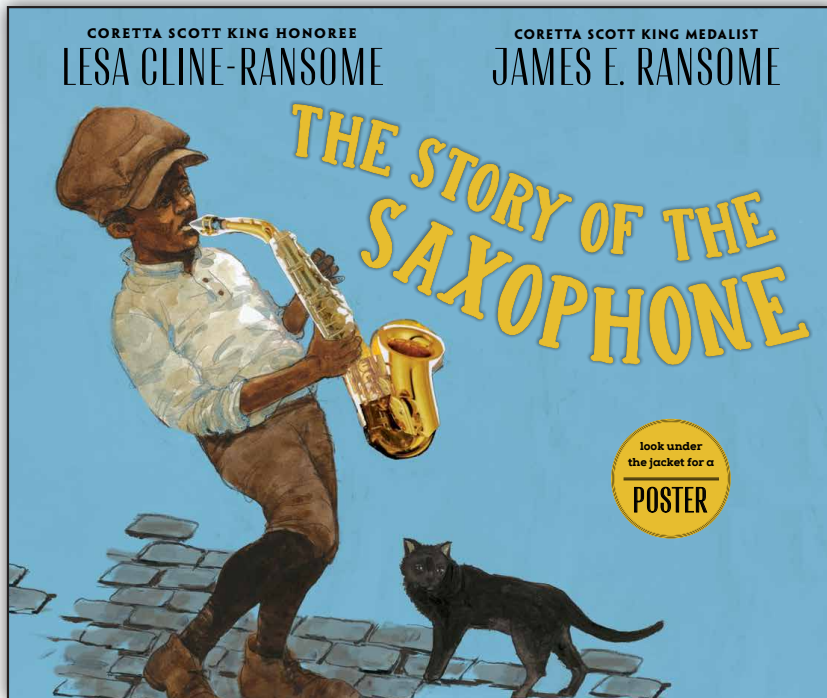


HOLIDAY HOUSE EDUCATOR'S GUIDE



The Story of the Saxophone

by **Lesa Cline-Ransome**

illustrated by **James E. Ransome**

ABOUT THE BOOK

Brassy, smokey, melodious. There's nothing like the saxophone. This incredible work from the award winners behind. This incredible work from the award winners behind *Before She was Harriet* includes a poster of jazz music's greatest talents.

You may think that the story of the saxophone begins with Dexter Gordon or Charlie Parker, or on a street corner in New Orleans. It *really* began in 1814 in Belgium with a young daydreamer named Joseph-Antoine Adolphe Sax—a boy with bad luck but great ideas.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Adolphe Sax's father is an instrument builder. Look closely at the first double-page spread. Describe the workshop. How many different types of instruments do you see? What is a daydreamer? Point to Adolphe. Discuss how the illustration suggests that he is a daydreamer. Why is daydreaming a good quality for an inventor?
- Trace Adolphe's journey to introduce his new instrument. Debate why a judge at the Belgian National Exhibition kicks the saxophone across the room. Describe the courage it takes for Adolphe to take his dented instrument and go to Paris. How does he encounter jealousies wherever he goes?



- How is Adolphe treated by the French people? Explain how Hector Berlioz changes people's minds about Adolphe's instrument. Discuss what Berlioz means when he says that the saxophone "cries, sighs, and dreams" (p. 21). Look closely at the double-page spread on pages 20 & 21. Why are the people turned toward Adolphe and Berlioz?
- What is a duel? Why do the French challenge Adolphe to a duel? Define bribe. Explain why Adolphe's band members were bribed to stay home on the day of the duel. What happens when Adolphe joins the military band with two saxophones? Explain why some call this new instrument a "devil's horn."
- Discuss how the saxophone becomes part of the music culture of New Orleans. Reread the first page of the book. How does the writer connect the first and last page? Discuss how the use of white space on the last double-page spread places focus on the musicians. Study the end pages. Discuss how the illustrations of these famous saxophonists contribute to the story and history of the saxophone.

Guide created by Pat Scales, retired school librarian and independent consultant, Greenville, South Carolina.

ABOUT THE CREATORS



Lesa Cline-Ransome is the author of more than twenty books for young readers including the award-winning Finding Langston trilogy. Her work has received a plethora of honors, including dozens of starred reviews, NAACP Image Award nominations, a Coretta Scott King Honor, the Scott O'Dell Award for Historical Fiction, and a Christopher Award. Her work has been named to ALA Notable Books and Bank Street Best Children's Book lists, and she lives in the Hudson Valley region of New York.

James E. Ransome has illustrated many award-winning books for children. His numerous accolades include a Coretta Scott King Illustrator Award for *The Creation*; Coretta Scott King Illustrator Honors for *The Bell Rang*, *Before She was Harriet*, and *Uncle Jed's Barbershop*; and an NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Literary Work for *Let My People Go*. He lives in upstate New York.

