



2018

Roots and Blues: A Celebration

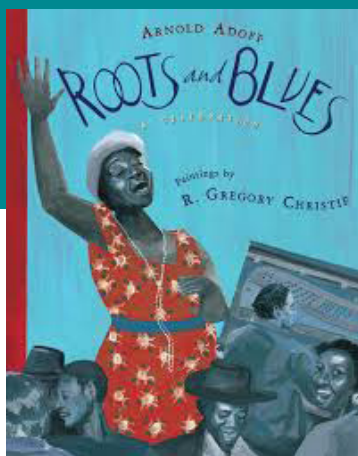
Kylee Vidmar-Hackney

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Book Review

Roots and Blues: A Celebration

Author

Arnold Adoff

Illustrator

Gregory Christie

Reviewer

Kylee Hackney

Rating

Excellent

Level

Intermediate, Young
Adult

Pages

96

Year

2011

Publisher

Clarion Books

ISBN

9780062347879

Arnold Adoff creates a series of poems about the words and feelings behind ‘the blues.’ Each of these patterned and well-crafted poems contain carefully worded narratives describing life as an African American during the time of slavery and inequality. Adoff emotionally describes the natural origins to this soulful music found in ‘the shuffle of chains between wrists,’ each chop of the axe, and voices shouting ‘amen.’ These were the sounds that inspired the blues, ultimately finding refuge from their pain in their music. During a time of grief and suffering, celebration was still found in the rhythm of the roots and blues.

Roots and Blues: A Celebration is an artistic, lyrical way to represent a piece of African American history. Through beautifully articulated poems and awe-inspiring paintings, the reader can’t help but feel the meaning and depth conveyed in these poems. Adoff’s unique format of poems with deliberate spacing and indentation causes proper prosody so effectively. This book is recommended to be part of any fifth or sixth grade classroom library as a way to not only teach civil rights but also to instruct students on expressive poetry and unique writing styles. However, this distinctive and poetic piece deserves to be recognized and taught to both young and old audiences alike.