

Jazz Books for Children

Grades Pre-Kindergarten to 6

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Although each item includes a suggestion for the appropriate grade level, many of the books have a general appeal. For example, *The Jazz Fly* has been enjoyed by sixth graders as well as students in kindergarten, and some of the books suggested for grades 2-5 appeal to the younger grades if read aloud to them. Some of the books may be out of print but are included here, as they are worth reading and can be found in some libraries.

Armentrout, Patricia and David. *Jazz and Blues, Sounds of Music*. Vero Beach, FL: The Rourke Corporation, 1999. Grades K-2. Explains jazz, marching bands, ragtime, and blues in simple, one-page, large-print descriptions. Includes jazz vocabulary (*improvisation, jazz, blues, musician, solo*).

Asirvatham, Sandy. *The History of Jazz*. Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, 2003. Grades 5 and up. The history of jazz music and important artists from New Orleans up to funky fusions and beyond. Chronology, websites, and recommended reading at the end of the book.

Awmilla, Craig. *Wynton Marsalis: Gifted Trumpet Player*. New York: Children's Press, 1996. Grades 2-6. An easy-to-read short biography of Wynton Marsalis, including his love for teaching children about the special ingredients of jazz.

Bankston, John. *The Life and Times of Duke Ellington*. Hockessin, DE: Mitchell Lane Publishers, 2005 (part of the *Masters of Music* great composer series). Grades 4-6. Five short chapters, which focus on different aspects of Duke Ellington's life and career. Each chapter includes an historical one-page *FYInfo* and color photos. A timeline in history, selected works, chronology, and suggested further reading are also included.

Barasch, Lynne. *Knockin' On Wood*. New York: Lee-Low Books, Inc., 2004. Grades K-6. This is the story of Clayton "Peg Leg" Bates, a legendary tap dancer of the 20th century, who lost his leg at age twelve in a factory accident. He never gave up his love for dancing, and became a star performer at the Cotton Club and performed throughout the US and Europe. The story also provides insight into segregation issues that Bates faced.

Beyer, Mark. *Rock and Roll Hall of Famers, Ray Charles*. New York: The Rosen Publishing Group, 2003. Grades 4 and up. The story of Ray Charles from his childhood in Georgia, his early travel, to his rise to stardom. Covers his "ups and downs" and his comeback in the 1980s.

Brandenberg, Alik. *Ah Music!* New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2003. Grades K-1. Pages 40-41 include an explanation of jazz.

Brown, Gene. *Duke Ellington: Jazz Master*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Silver Burdett, 1990. Grades 4-6. A biography of Duke Ellington, covering his life, career, and importance as a musical pioneer who left a deep impression on jazz and popular music. Readers gain insight

into different styles of jazz, important people in the evolution of jazz, and what was happening historically and culturally. Chronology, bibliography, major works, and glossary are included.

Brown, Sanford. *Louis Armstrong*. New York: Franklin Watts, 1993. Grades 5 and 6. Personal life and career of Louis Armstrong.

Burleigh, Robert. *Lookin' for Bird in the Big City*. New York: Harcourt, Inc., 2001. Fiction, Grades 1-3. A story of Miles Davis as a teenager searching for Charlie Parker in New York City.

Campbell, Bebe Moore. *Stompin' At the Savoy*. New York: Philomel Books, 2006. Grades 1-6. Fiction. Mindy is nervous and does not want to be in her jazz recital, no matter how hard her dancing aunties try to convince her. It's only after a talking drum spirit whisks her away to the Savoy Ballroom where she joins the other dancers, does she gain her confidence. Even though this is fiction, the story provides insight into the Savoy Ballroom.

Collier, Bryan. *Uptown*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2000. Fiction, Grades K-3. The sights and sounds of Harlem (the Apollo Theater, the music of Duke Ellington, etc.) as seen through the eyes of a young boy.

Collier, James Lincoln. *Jazz, An American Saga*. New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1997. Grades 5-6. Explores the history of jazz and the contributions of individual artists.

_____. ***Duke Ellington*.** New York: Macmillan Co., 1991. Grades 5-6. The life and greatness of Duke Ellington.

_____. ***The Louis Armstrong You Never Knew*.** New York: Children's Press, 2004. Grades 4-6. Through personal stories that are simply told, the reader gains insight into Louis Armstrong's personal life and feelings throughout his career.

Davis, David. *Jazz Cats*. Gretna, LA: Pelican Publishing Co., 2001. Fiction, Grades K-4. Jazz Cats entertain the crowds in the French Quarter of New Orleans. The story, told in rhyme, introduces students to the "feel" of jazz and instruments. Characters include Broussard (clarinet), Old Wailing Tyon (fiddle bass), Tyrone (trumpet), Grandpa Kitty (alto sax), and others.

Dillon, Leo and Diane. *Rap A Tap Tap: Here's Bojangles - Think of That!* New York: Blue Sky Press, 2002. Fiction, Grades Pre-K-2. This picture book, which includes large full-page illustrations with one line of text per page (rhyme and repetition), captures the speed and intricacy of Bill "Bojangles" Robinson's tap dancing rhythms.

Domnauer, Teresa, and John Lithgow. *Rock, Rag, and Swing, Level 4: A Musical Adventure*. Grand Rapids, MI: School Specialty Publishing, 2006. Grades 2-4. Farkle McBride invites students to join him in learning about different kinds of music, beginning with early and classical music through opera, gospel, ragtime, jazz, marching music, the Blues, Folk Music, Country and Western, Rock and Roll, Pop Music and Rap. Each page in this 30-page book includes colorful photos, and is devoted to one of the above styles of music with a "Farkle fact" at the bottom of each page.

Elmer, Howard. *Blues: Its Birth and Growth*. New York: Rosen Publishing Group, 1999. Grades 4-6. An informative "user-friendly" book that traces the origins and evolution of blues music and its influence on jazz and other music. Readers gain insight into song types,

instruments, musical traditions (work songs, spirituals), artists, folk and classical blues, and the new generation of blues musicians. Includes photos.

England, Linda. *Old Cotton Blues*. New York: Margaret K. McElderry Books, 1998. Fiction, Grades K-5. The story of Dexter, a young boy who wants to play the harmonica like Johnny Cotton, a harmonica player he knows. Dexter is feeling blue because his mom can't afford to buy him a harmonica. One day, Johnny Cotton gives him a harmonica, and with practice Dexter is able to play *Old Cotton Blues*.

Evans, Mark. *Scott Joplin and the Ragtime Years*. New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1976. Grades 4-6. The story of Scott Joplin, who wrote ragtime classics and the opera *Treemonisha*. The book traces his career from his days as an itinerant musician to Sedalia, Missouri, to New York City.

Faine, Edward Allan. *Bebop Babies*. Takoma Park, MD: IM Press, 2003. Fiction, Grades pre-K-K. A board book, which introduces children to the world of music and instruments. Each page includes a word related to jazz music or an artist (goatee, trumpet, drums, etc.), and an illustration of a young child engaged in a jazz related activity. For example, one page has the word *conga*, then *Cubano Be*, *Cubano Bop*, "Go, Chano, Go!" and "Chano Pozo's" name at the bottom with a boy playing the Conga.

Fitzgerald, Ella and Van Alexander. *A-tisket, a-tasket*. New York: Philomel Books, 2003. Grades Pre-K-3. In this illustrated picture book of Ella Fitzgerald's rendition of the nursery rhyme, a little boy in New York City drops his basket and sees a little girl carrying it around. Lively city scenes made from cut paper, mixed media and computer techniques form the background.

Frankl, Ron. *Charlie Parker*. New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1992. Grades 5-6. A well-illustrated biography in the series *Black Americans of Achievement*.

_____. ***Duke Ellington*.** New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1988. Grades 5-6.

_____. ***Miles Davis*.** New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1995. Grades 5-6.

Friedman, Carol. *Nicky, the Jazz Cat*. New York: Dominick Books, 2004. Fiction, Grades Pre-K—2. Called "a story for children of all ages," *Nicky the Jazz Cat* teaches readers about jazz and some of the famous musicians that Friedman, a well-known photographer, has known.

Gillis, Jennifer Blizen. *Lives and Times of Scott Joplin. The King of Ragtime*. Chicago: Heinemann Library, 2006. Grades K-3. A very simply told story about Scott Joplin's life and career, and ragtime. It is written in an easy-to-read format, with certain words shown in bold letters, with their definitions in the glossary. Also included are a fact file, timeline, and "Find Out More" section at the end of the book.

Gollub, Matthew. *The Jazz Fly*. Santa Rosa, CA: Tortuga Press, 2000. Fiction, Grades Pre-K—6. A fly, who speaks jazz, seeks directions to town from several animals and insects who respond to him with their sounds. The fly uses these sounds to jazz up his band's music. Characters include The Jazz Fly, Willie the Worm, Nancy the Gnat, Sammy the Centipede. A great story to introduce readers to scat singing. The book includes a CD with narration set to a jazz quartet. The author's website includes a writing lesson that incorporates scat.

Gourse, Leslie. *Dizzy Gillespie and the Birth of Bebop.* New York: Atheneum, 1995. Grades 6-10.

_____. *Louis' Children: American Jazz Singers.* New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1984. Grades 6 and up.

_____. *Striders to Beboppers and Beyond: The Art of Jazz Piano.* New York: Franklin Watts, 1997. Grades 6 and up.

_____. *Swingers and Crooners: The Art of Jazz Singing.* New York: Franklin Watts, 1997. Grades 6 and up.

_____. *Wynton Marsalis.* New York: Franklin Watts, 1999. Grades 4 and up. The story of Wynton Marsalis from his childhood to Artistic Director of Jazz at Lincoln Center.

Governar, Alan, editor. *Stompin' At The Savoy.* Cambridge, MA: Candlewick Press, 2006. Grades 4-6. This biography of Norma Miller's early life and rise to fame as one of the original performers of the Lindy Hop, is the result of interviews by Alan Governar. A wonderful personal account told in Norma Miller's voice, the book brings the reader inside the Jazz Age, the Harlem Renaissance, the Savoy Ballroom, and Whitey's Lindy Hoppers.

Graham, Carolyn. *Jazz Chant Fairy Tales for Children.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1988. This collection of eight fairy tales is written in a jazz chant style. Each performance piece includes a narrator, solo parts, and a chorus. There is a Student Edition and a Teacher's Edition.

Gray, Libba Moore. *Little Lil and the Swing-Singing Sax.* New York: Simon and Schuster Books for Young Readers, 1996. Fiction. Grades K-4. One day, when Little Lil's mom gets sick, Uncle Sudi Man, a saxophonist in a jazz club, sells his saxophone to pay for medicine. The house seems empty without the sounds of the saxophone, and Little Lil's mom becomes sad. Little Lil retrieves the saxophone and brings happiness back to the house.

Grifalconi, Ann. *Tiny's Hat.* New York: Harper Collins, 1999. Fiction, Grades 3 and up. This picture book is dedicated to singer Billie Holiday, who like Tina, the young girl in the story, has a gift of music, which helps her deal with her blues. Tina's father is always traveling with his trumpet looking for a gig. One day, when he does not return, Tina puts on his hat he left her and sings her blues away.

Hacker, Carlotta. *Great African Americans in Jazz.* New York: Crabtree Publishing Company, 1997. Grades 4-6. Highlights 13 African American musicians including Louis Armstrong, Miles Davis, Duke Ellington, Dizzy Gillespie, Billie Holiday, Wynton Marsalis, Thelonious Monk, and Charlie Parker. Each section focuses on the artist growing up, developing skills, overcoming obstacles, personality profile, and accomplishments.

Hannah, Jonny. *Hot Jazz Special.* Cambridge, MA: Candlewick Press, 2005. Grades 3-6. Rhymes and poster style art bring the reader into the jazz world that includes Jelly Roll Morton, Billie Holiday, Duke Ellington, Benny Goodman, Gene Krupa, Charlie Parker, and Django Reinhardt.

Haskins, James. *Black Music in America.* New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Junior Books, 1987. Grades 6 and up. A detailed history of black music in America from its African roots.

Hughes, Langston. *The First Book of Jazz*. New York: Franklin Watts, 1998. Grades 1-6. An introduction to the elements and evolution of jazz up through the swing era. Includes a useful list of 100 of the author's favorite recordings, a discography organized by jazz styles, and a list of jazz musicians, organized by instruments.

Hurd, Thatcher. *Mama Don't Allow*. New York: Harper and Row, 1984. Fiction, grades Pre-K to 3. Miles (a possum) receives a saxophone for his birthday and plays terribly until he practices. He eventually forms a swamp band that plays for the Alligator Ball on a riverboat. The words and music for the song "*Mama Don't Allow*" are included.

Hurwitz, Andy Blackman. *Charlie Bird Counts to the Beat*. New York: Price Stern Sloan, 2006. Fiction, Grades Pre-K-2. Part of the Baby Loves Jazz series, this is one of four board books with an accompanying CD that includes sing-alongs, stories and more. When Charlie Parker plays his saxophone, jazz numbers arise. Each page includes a number (from 1 to 10) and the corresponding musical term (sole, duet, etc.), large illustrations, and a sentence that uses alliteration (five funky fish play fiddles).

_____. ***Duck Ellington Swings Through the Zoo*.** New York: Price Stern Sloan, 2006. Fiction, Grades Pre-K-2. Part of the Baby Loves Jazz series, this is one of four board books with an accompanying CD that includes sing-alongs, stories and more. In this story, the animals in a zoo have nothing to do and are feeling blue, so they call on Duck Ellington who gets them stomping, clapping, singing and dancing.

_____. ***Ella Elephant Scats Like That*.** New York: Price Stern Sloan, 2006. Fiction, Grades Pre-K-2. Part of the Baby Loves Jazz series, with a CD that includes sing-alongs, stories and more. In this story, Ella Elephant teaches Otis the cat how to scat, while Mingus Mouse plays the bass; Miles the Crocodile plays the trumpet; Charlie Bird plays the sax; and Duck Ellington plays the piano.

_____. ***Miles the Crocodile Plays the Colors of Jazz*.** New York: Price Stern Sloan, 2006. Fiction, Grades Pre-K-2. Part of the Baby Loves Jazz series, this is one of four board books with an accompanying CD that includes background information on Miles Davis, concepts of "high" and "low," as well as music that correlates to the feelings of each color. Readers and listeners learn how when Miles plays the trumpet, he expresses feelings and "jazz colors appear." Each page is dedicated to a color with a poem that captures the images and feelings of that color.

Igus, Toyomi. *i see the rhythm*. San Francisco: Children's Book Press, 1998. Grades 1-6. The author and illustrator introduce the reader to an overview of jazz from its African origins through to hip-hop. Each two-page section includes a prose poem, a historical timeline of important cultural and historical events, and a painting. Included are ragtime, birth of the blues, New Orleans, swing, jazz women, bebop, cool jazz, gospel, rhythm and blues, funk, rap.

Imai Miko. *Sebastian's Trumpet*. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick Press, 1995. Fiction, Grades pre-K to K. Three little bears receive musical instruments for their birthday. Sebastian is the only bear who can't get his instrument, the trumpet, to play. He keeps trying and eventually succeeds.

Isadora, Rachel. *Ben's Trumpet*. New York: Greenwillow Books, 1979. Fiction, Grades K-5. Ben loves the sound of jazz that he hears from the Zig Zag Jazz Club, and wishes he could play

the trumpet. He imagines he has a trumpet and plays his imaginary trumpet for everyone in his family and for his friends who make fun of him. One day, a musician from the jazz club sees him and invites him to play on a real trumpet. There is an accompanying cassette with narration and jazz music.

Isadora, Rachel. *Bring On That Beat.* New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 2002. Fiction, Grades Pre-K-3. Illustrations dominate this rhyming picture book that captures the rhythm of jazz that is felt as a jazz trio plays under a streetlamp in Harlem of the 1930s.

Iverson, Genie. *Louis Armstrong.* New York: Thomas Crowell Co., 1976. Grades 2-5. An easy-to-read and understand, large-print biography that focuses on the life of Louis Armstrong.

Johnson, Anne E. *Jazz Tap. From African Drums to American Feet.* New York: Rosen Publishing Company, 1999. Grades 2-6. Informative and "user friendly" overview of the history of jazz dance from its roots in African musical traditions to contemporary jazz dance.

Kallen, Stuart A. *The History of Jazz.* Farmington Hills, MI: Lucent Books, 2003. Grades 4-6. The history of jazz from its roots through swing, bebop, cool jazz and fusion.

Kimmel, Eric. *A Horn For Louis.* New York: Random House Children's Books, 2005. Grades 1-4. Fiction and fact mix together in this story about how Louis Armstrong received his first horn. The author has used an unpublished memoir about Louis Armstrong and the Karnofsky family for whom he works as a young boy. The author captures the New Orleans of Armstrong's childhood.

Kliment, Bud. *Billie Holiday.* Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, 1990. Grades 5 and up. A biography of the famous singer, in the context of her times.

_____. *Count Basie.* Los Angeles: Melrose Square Publishing Co., 1994. Grades 5 and up. A biography of the bandleader-pianist.

_____. *Ella Fitzgerald.* Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, 1988. Grades 5 and up. A biography of the celebrated singer.

Krohn, Katherine. *Ella Fitzgerald: First Lady of Song.* Minneapolis: Lerner Publications Company, 2001. Grades 5 and up. This biography follows the life and career of Ella Fitzgerald from her childhood and Amateur Night at the Apollo through to her death in 1996. The reader gains insight into Ella's personality and talent. Includes a list of her Grammy Awards and highlights of her discography, as well as a glossary of jazz terms and suggested further reading.

Kruper, Peter. *Theo and the Blue Note.* New York: Viking, 2006. Fiction. Ages 3 and up. All Theo wants to do is to play the sax, but he only knows one blue note. He loves music and the posters in his room include "Billy Goat Holiday," "Duck Ellington," "Moles Davis" and others. One night, a rocket ship appears in his back yard. He enters it to find a jukebox filled with songs of his favorite musicians. He lands on the moon, and enters the Apollo where a band of famous musicians with animal names (Lionel Hamster, Elephants Gerald, Nat King Cobra, etc.). Duck Ellington complains that the song they are playing is not right. It has all the color notes but is missing the blues note. Theo starts to play and plays all the blue notes (every shade of blue!), and the music is complete.

Lee, Jeanne. *Jam! The Story of Jazz Music.* New York: Rosen Publishing Group, 1999. Grades 1-6. From the African vocal and instrumental traditions to the work song in America, this user-friendly, large-print informative book explains the history of jazz and important artists. Included are: spirituals, minstrels and songsters, the blues, ragtime, New Orleans, Congo Square, the birth of jazz, Billie Holiday, Dizzy Gillespie, Charlie Parker, Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, scat, call and response, swing and more. A glossary, discography, photos, and bibliography are included.

London, Jonathan. *Froggy Plays In The Band.* New York: Penguin Group, 2002. Fiction, Grades Pre-K-2. A story about Froggy and his marching band, and how they enter a contest, even though they have not been playing together for very long.

_____. ***Hip Cat.*** San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1993. Fiction. Grades Pre-K to 6. In this story told in rhyme, a hip cat who wants to make jazz music, picks up his saxophone, heads for the city near the bay, and follows his dream. Colorful illustrations and a text that is presented in a “jazzy” style. The theme is, “Do what you love to do and do it well!”

_____. ***Who Bop?*** New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2000. Fiction. Grades Pre-K to 4. Jazz-Bo plays his sax and jams while hip hares and cool cats dance to the be-bop boppin’ and swinging music of his sax. Told in rhyme, with the text presented in a “jazzy” style.

Marsalis, Wynton, illustrated by Paul Rogers. *Jazz A B Z, an A to Z collection of Jazz Portraits.* Cambridge, MA: Candlewick Press, 2005. Grades 6 and up. Graphic artist Paul Rogers designed the portraits of each musician, and Wynton Marsalis created the words/poems for the paintings. Each poem reflects the style and personality of the artists (i.e. Jelly Roll Morton/an ode; Nat King Cole/nursery rhyme pattern; Ella Fitzgerald/call and response, preacher/congregation. Each letter of the alphabet represents an artist, and each poem includes alliteration. For example: “Mingus makes mad, majestic mind-boggling music.” It also includes end notes on the poetic forms used throughout (abstract, haiku, Ballad, etc.), and why each style was chosen for each artist. A biographical sketch—written by Phil Schaap—of each musician is included.

Marsalis, Wynton. *Marsalis on Music.* New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1995. Grades 5 and up. This book with CD is the companion to a television series. It is a basic introduction to classical and jazz music for all ages, as he uses simple examples and analogies to describe elements of music and to compare classical and jazz music.

Mathis, Sharon Bell. *Ray Charles.* New York: Lee and Low Books, 2001. Grades 3-6. A biography with black and white illustrations that tells the story of Ray Charles from his childhood to age 40, with an updated “Afterward” that updates his life. Captures Ray’s feelings along his way to stardom.

McCurdy, Ronald, Ph.D. *Meet the Great Jazz Legends.* Van Nuys, CA: Alfred Publishing Company, 2004. Grades 3-6. Includes 17 units on jazz legends from New Orleans jazz through Swing to jazz fusion. Each unit contains biographical information, suggested listening, photographs, and important information on the era, as well as puzzles, word scramble games, and other activities. There is also an accompanying set of reproducible fact and activity sheets.

McKissack, Patricia and Fredrick. *Louis Armstrong: Jazz Musician.* Berkeley Heights, NJ: Enslow Publishers, Inc., 2001. Grades 2-6. Biography of Louis Armstrong and his accomplishments as a trumpeter and singer.

Medearis, Angela Shelf and Medearis, Michael. *Dance.* *African-American Arts* series. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1997. Grades 5-6. The history of jazz dance from Africa through the Middle Passage and up to the late 1990s.

_____. ***Music.*** *African-American Arts* series. New York: Twenty-First Century Books, 1997. Grades 5-6. The history of black music from African musical traditions through the Middle Passage up through the late 1990's.

_____. ***Rum-A-Tum-Tum.*** New York: Holiday House, 1997. Fiction, Grades K-3. Set in the French Quarters of New Orleans in the early 1900s, this rhyming story captures the sounds of the street cries and the marching bands.

_____. ***Treemonisha.*** New York: Henry Holt. 1995. Fiction, Grades K-6. A story version of Scott Joplin's opera *Treemonisha*, which emphasizes the importance of education over ignorance and superstition. The story takes place in the post-Civil War South. Treemonisha, the daughter of freed slaves, returns to Liberty after receiving a college education. She convinces the people in Liberty to stop believing in the potions they buy from Zodzetrick, an evil conjuror.

_____. ***Little Louie and the Jazz Band.*** New York: Lodestar Books, 1994. Grades 1-4. An easy-to-read story about young Louis "Satchmo" Armstrong's life. Provides insight into Louis' childhood in New Orleans, his move to Chicago, and how he became the Ambassador of Good Will.

Michelson, Richard. *Happy Feet! The Savoy Ballroom Lindy Hoppers and Me.* New York: Gulliver Books: Harcourt, Inc., 2005. Fiction. Grades K-3. A young boy named Happy Feet listens to his father tell his favorite stories about the night he was born, which coincided with the opening of the Savoy Ballroom in Harlem. Included in the story is information about the Savoy Ballroom and people like Leroy "Stretch" Jones, Frankie "Musclehead" Manning, Herbie "Whitey" White, "Long-Legged George" Grenidge, and Big Bea. The book includes biographical information on these characters.

Miller, William. *Rent Party Jazz.* New York: Lee & Low, Inc., 2001. Fiction, Grades K-6. A story that captures New Orleans jazz in the 1930s, and emphasizes family, friendship, and community. A family who can't pay their rent is saved by a jazz musician who helps them raise money through a rent party.

Mitchell, Barbara. *Raggin': A Story about Scott Joplin.* Minneapolis: Carobrroda, 1987. Grades 2-6. An easy to comprehend story of Scott Joplin from his childhood.

Monceaux, Morgan. *Jazz: My Music, My People.* New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1994. Grades 4-6. Each page includes a painting, personal recollection by the author, and a short biography, beginning with Buddy Bolden and concluding with jazz singers.

Monroe, Judy. *Duke Ellington: Jazz Composer.* Mankato, MN: Capstone Press, 2005. Grades K-4. An easy-to-read (large print) and comprehend introduction to the life of Duke Ellington. Key words (*rhythm, swing, composer*, etc.) are in bold print and defined in a glossary. A quote from Duke Ellington and a "Fact!" are included in each short chapter.

Myers, Walter Dean. *Jazz.* New York: Holiday House, Inc. 2006. Grades 2-12. Fifteen poems celebrate the different styles of jazz from ragtime to swing, bebop to fusion. The

book begins with an overview of the evolution of jazz, and ends with a glossary of jazz terms and a jazz timeline.

Neftzer, Amy. *All That the Dog Ever Wanted.* Brentwood, TN: Fields of Gold Publishing, Inc., 2005. Fiction, Grades K-4 (dog lovers of all ages will enjoy). Django, a golden retriever named after guitarist Django Reinhardt, only wants to please the boy who owns him. Since the boy loves music and jazz, Django tries to play his guitar and drums, but only causes problems. Ultimately, it is the dog's crooning that brings him the happiness he desired. A CD is included.

Nygaard, Elizabeth. *Snake Alley Band.* New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, Inc., 1998. Fiction, Grades Pre-K to 2. A snake decides that his snake band is monotonous, so he adds Frog's "cha-bop," and the sounds of crickets and others he meets. The message is the importance of working together as an ensemble.

Old, Wendie C. *Louis Armstrong, King of Jazz.* Berkeley Heights, NJ: Enslow Publishers, Inc., 1998. Grades 4-6. A biography that explores the life and career of Louis Armstrong.

Olmstead, Mary. *Tito Puente.* Chicago: Raintree, 2005. Grades 4-6. An easy-to-read biography of Tito Puente, one of the great bandleaders who introduced Latin jazz to millions of listeners. In addition to information about Tito's life and achievements, each short chapter includes sidebars that supplement the text with information about important cultural and historic events. For example, in the chapter, "The Early Years," there is supplemental information about life in Spanish Harlem.

Orgill, Roxane. *If I Only Had a Horn.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1997. Grades K-3. The story of Louis Armstrong as a young boy and how he was in trouble with the law and sent to The Colored Waif's Home. At the Home, a music teacher discovers Louis' musical talent and gives him a cornet. Louis works hard and becomes the leader of a parade in New Orleans.

Panahi, H. L. *Bebop Express.* New York: Laura Geringer Books/HarperCollins Publishers, 2005. Fiction, Grades K-6. Readers take a jazzy journey on the Bebop Express across America from New York City to Philly to St. Louis, with the last stop New Orleans for a "razzin', jazzin' American jazz Symphony." The illustrations in the style of Romare Bearden, are collages that combine paintings, photos, fabrics, sheet music, and newspaper to capture the rhythm and energy of jazz.

Pinkney, Andrea Davis. *Duke Ellington: The Piano Prince and his Orchestra.* New York: Hyperion Books for Children, 1998. Grades K-6. An excellent picture book overview of the career of Duke Ellington and his music, with colorful scratchboard illustrations by Brian Pinkney that capture the essence of Duke Ellington's music.

_____. ***Ella Fitzgerald, Vocal Virtuosa.*** New York: Hyperion Books for Children, 2002. Grades K-6. Scat Cat Munroe, a feline, narrates this picture book story of Ella Fitzgerald's career, from her beginnings at a talent contest at the Apollo Theatre, to her days at The Savoy and her work with Chick Webb and Dizzy Gillespie. There are four sections, each one called a track: *Hoofin' In Harlem, Jammin' at Yale, Stompin' at the Savoy, and Carnegie Hall Scat* (Dizzy Gillespie and Bebop). Superbly illustrated in scratchboard technique by Brian Pinkney.

_____. ***Shake, Shake, Shake.*** New York: Harcourt Children's Books, 1997. Fiction, for the very young. Young children and a parent have great fun shaking and playing with a shekere, an African instrument.

Pinkney, Brian. *Max Found Two Sticks*. New York: Simon & Shuster for Young Readers, 1994. Fiction, Pre-K to 4. Written and illustrated in scratchboard by Brian Pinkney, this picture book tells the story of a young boy Max, who one day does not feel like talking to anyone. Max takes two twigs that fall to the ground and plays the rhythms he hears in his neighborhood on anything he can find (garbage cans, bucket, hat boxes, bottles). At the end of the story, a drummer passing by in a parade tosses Max his spare set of sticks.

Preston, Katherine. *Scott Joplin*. New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1998. Grades 5 and up. A biography of Scott Joplin with suggested additional reading, a chronology, compositions and selected discography.

Raschka, Chris. *Charlie Parker Played Be-Bop*. New York: Orchard Books, 1992. Fiction, Grades K-3. This illustrated read-aloud picture book about the famous saxophonist Charlie Parker and bebop, is filled with word patterns, rhyme and rhythm.

Raschka, Chris. *John Coltrane's Giant Steps*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2002. Fiction, Grades Pre-K and up. This playful picture book was inspired by John Coltrane's famous recording of *Giant Steps*.

Raschka, Chris. *Mysterious Thelonious*. New York: Orchard Books, 1977. Fiction, Grades Pre-K to 6. This picture book was inspired by *Misterioso*, one of Thelonious Monk's compositions.

Rennert, Richard Scott. *Jazz Stars*. New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1994. Grades 5-9. Brief biographies of eight jazz masters: Louis Armstrong, Count Basie, Charlie Parker, Ella Fitzgerald, Billie Holiday, Duke Ellington, Dizzy Gillespie, and John Coltrane.

Roberts, Brenda. *Jazzy Miz Mozetta*. New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 2004. Fiction, Grades K-6. Miz Mozetta puts on her firecracker-red dress and favorite blue shoes. She yearns to dance, but her friends are too old, and the neighborhood kids think she would be too slow for them. She stays home and dreams of the old days at the Blue Pearl Ballroom, wishing she could jitterbug. Finally, her friends knock at the door, and they dance to their hearts content, including the neighborhood kids.

Sabir, C. Ogbu. *Scott Joplin, The King of Ragtime*. Chanhassen, MN: Child's World, Inc., 2001. Grades 2-6. An easy-to-read overview of Scott Joplin and ragtime. Throughout the text important words are printed in bold letters (*sharecroppers, composer, etc.*), with their definitions in the glossary.

Sanders, Ruby Wilson. *Jazz Ambassador Louis Armstrong*. Chicago: Children's Press, 1973. Grades 4-6. Biography of Louis Armstrong that concentrates on his childhood and early days of his career.

Schneider, Christine M. *Saxophone Sam and His Snazzy Jazz Band*. New York: Walker and Company, 2002. Fiction, Grades K-3. Hearing a jazz tune, a brother and sister search through a home until they find an old radio, which they open to find a little jazz band. Rhymed text, vivid illustrations.

Schroeder, Alan. *Ragtime Tumpie*. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1989. Fiction, Grades K-4, Fictionalized account of Josephine Baker's childhood and how she was influenced by ragtime.

Schroeder, Alan. *Satchmo's Blues*. New York: Delacorte Press, 1996. Fiction, Grades 1-5. A story based on how Louis Armstrong once saw a cornet and wanted to buy it. Focuses on Louis Armstrong as a young boy and the streets of New Orleans.

Schwartzman, Myron. *Romare Bearden*. New York: Franklin Watts, 1999. Grades 5 and up. All grades benefit from this book about visual artist Romare Bearden who created a "visual definition of jazz." with his blues and jazz themes. This biography is not just about Bearden's life, career, style, themes, and approach to art, but also about the jazz scene that was integral to Bearden's life and inspired his art work.

Shahan, Sherry. *The Jazzy Alphabet*. New York: Philomel Books, 2002. Fiction, Grades Pre-K to 2. Readers are introduced to the alphabet through jazzy rhythms and illustrations.

Shaik, Fatima. *The Jazz of Our Street*. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers, 1998. Fiction, Grades K-3. Captures the sounds of New Orleans, the beat of the marching bands, and introduces readers to New Orleans style brass bands.

Shange, Ntozake. *Ellington Was Not a Street*. New York: Simon and Schuster Books For Young Readers, 1983. Fiction, Grades 2-6. The text for this picture book with full-page illustrations is the poem *Mood Indigo*, a tribute to the African American community of men who changed the world. Ntozake Shange recalls her childhood and how men like Duke Ellington, Dizzy Gillespie, Ray Baretto, visited her house. At the end of the story there is a bibliography of these great men.

Tanenhaus, Sam. *Louis Armstrong*. New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1989. Grades 5 and up. Detailed biography of Louis Armstrong's life and career.

Taylor, Debbi A. *Sweet Music in Harlem*. New York: Lee and Low Books Inc., 2004. Fiction, Grades Pre-K- 6. Uncle Click, a great trumpet player is about to be photographed by Highnote Magazine and can't find his black beret. Uncle Click's nephew who hopes to be a great jazz musician like his uncle, searches for the hat in places like Midnight Melody Café. In a surprise ending, some of the greatest singers and musicians in Harlem decide they would like to be in the photograph. The historic photo *Harlem 1958* is featured on the last page of the book.

Terrill, Richard. *Duke Ellington*. Chicago: Raintree, 2003. Grades 4-7. This biography includes eight short chapters: *The Early Years, Harlem, The Cotton Club, On the Road, The Swing Era, Facing Challenges, Ellington at Newport, and The Highest Honor*. Throughout the book, select words are shown in bold letters, and then defined in the glossary.

Venezia, Mike. *Duke Ellington. Getting To Know the World's Greatest Composers* series. Danbury, CT: Grolier Publishing Co., 1996. Grades 2-4. A very "user friendly" large print biography with cartoon-style illustrations as well as photos and other visual expressions of jazz. The reader gains insight into Duke's childhood and how he became interested in music, as well as highlights of his career and what made him special as a composer-bandleader-pianist. In addition, the reader learns about the beginning of jazz and the Harlem Renaissance.

Weatherford, Carole Boston. *Jazz Baby*. New York: Lee and Low Books, 2002. Fiction, Grades Pre-K to 2. Young children tap their feet, clap the beat, and are introduced to the rhythm of jazz as they read or listen to this story told in rhyme.

Weatherford, Carole Boston. *The Sound That Jazz Makes*. New York: Walker and Co., 2000. Grades K-6. An overview of the evolution of jazz and jazz styles told in poetry. Each page includes a four-line poem and full-page illustration.

Winter, Jonah. *Once Upon a Time in Chicago: The Story of Benny Goodman*. New York: Hyperion Books For Children, 2000. Grades 1-4. Tells the story of Benny Goodman growing up in Chicago, and how his family helped him fulfill his dream to play the clarinet.

Woog, Adam. *The Importance of Duke Ellington*. San Diego: Lucent Books, 1996. Grades 5-10. This is one of many books in a series entitled, *The Importance of Biographies*, that focuses on individuals who have made unique contributions to history. This biography emphasizes how Ellington changed the course of music. Each short chapter begins with a quote by or about Ellington, and also includes a “boxed” excerpt from other books about him.