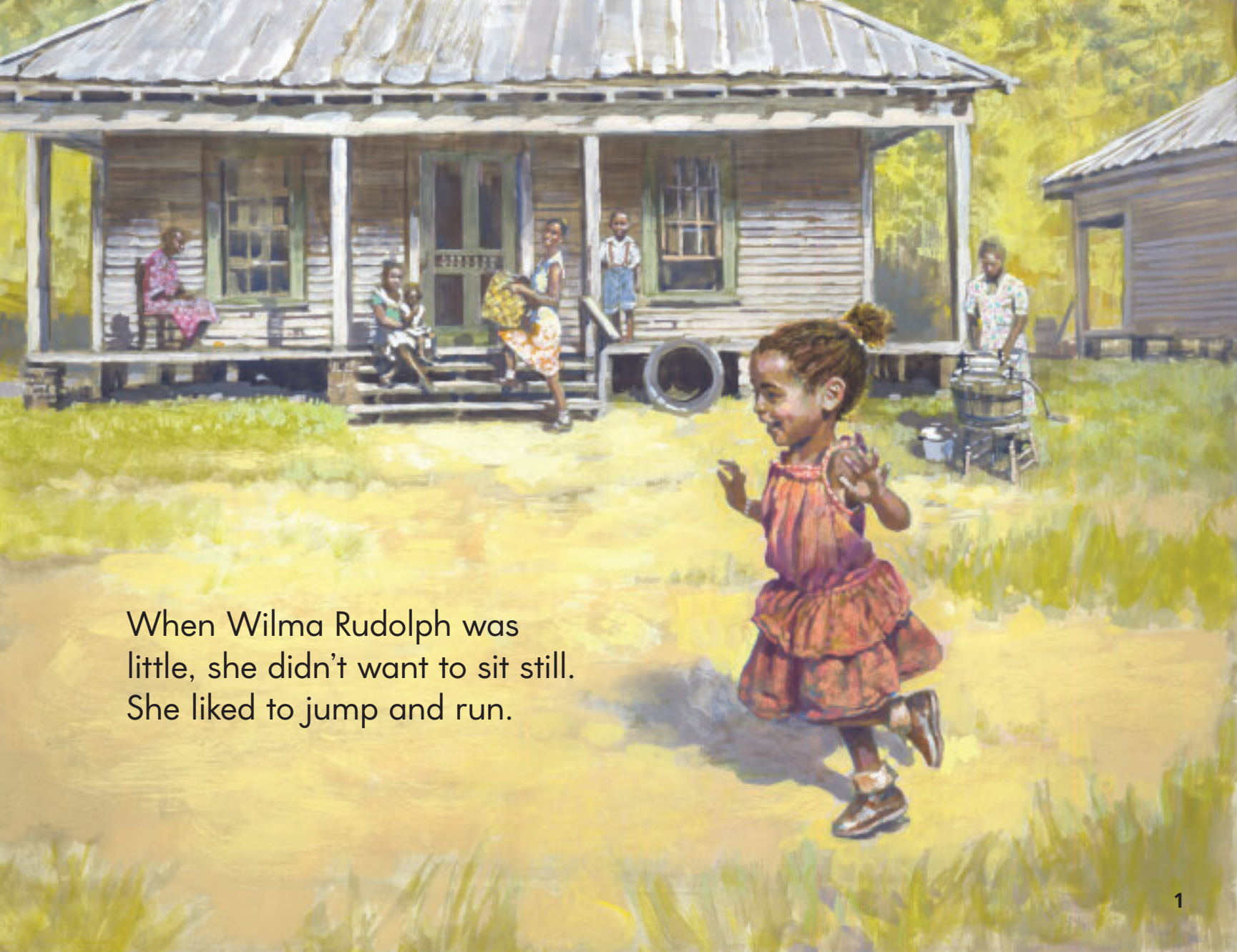
FIRST GRADE

Wilma Rudolph



Written by Judy Woodburn

Illustrated by Greg Ruhl



When Wilma Rudolph was little, she didn't want to sit still. She liked to jump and run.

But when she was five,
Wilma got a bad illness.



She was stuck in bed for a long time.
The sickness made her legs thin and weak.

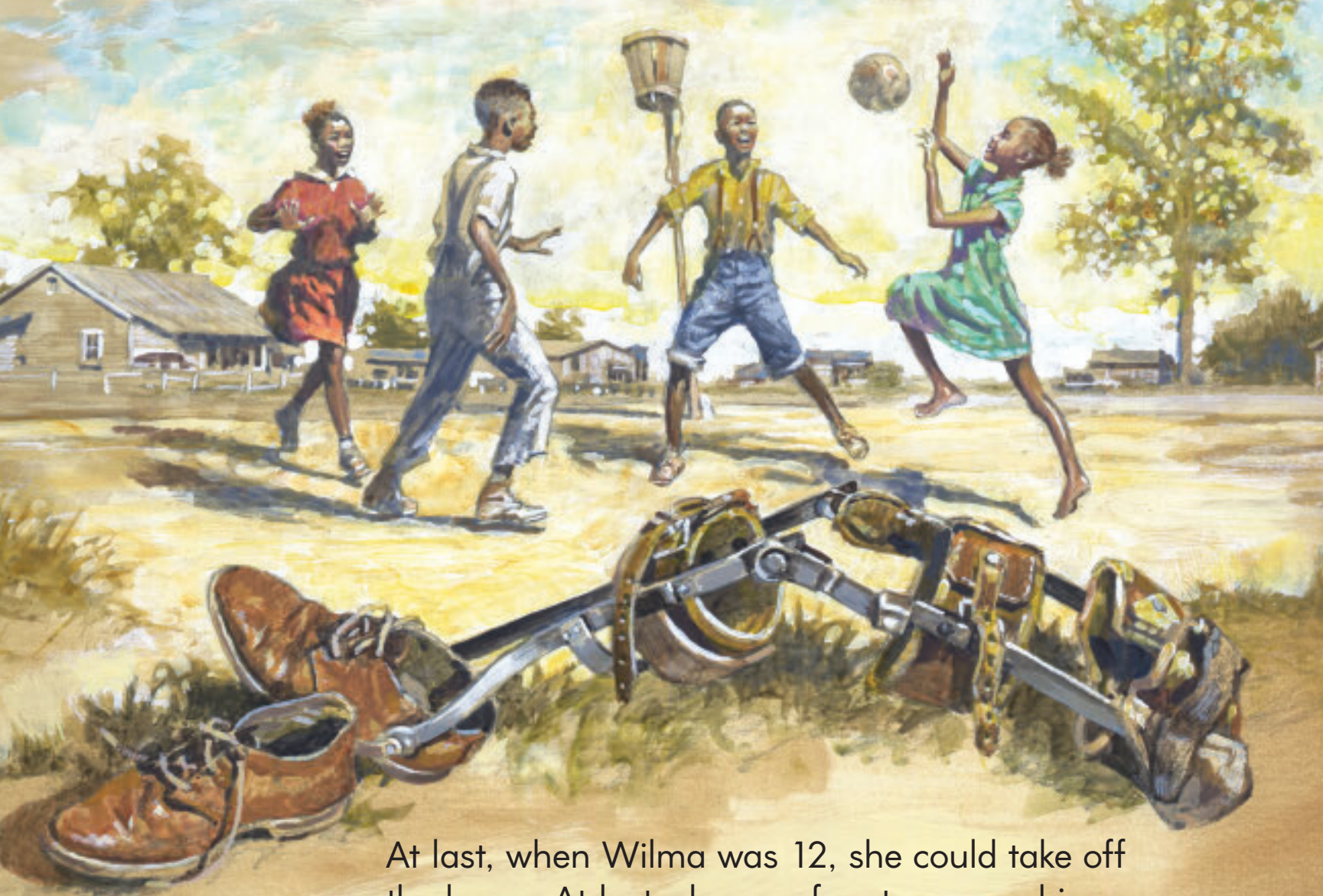
Wilma got well, but one leg was still weak and twisted. She needed to get a metal brace for the leg.

It was impossible for her to run with her sisters and brothers. Wilma felt sad and left out.



“I cannot run,” Wilma said to herself. “But if I limp as fast as I can, I will catch up.” And, day after day, that is what she did. She used her leg a lot. It got stronger and stronger.






At last, when Wilma was 12, she could take off the brace. At last, she was free to run and jump like other kids!

Wilma began to do a lot of sports. The sport she was best at was running. Wilma liked winning. She began to dream she could be the best runner ever.





Then Wilma ran in a big contest.
She did not win a single prize.
She was very upset—but not for long.
“I will learn from this,” she said to
herself. “I will get better. I will learn how
to run faster.”

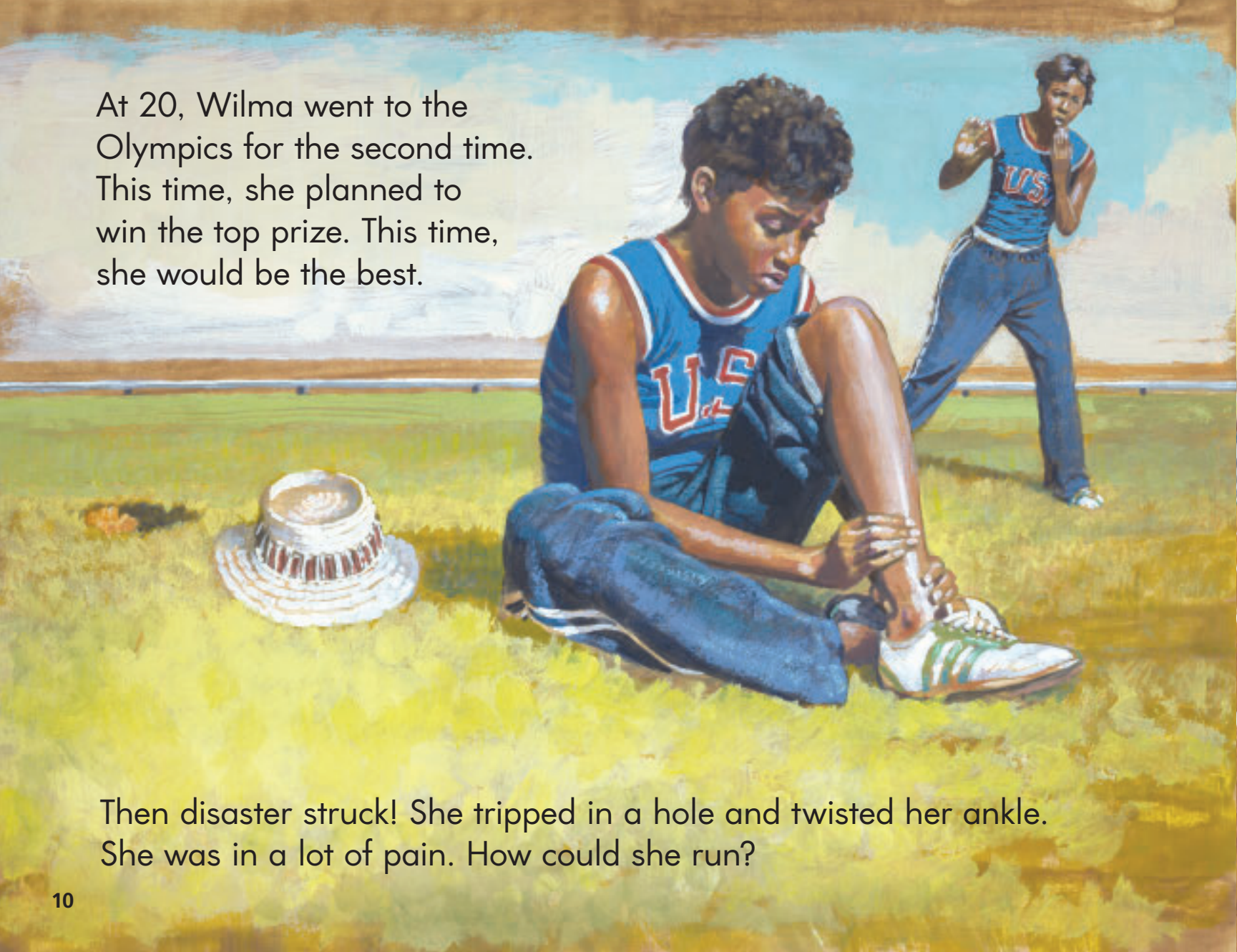


And that is what she did. She got a terrific coach. He helped her learn to be a better runner. She got faster and faster.

At just 16, Wilma got picked to run in the Olympic Games!
She ran well and won a medal, but she was not the fastest runner.



At 20, Wilma went to the Olympics for the second time. This time, she planned to win the top prize. This time, she would be the best.



Then disaster struck! She tripped in a hole and twisted her ankle. She was in a lot of pain. How could she run?

Wilma said to herself, “My ankle is in bad shape, but I will do the best I can.”

Her ankle strapped with tape, she got set to run.





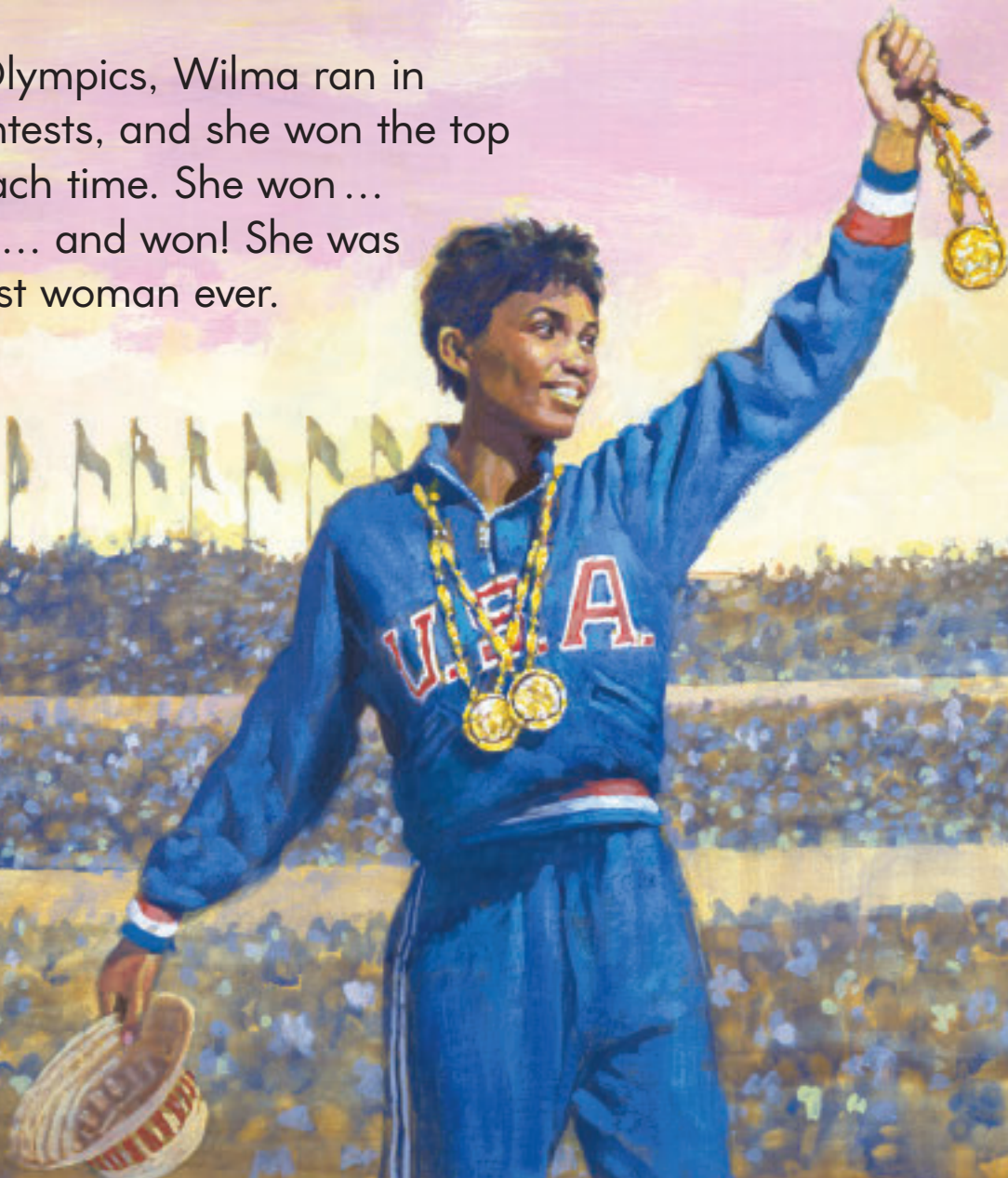
Bang! The runners were off!

Wilma ran the fastest she had ever run.



No one could beat her.

In that Olympics, Wilma ran in three contests, and she won the top medal each time. She won ... and won ... and won! She was the fastest woman ever.



As an adult, Wilma wanted to inspire kids. She would tell them not to let problems stop them from getting better at things. Never stop trusting in your dreams, she said. If you struggle to do it, you can win.



This is what the real **Wilma Rudolph** looked like.



Wilma with her big sister.



Wilma at the Olympics.



Wilma went on to get a degree.



What a fantastic life!

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