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Duke Ellington: His Life In Jazz With 21 Activities (For Kids Series)



Synopsis

Duke Ellington, one of the most influential figures in American music, comes alive in this comprehensive biography with engaging activities. Ellington was an accomplished and influential jazz pianist, composer, band leader, and cultural diplomat. Activities include creating a ragtime rhythm, making a washtub bass, writing song lyrics, thinking like an arranger, and learning to dance the Lindy Hop. It explores Ellington's life and career along with many topics related to African American history, including the Harlem Renaissance. Kids will learn about the musical evolution of jazz that coincided with Ellington's long life from ragtime through the big band era on up to the 1970s. Kids learn how music technology has changed over the years from piano rolls to record albums through CDs, television, and portable music devices. The extensive resources include a time line, glossary, list of Ellington's greatest recordings, related books, Web sites, and DVDs for further study.

Book Information

Series: For Kids series

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Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars 7 customer reviews

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Age Range: 9 - 13 years

Grade Level: 4 and up

Customer Reviews

Grade 4 "Preceded by a time line of personal and public events, this biography begins with a brief discussion of the lives of Ellington's parents and his childhood introduction to music and instruments. As each chapter introduces separate highlights of the man's life and musical growth, sidebar articles emphasize historical milestones in music (the Harlem Renaissance, Jazz Pioneers,

Tin Pan Alley, etc.) and the impact of individuals or events on his life. The book also features 21 interactive activities, each of which is positioned to provide a greater understanding of an instrument, performance, or music theory in jazz style (e.g., writing the blues, an improvisation exercise, illustrating sheet music covers, or dancing the Lindy Hop). Illustrations and the boxed information break up the text-heavy pages while the activities range from those suiting younger readers (experimenting with sound effects, making a shaker) to the more complicated (learning to read drum notation). This account of Ellington's life story reveals his late introduction to music as a career possibility and lightly touches on his personal relationships and lack of education. Illustrations include performance photographs and portraits of notable names from the Big Band era. Bibliographic references, recommended recordings and films, and annotated Web sites complete this thorough look at Ellington's musical life and legacy.â "Mary Elam, Forman Elementary School, Plano, TX Copyright Â© Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

This large-format book combines an illustrated biography of Â Duke Ellington with activities designed to offer insights into Ellingtonâ 's era and his music. The main text presents Ellingtonâ 's life in a straightforward account, concentrating on his career as a jazz musician, composer, and band leader. Meanwhile, the many sidebars discuss related topics such as turn-of-the-twentieth-century music technology (piano rolls and phonographs) and the U.S. State Departmentâ 's â œjazz ambassadorsâ • program during the Cold War. Appearing throughout the book, the activities mentioned in the subtitle vary from â œLearn to Read Drum Notationâ • to â œMake Corn Bread for a Rent Partyâ • to â œWrite Lyrics to an Ellington Tune.â • Some activities are illustrated with drawings of young children, an odd choice that might put off readers in their teens. The many black-and-white excellent photos show up well on the glossy pages. Appendixes include bibliographies and lists of recommended recordings, films, and Web sites. An informative account inÂ an attractive paperback format. Grades 6-9. --Carolyn Phelan

What a great book to explore jazz though the life of Duke Ellington! The activities are fun and engaging (most are appropriate for the 7 - 10 age group). I like that there is variety in the activities (everything from making instruments to writing lyrics to making corn bread!), so kids can get a more robust hands on learning experience. While this is by no means a stand alone book on jazz, it is a great introduction to students learning about various types of music, an excellent starting book for someone doing a biography on Duke Ellington, or a jumping off point into the wonderful world of

jazz. It would also make a great gift for a young, budding musician as the Duke was a great role model (I haven't read about a drug habit or wife beating or other things that tend to plague musicians of all genres throughout history). While this book could be used in schools, it seems most appropriate for use at home with the family. There are great family activities and the way the book is written, it easily allows for parents and grandparents to expound upon "those days" that don't seem so "walked ten miles to school, uphill, in a snow storm". It allows for some great life lessons as Duke Ellington didn't just happen to be a great musician, he worked hard at it and even when he was very good - he still continued to practice and learn from others to try and get better. Pair it with samples of his music and you have a great family learning project to help bring you closer to your children in a new and exciting way.

This book does contain a biography about Duke Ellington, but it is much more than just a biography. The activities are well thought out, particularly for a group or classroom setting. I purchased this book for teaching about the Jazz Age to a home school co-op class. I believe it is a superior resource than the book suggested by the curriculum that I am using to teach this period of history.

This is one of those years in February where we focused on Duke Ellington and I used this for my classes. It has good information and also is full of activities for teachers to use in the classroom!

I bought this book as a resource for my 7th grade music appreciation class. It is an extremely useful book. The activities are creative and doable.

Purchase for a kindergartner to do a book report unable to print a page or copy and paste.thank you

Biographies can have a tough life. Their charms are often lost on young readers who are more focused on the latest hyped-up fiction or eye-catching nonfiction titles. I can see why this is the case - biographies can come across as being more utilitarian than entertaining. Duke Ellington: His Life in Jazz tries its best to provide the facts in ways that will appeal to young readers. Duke Ellington... is an unquestionably well crafted title. Text that is detailed and accessible, images that are large and crystal clear, and an interactive twist make this title stand out. With over 2,000 compositions and numerous musical achievements, Ellington's body of work was immense. Author Stephanie Stein Crease treats the musician's life and career with obvious admiration. From his early days of playing piano at parties to the formation and growth of his renowned jazz orchestra, Ellington's story is

presented in a clear, conversational tone that adds to the overall readability. A time line and a multitude of sidebars help to add context. When I first saw this book, the thing that stuck with me was the "with 21 activities" in the title. I wondered how well this would work. The verdict? Not too shabby. The various, step-by-step Ellington-related activities range from the just for fun (make a concert poster) to more in depth (writing your own blues melody). This mix was a good choice - it allows a wide variety of readers to take part if they like. Musical talent is not required. While it's likely that only the most interested of young readers will read this title cover to cover, Duke Ellington... will also ably serve students who are looking for facts or working on a biography of the man. If you're looking for an update in your Ellington bio section, this will make an excellent choice.

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