

Little Melba and Her Big Trombone

A RIF GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND FAMILIES

Themes: Jazz, Music History, Perseverance

Book Brief: Ever since she was a little girl, Melba Doretta Liston loved music. One day, her momma bought her a big, shiny trombone—and the rest is history! This book tells the true story of one of the most famous female jazz musicians ever.

Author:
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Illustrator:
Frank Morrison



TIME TO READ!



Before reading, build background: What's your favorite kind of music? Do you play any instruments, write music, or rap or sing? Are there any other hobbies or activities you love?

While reading, look at the pictures: Melba was born in 1926. How do the pictures help you understand what life was like back

then? How was the world different than it is today?

After reading, ask questions:

- ◆ Why do you think Melba kept playing even though she wasn't very good at first?
- ◆ Why do you think she kept playing when jealous boys teased her?
- ◆ Have you ever been teased about something by other students? How did you feel? What did you do?

RELATED ACTIVITIES

IMPROVISATION STATION

One important part of jazz is *improvisation*, or making something up as you go. Every time a jazz musician plays a song, they change it slightly or add something new. Why not jazz up your favorite recipes? Pick a dish or recipe you like and try changing it a little. For example, you might add chopped vegetables or a little ranch dressing to your mac and cheese. You could add candy bits or flavorings to your sugar cookies. You can even jazz up a plain peanut butter and jelly sandwich by adding fresh fruit or honey. The sky's the limit! Be creative, just like a true jazz artist.

MUSIC MAKER

Melba was a trombone player, and she also wrote her own songs. Have you ever written a song or a rap? What about a poem or rhyme? Visit <http://fun2think.com/free-online-music-making-for-kids> for links to sites where you can make music online for free. After you've made a tune, try adding words to it! Share your song with a family member or friend.

POST IT

Materials: construction paper, markers or crayons

Who's your favorite musician or band? Have you ever seen them perform live? Imagine they're playing a show in your town! Make a poster to advertise the performance. Include the name of your town, a date, and the artist or band's name. Be sure your poster is colorful and bright so people will notice it! Add pictures of the artist or band. You can draw the pictures yourself, print them from online, or cut them out of a magazine or newspaper. Hang your poster up so you can enjoy it!

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

OTHER BOOKS ABOUT MUSICIANS

Drum Dream Girl, Margarita Engle (2015)

Talkin' Guitar: A Story of Young Doc Watson, Robbin Gourley (2015)

Duke Ellington, Andrea Davis Pinkney (2006)



Reading Is
Fundamental