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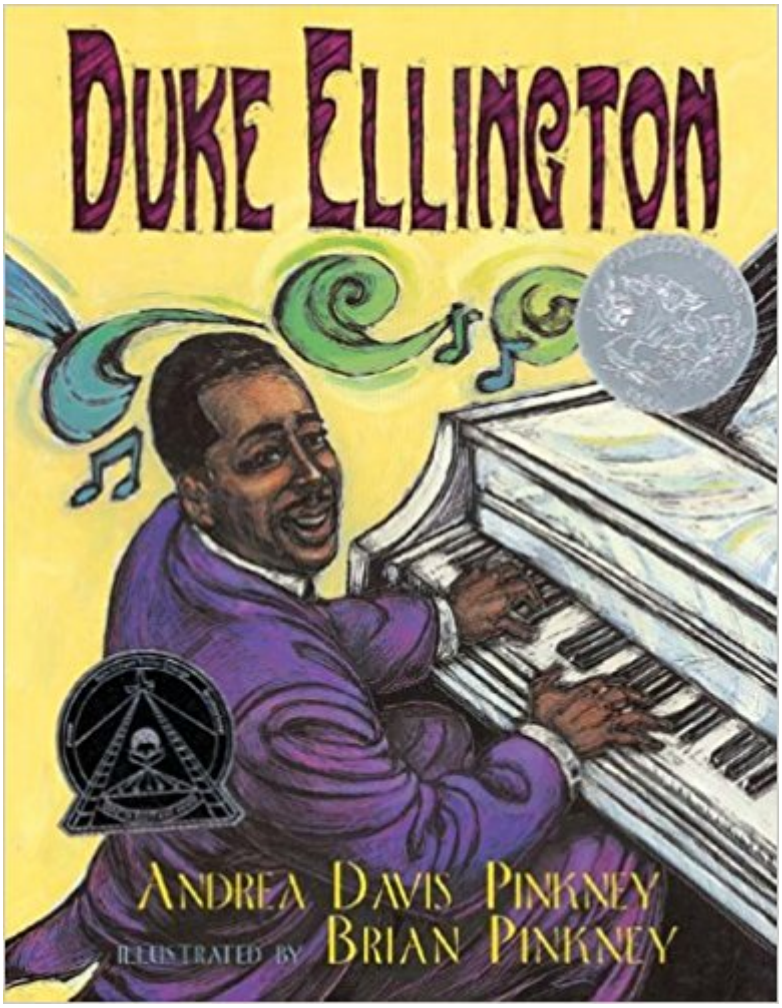
Duke Ellington: The Piano Prince And His Orchestra



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Synopsis

Another stunning picture book biography of a prominent twentieth-century African-American in the arts, from the creative team behind Alvin Ailey.

Book Information

Lexile Measure: 800 (What's this?)

Paperback: 32 pages

Publisher: Hyperion Book CH; 1 edition (December 12, 2006)

Language: English

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Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars 23 customer reviews

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Age Range: 5 - 9 years

Grade Level: Kindergarten - 4

Customer Reviews

Edward Kennedy "Duke" Ellington, "King of the Keys," was born on April 29, 1899, in Washington, D.C. "He was a smooth-talkin', slick-steppin', piano-playin' kid," writes master wordsmith Andrea Pinkney in the rhythmic, fluid, swinging prose of this excellent biography for early readers. It was ragtime music that first "set Duke's fingers to wiggling." He got back to work and taught himself to "press on the pearlies." Soon 19-year-old Duke was playing compositions "smoother than a hairdo sleeked with pomade" at parties, pool halls, country clubs, and cabarets. Skipping from D.C. to 1920s Harlem, "the place where jazz music ruled," Duke and his small band called the Washingtonians began performing in New York City clubs, including the Cotton Club, where Duke Ellington and his Orchestra was officially born. By 1943, Duke Ellington--writer of more than 1000 compositions, including ballet and film scores, orchestral suites, musicals, and choral works--had made it all the way to Carnegie Hall. We applaud this talented husband-and-wife team--award-winning illustrator Brian Pinkney and writer Andrea Pinkney--for making music fly in this fantastic tribute to a jazz legend. Andrea does an extraordinary job of translating music into

words, with blues "deeper than the deep blue sea" and "hot-buttered bob, with lots of sassy-cool tones," while her husband visually interprets the movement of music as spirals, waves, and swirls of color, prepared as scratchboard renderings with luma dyes, gouache, and oil paint. Andrea writes, "Toby let loose on his sleek brass sax, curling his notes like a kite tail in the wind. A musical loop-de-loop, with a serious twist," while Brian paints those curling notes, the loop-de-loops, and the kite sailing up to the New York City skyline. Young readers will enjoy the rhythm and beauty of the story itself, and may even be inspired to give Raffi a rest and swing with the Duke! (Great read-aloud, ages 4 to 8) --Karin Snelson, .com Kids editor --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

Grade 1-5AA royal introduction to the piano prince. Told in a swingy conversational tone and highlighting the musician’s childhood, early ragtime days, and stellar rise to popularity, playing at the Cotton Club and, later, Carnegie Hall, this is a jazzy treat. It is rare to find text that describes music so well. Phrases such as "sassy ride on his cymbal," "musical stream," and "purple dash of brass" carry the auditory experiences of the Duke’s music right off the page. Young readers will find more than just a few facts here. They will learn what Duke Ellington did for the jazz world, how his music was played, and the legacy he left behind. Brian Pinkney’s distinctive scratchboard, gouache and oil paintings are a harmonious complement to Andrea Pinkney’s text. Bright, wild colors on soft neon backgrounds are beautifully balanced with black-and-white highlights. It is the blending of words, symbols, and pictures that bring this subject to life. A page of biographical information and impressive source notes conclude the presentation. This book swings. Don’t miss it.ABeth Tegart, Oneida City Schools, NYCopyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

Well written and the art is excellent. I read it to my students for African American Month.

Book was in excellent condition!

I am an elementary school music teacher & I ordered this book for my classroom. When I read through it upon receiving my order I was immediately impressed! The art work is amazing & the story is very child friendly. You will be pleased with this book as a parent or teacher. It is a wonderful resource!

Great book. Taught my son quite a bit and helped with his 1st grade project.

Good for school projects.

Duke Ellington: the Piano Prince and His Orchestra is a brief biography of Duke Ellington, the great jazz pianist and orchestra leader. It only mentions the happy, good events in Ellington's life and seems intended to spark an interest in jazz music in general, and Ellington in particular.Mrs. Pinkey writes in vernacular, dropping the"-ing", talking directly to the reader and using slang from the jazz era. This gives the book a quick rhythm, a jazzy feel, and makes it a joy to read aloud. Her metaphors for the music are colorful and descriptive, at times poetic.Mr. Pinkney uses bright colors and bold lines to express the feeling of music being played. The colors add to the jazzy, joyful rhythm of the words. The texture from the scratch-board technique gives depth to the illustrations. The bold, curving lines propel the eye around the page, following the drawn music. Overall, the art gives the impression of movement, vitality and most of all, of music.The intended audience is preschool age up to around age 8. This is too dense of a book, both in amount of words and amount of story covered, to be appropriate for a typical four year old. On the other hand, it is such a lively book to read out loud, it might hold a preschooler's attention despite a disinterest in and lack of understanding about the subject. For the school age child, I don't think it would be an appropriate read-alone book, for the reason mentioned above but also because many of the slang words will need an explanation.

This is an amazing book about Duke Ellington. The language of the book is delightful. It sends you on a voyage back to the early 1900's and you can practically hear Duke Ellington and his band playing. Elementary school children will love this book. It will expose them to a prominent African-American and a musical era that they might never hear about until they are much older. This book contains absolutely beautiful illustrations that add to the joyous feeling conveyed by this story.

Duke Ellington: The Piano Prince and His Orchestraby Andrea Davis Pinkney, Brian Pinkney (Illustrator)Duke Ellington: the Piano Prince and his orchestra by Snadrea Pinkney: is a book about his life his times his music to inspire the masses and tell the musical story of life

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