

HOLIDAY HOUSE EDUCATOR'S GUIDE



This Is Tap Savion Glover Finds His Funk

by Selene Castrovilla

illustrated by Laura Freeman

ABOUT THE BOOK

A bouncing picture book biography of the tap dancer behind the *Happy Feet* penguin, illustrated by the Coretta Scott King Illustrator Honor Winner of *Hidden Figures*.

This is a story about tap dancing, a distinctly American art form that blended English-Scottish-Irish clog dancing with African tribal dancing. And it's about a boy, Savion Glover—who was born to feel the music—to dance and perform and invent. And to delight and awe audiences with the movements of his body.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Look closely at the first double-page spread. Consider the title of the book and discuss the multiple footprints inside the mother's stomach. What do the points of the star represent? Why do you think Savion Glover's mother knew he would be special?
- How does Savion Glover show he has the beat at an early age? Explain how the beat of a drum is like tap dancing. Why do you think he has his eyes closed when he is pounding the beat? Simile is a type of figurative language that compares two different things using "like" or "as." Discuss the following simile: "Savion's feet thundered on the stage like a set of ragin' drums" (p. 32).



- Homophones are words that sound alike but are different. Explain the homophones on p. 15: “Soul meets sole.” How does tap dancing require “soul” and “sole”? No one has to tell Savion to practice, because dance becomes his life. Discuss his ability to hear the beat wherever he goes. Define throbbing. Explain how the sound of the beat makes his feet throb.
- Why does Savion think he needs to make changes in his dance? How does he find his funk? Discuss how the beat of tap dancing is similar to hip-hop.
- How does Savion Glover use dance to call attention to racism? Study the double-page spread on pages 26 & 27. Why do you think the illustrator only shows the feet of the dancers? How do the stage lights shine light on the dancers and Savion Glover’s message about racism? Explain why Savion is called “Savior of Tap.”

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

ABOUT THE CREATORS



Selene Castrovilla is an award-winning nonfiction and fiction author who is dedicated to uncovering hidden truths about both our nation’s history and about ourselves. Her works include *Revolutionary Friends: General George Washington and the Marquis de Lafayette*, which received numerous accolades, including the Society of School Librarians International Book Award Honor and the California Reading Association Eureka! Nonfiction Honor. Also, *Revolutionary Rogues: John André and Benedict Arnold* was a National Council for the Social Studies and Children’s Book Council Notable Trade Social Studies Book, a Kansas Reading Circle choice, and a Bank Street College Best Book, and was featured on *School Library Journal*’s recommended reading for American history list.



Laura Freeman is an African American illustrator who was given an NAACP Image Award and Coretta Scott King Illustrator Honor for *Hidden Figures*. Other honors include 6 Junior Library Guild Gold Standard selections, Chicago Public Library Best of the Best List, and state awards.

