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Spirit Seeker: John Coltrane's Musical Journey

Aylea Stephens

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Book Review

Title: Spirit Seeker: John Coltrane's Musical Journey

Author: Gary Golio

Illustrator: Rudy Gutierrez

Reviewer: Aylea Stephens

Publisher: Clarion Books

Publication Year: 2012

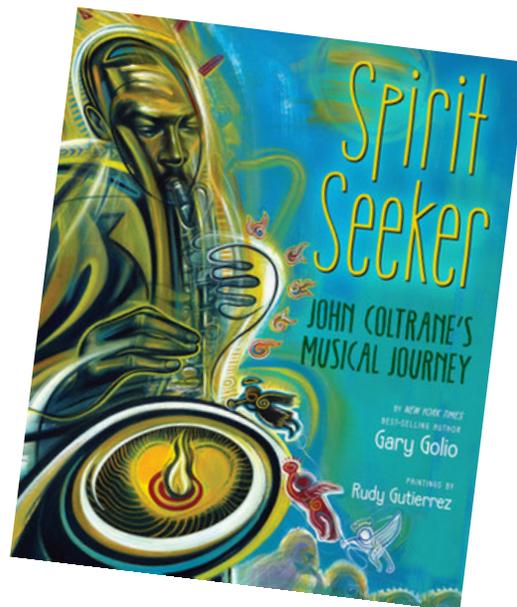
ISBN: 9780547239941

Number of Pages: 48

Interest Level: Primary

Rating: Dependable

Review



John Coltrane lived in a world full of music. He heard it at church, and especially at home. When his father, grandfather, and grandmother all died within a short time, he wasn't sure life could ever be okay again. His family had no money, but John turned to music to fill the hole where his Papa had been. He learned the alto saxophone, and it gave him voice. He listened to big bands and one day he listened to Charlie "Bird" Parker playing a new type of jazz, bebop, that John loved and began playing as he toured around. Still, he felt like his life was dark and empty. He lost his job because of drugs and alcohol, but he turned to the Spirit to heal him and it helped him play better than ever.

This book is a story of both jazz and religion. It is an unusual picture book in that it has a lot of text and deals with difficult subjects such as drugs and alcoholism, but it shows the development of one of the most well-known jazz saxophone players. The illustrations have bright colors that capture the vibrant spirit of jazz music. This book will be especially appealing for older children who want to learn more about jazz or about how religion can change someone's life.