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Play, Louis, Play!: The True Story Of A Boy And His Horn



Synopsis

The childhood of Louis Armstrong was as fascinating as the great musician himself-and this chapter book biography tells it like never before. *Play, Louis, Play!* is written from the point of view of Louis' closest companion throughout his youth-his horn! In a jazz-inflected, exuberant voice, this unusual narrator tells it all, starting with the small New Orleans hock shop where little Louis bought his first trumpet for five hard-earned dollars. As Louis goes from a street quartet to the marching band of the Colored Waif 's Home to the big sounds of New Orleans jazz clubs, author Muriel Harris Weinstein creates a moving portrait of the jazz legend. Includes a detailed author's note, glossary of jazz terms, and bibliography.

Book Information

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Age Range: 7 - 10 years

Grade Level: 2 - 4

Customer Reviews

With a bouncy, freewheeling tone that would make her subject proud, Weinstein tells the story of Louis Armstrong's childhood from the point of view of his first cornet, a battered old five-dollar junker he scrimped and saved to buy from a pawn shop. He grew up poor, with a sick mother and absent father, in a rough New Orleans neighborhood. But he found a passion when he heard a new kind of music: horns wah-wah-wahing, slow sad drag-me-out blues, riffs on razzmatazz cornets, and jazzy beats of thumping piano keys. And ever the affable performer in training, he never lost his face-splitting grin, no matter how bad things got as he bounced around

homes until finally landing in the Colored Waif's Home for Boys. From there, his talent shone when their band would march the streets, and eventually he got picked up by Louis Oliver's band and went on to change music history. Morrison's sketchy black-and-white spot art livens up an already ebullient chapter-book biography of a true artistic pioneer. Grades 3-5. --Ian Chipman --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

MURIEL HARRIS WEINSTEIN's poems have appeared in The Comstock Review, Nassau Review, Kent State Review, Nexus, and many anthologies. She is the author of the picture book *When Louis Armstrong Taught Me Jazz*. She lives in New York. FRANK MORRISON is a renowned fine artist whose work was featured in *Our Children Can Soar*. He has lent his talents to many picture books, including Alex Rodriguez's *Out of the Ballpark*, Queen Latifah's *Queen of the Scene*, and Brenda Roberts' *Jazzy Miz Mozetta*, for which he won the Coretta Scott King/John Steptoe Award for New Talent. He lives in Georgia.

This is the story of Louis Armstrong as told by his trumpet. And because trumpets make music, author Muriel Harris Weinstein has filled her words with a sing song poetry that is absolutely irresistible. I can't imagine a better book to read to a child, or for a child to read to himself. The trumpet sees young Louis through the window of a junk shop in New Orleans. He is a skinny, dirt poor little boy who can't help but make music. Sticks, garbage cans, everything he touches he makes sing, but the one thing he wants more than the world itself, is that trumpet. At six-years old Louis had to take care of his mother and little sister. He worked on a cart selling odds and ends and blowing a toy horn so loud everyone knew when he was around. He sold newspapers, he shoveled coal and he sang in a street quartet--little Louis did everything he could to earn money for his family, and he saved and saved to have \$5 to buy that trumpet. When he finally has the money and he blows those first notes, it's as if he'd been born to play. Through all the trials and tribulations that follow, Louis greets every setback with a smile that becomes legendary. This is a tale of an extraordinary kid who triumphs over the worst of circumstances, and it's told so extraordinarily it's as if you put Louis to your ear and heard the melody of his heart.

This book *SWINGS ! PLAY LOUIS, PLAY!* reads more like fiction than a biography. It's not like the usual biography. It breaks all the rules. It doesn't start like others, "he was born on such & such a day & he lived on such and such a street". No, this bio starts with *FEELING* & its language is so southern that it conjures up a southern drawl and even poetry. *WHATTA BOOK !* Louis grew up in

the poorest, the toughest, the worst neighborhood in all of New Orleans. He could've become a petty thief, a gambler, a hustler. And he never had a music lesson. couldn't even read music. Never had money to even buy an instrument. So HOW IN THE WORLD DID HE GET INTO MUSIC???????? KNOW HE LOVED MUSIC???????? START PLAYING????????? Good questions. Read the book. And just as his music swings, just as his gravelly voice sings WHEN THE SAINTS COME MARCHING IN, this book swings with the jazz rhythms that Louis felt, that made him tick ! Get the book, it's a GREAT READ !! And a FAST one too. Music teachers in school would LOVE this book for their classes. Psychologists working with children would LOVE this book for their student groups and individual kids in and out of school. Kids who are in lower financial groups would LOVE this book as it shows what's really important to make you happy. Kids who are poor would LOVE this book because Louis had even LESS than they have. He had NO bathroom, NO electricity, NO running water. Imagine using an "outhouse" on a cold rainy night when you wake up at 2 in the morning !! Musicians would love this book because it's so joyously filled with music in its language, in Louis' heart.

Wonderful autobiography about Louis Armstrong. A clear description of his challenging and difficult upbringing, and of the talent that ultimately allowed him to overcome these challenges and live a better life. An amazing story of how attitude, talent and hard work pays off and will eventually take you to a better place. This was a truly inspirational story for adults and children of all ages. A great message and a fun story to read aloud. Also, a nice bit of musical history interwoven in the plot that adds another teaching element to the story.

This book is a fantastic read. It is told from Louis Armstrong's trumpet's point of view. I teach gifted first through fifth grades and I used this to teach about Louisiana history, as well as a spring board to have the students write their own autobiography told by something that was important to them. I asked the students, "What would tell your biography?" So many great activities for this book!

This is a wonderful story, well told by the horn, and great for children and adults

I like this reading very much! I enjoyed reading about Armstrong's background that gave me a clearer understanding of who he was. This book should be read by young people who especially have struggles themselves and know that they too can overcome.

This book was the best book I have ever read. It is kind of sad at the end because Louis only lived to be in his 60`s.

It was a great book and heartwarming it also told all about the history of Louis Armstrong. Thanks for great book

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