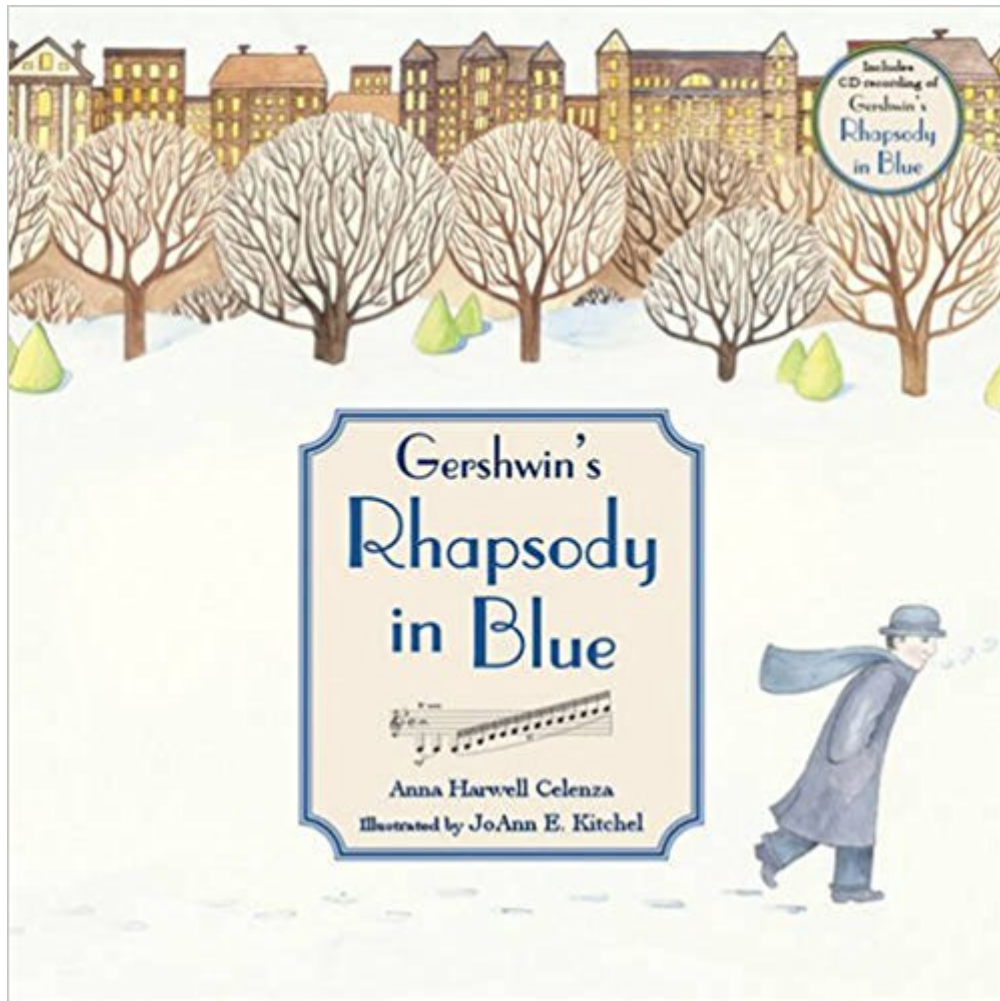


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# Gershwin's Rhapsody In Blue



## Synopsis

George Gershwin only has a few weeks to compose a concerto. His piece is supposed to exemplify American music and premiere at a concert entitled "An Experiment in Modern Music." Homesick for New York while rehearsing for a musical in Boston, he soon realizes that American music is much like its people, a great melting pot of sounds, rhythms, and harmonies. JoAnn Kitchel's illustrations capture the 1920s in all their art deco majesty. Includes a CD of "Rhapsody in Blue" performed by George Gershwin (1925 piano roll) and the Columbia Jazz Band, conducted by Michael Tilson Thomas.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 830L (What's this?)

Hardcover: 32 pages

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Shipping Weight: 15.2 ounces

Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars 18 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #672,686 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #51 in Books > Children's Books > Arts, Music & Photography > Music > History #125 in Books > Children's Books > Biographies > Performing Arts #171 in Books > Children's Books > Biographies > Musical

Age Range: 6 - 9 years

Grade Level: 3 - 4

## Customer Reviews

Grade 1-5 "The creation of Gershwin's 1924 masterpiece is the subject of this picture book. The story, rendered in watercolor-and-ink caricatures, opens in the legendary pool hall where George's brother Ira discovers a newspaper announcement for a concert at which his sibling's new jazz concerto is to be featured "only it hasn't been written yet. After the disbelief subsides and the conductor who placed the ad is confronted, the musical genius embarks on a journey in which doubt, inspiration, and frustration overlay frenzied periods of intense work. Celenza's tale, complete with invented dialogue, brings the composer to life. The text incorporates musical ideas to discover the klezmer howl of the opening clarinet, the blues, and the love song for New York in the main

theme. An author's note contains Gershwin's words describing the rhythm of the train ride that freed his mental block, providing ideas for content, style, and direction. Kitchel's sensitivity to this source material is especially evident in her spread of multifaceted patterns and images, presented as cameos against a black background; they relate to the composer's concept of a musical kaleidoscope of America. An accompanying CD features Gershwin himself (courtesy of a piano roll). Pair this with Robert Burleigh's *Langston's Train Ride* (Scholastic, 2004) to compare how a trip on an iron horse affected another American artist from the same period.â “Wendy Lukehart, Washington DC Public Library Copyright Â© Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* is one of the most American of all musical pieces, incorporating rhythms and sounds that mirror New York City in the mid-1920s. In straightforward prose and sturdy art, this book relates its story. Gershwin didn't remember agreeing to participate in bandleader Paul Whitman's musical extravaganza "An Experiment in Modern Music," which was only weeks away. But at Whitman's urging, he decides to compose a concerto--then regrets it when the writing becomes a struggle. While on a train, however, the sounds he hears help him focus his thoughts, and he imagines the rhapsody from beginning to end, later calling it "a musical kaleidoscope of America." Along with the story, this provides a CD--an addition that enriches the book. On its own, the story may not interest children, but once they hear the stimulating music, the history of its origins will take on meaning. A great way to introduce a classic to a new generation. Ilene CooperCopyright Â© American Library Association. All rights reserved

Good read for elementary level children.

Excellent

Fine for kids. And the CD contains Gershwin at the piano, mixed with a today orchestra. Moving.

A very nice book for elementary students.

This is book is in my piano studio library. It is a sweet story about one of my favorite pieces, and is beautifully illustrated

This is another evocative and personal book by Ms. Celenza, who has a gift for building a story that appeals to young readers. This book definitely *\*does\** come with a CD - it is inside the back cover. Perhaps the other reviewer who didn't get a CD was expecting a separate CD case? Regardless, it's a nice combination.

This is such a great story and so well written. Gershwin's music is a wonderful example of a person's ability to even produce under pressure. He was one of a kind. My grandchildren loved these books.

amazing book, with George himself playing at lightening speed, from a piano roll. LOVE IT!

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