Title: Harley and the Davidsons
Chapter 4: A Race for the Top

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Summary: On a summer afternoon in 1891, Arthur Davidson and his friend Bill Harley dreamed of a bicycle that could zoom up hills and get from place to place much faster than a push-pedal bike. What they did with that dream is the stuff of legend. Along with Arthur’s brothers William and Walter, they created a motorcycle that was more powerful—and more popular—than any other machine on the road. The roar and power of Harley-Davidson motorcycles can still be heard today.

STORY PRESENTATION
Setting the Stage: The friends that started the Harley-Davidson motor company had many different adventures. One of the things they liked to do is race motorcycles. Have you ever been in a race? What kind of race was it? How did you do?

Read the Story: Today we are going to read about how Walter Davidson raced motorcycles. One of the races he participated in was called an Endurance race. As I am reading, listen to find out what an endurance race is all about.

Finishing the Story: Who can tell me what an endurance race is? Why was it so difficult? What were some of the challenges that faced these racers? Let’s go take a look at some of the trophies that Walter won in these races.

(Continued on next page)
GALLERY PRESENTATION

Exhibit/Artifact:  Take your students into the second gallery of the Harley-Davidson Journey on the second floor. Look for the trophies in this exhibit case. Look for the 1908 FAM endurance/economy cup.

![Image of trophies]

Gallery facts to share with students:

- The founders of Harley-Davidson weren’t just inventors and entrepreneurs (businessmen) but motorcycle enthusiasts. They were expert riders and enjoyed racing the machines they built. They entered their bikes into many races.
- Walter Davidson did the most racing of the four founders.
- As Walter won races, this helped to establish a good reputation for Harley-Davidson motorcycles, and the founders celebrated his victories in their advertising.
- Point out the 1908 FAM endurance/economy cup. Ask what it is made of (brass and horn). Discuss what Walter achieved during this endurance race and economy run (two separate contests). The endurance run was organized by the FAM (Federation of American Motorcyclists) and was a two-day-long race through upstate NY covering over 300 miles. Two days after this part of the contest, another contest, the fuel economy contest, was run. In this contest, competitors had to run a 52-mile course and see how much gas their machine used. Walter came in first place on a stock machine, meaning it had no special parts or modifications. Walter’s Harley-Davidson used the least amount of fuel—one quart and one ounce (33 ounces total) of gas.
- Show the illustration of the trophy in the advertising literature to relate to bullet point above.
- Point out large photo behind bike on adjacent platform and identify Walter Davidson. This photo was taken shortly after his 1908 endurance/economy victory.