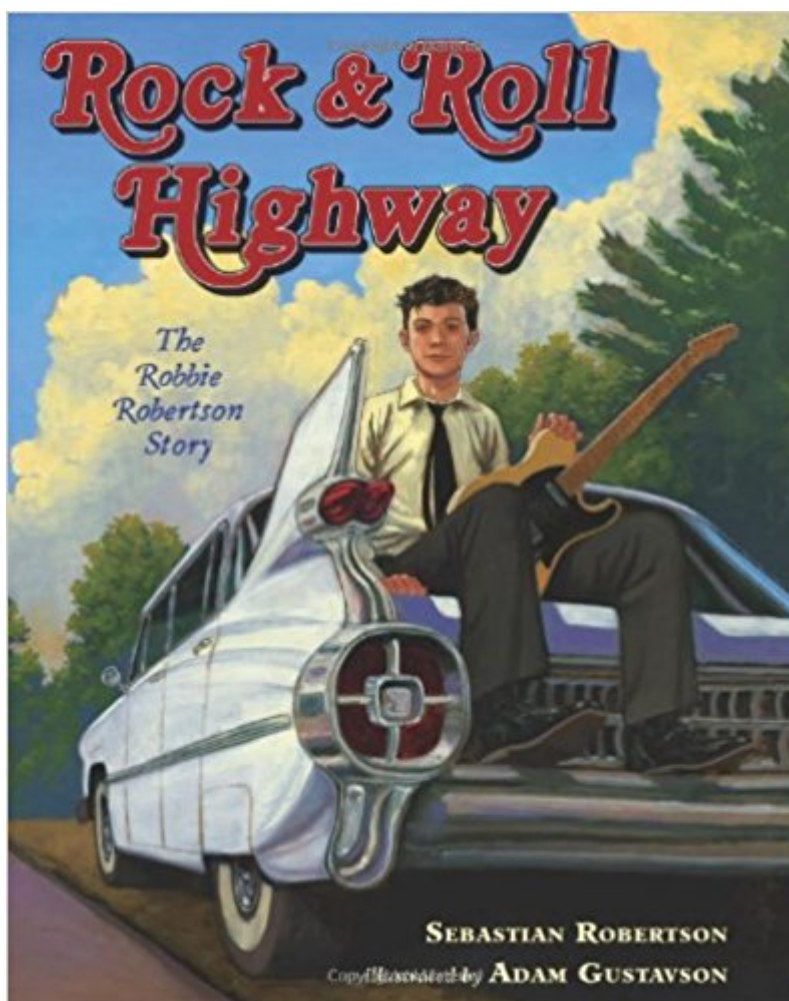


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Rock And Roll Highway: The Robbie Robertson Story



Synopsis

Canadian guitarist and songwriter Robbie Robertson is known mainly for his central role in the musical group the Band. But how did he become one of Rolling Stone's top 100 guitarists of all time? Written by his son, Sebastian, this is the story of a rock-and-roll legend's journey through music, beginning when he was taught to play guitar at nine years old on a Native American reservation. Rock and Roll Highway is the story of a young person's passion, drive, and determination to follow his dream.

Book Information

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Age Range: 6 - 9 years

Grade Level: 1 - 4

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Gr 1-4 • This attractive picture book biography profiles artist Robbie Robertson, founder of the Band, the group known for backing up Bob Dylan and for the songs "The Weight," "Up on Cripple Creek," and "The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down." Written by Robbie Robertson's son, Sebastian, the book takes readers through Robbie's life, starting with his birth, covering his childhood in Toronto, development as a musician, and rise to fame, and ending in the mid-1970s with the Band's final performance. The use of dialogue adds to the appeal, keeping the tone lively and accessible. The tone is enthusiastic, bordering on worshipful at times ("It was now 1961 and

people came from far and wide to hear the hottest, youngest guitar player around"). Gustavson's rich, nostalgia-tinged oil paintings will provoke plenty of smiles of recognition from adult rock fans, portraying as they do places such as the Brill Building, where Robbie met songwriters Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller, and Big Pink, the house in Woodstock, New York, where the Band's most famous album was recorded, as well as artists with whom Robbie interacted, like Buddy Holly, Jerry Lee Lewis, and, of course, Dylan. However, these details aren't likely to resonate with the intended audience, for whom the mere mention of Music from Big Pink and "The Last Waltz" won't conjure up beloved memories. Though this is a well-illustrated and nicely told story, the subject matter will limit its appeal. —Mahnaz Dar, School Library Journal

Kids who like dancing around to their parents' (or grandparents') LPs may get a kick and learn something, too, from this insightful picture-book bio of rocker Robbie Robertson, penned by his son. Robbie's epic journey on the rock and roll highway is just that. Growing up as the child of a Mohawk Indian mother and a Jewish professional gambler, Robbie developed an interest in music that was fueled by reservation storytelling. He became a classic play-till-your-fingers-bleed fanatic, and he was soon drafted to be part of Ronnie Hawkins' outfit. A fortuitous meeting with Bob Dylan led to the formation of The Band, a folk-infused rock group that so confounded Dylan's fans that Robbie had to learn to play without looking at his fingers so as to dodge the thrown refuse. Author Robertson hits all the right notes, knowing just when to bend the strings to work in bits of fascinating detail or esoterica. Gustavson's realistic watercolors have an earthy grit just perfect for this story of the roots of Americana music. Grades 1-4. --Daniel Kraus

Rock and Roll Highway focuses on Robbie Robertson and how he got his start in music. Written in an easy conversational style children will easily understand. The story begins where Robbie says goodbye to The Band and life on the road. The author takes us back to the very beginning of Robbie's journey. You will enjoy learning many interesting facts that even his staunchest fans might not know. Robbie Robertson worked with music's biggest stars and kept pace with all of them. Hard work, dedication and commitment to the dream you want to attain is the message you will glean from this biography. One look at the beautiful cover tells you it is illustrated by one of the best! The colorful and lively illustrations compliment this story perfectly. I highly recommend this biography to every young person who wants to know what it takes to realize your dreams.

This book is fine for what it is...a children's book about a great rock musician and songwriter. Like other folks, I mistakenly thought I'd be reading a detailed account of Robertson's life in and out of music, like those written by or about other popular music figures (such as recent books by John Lydon, Elvis Costello, Neil Young, David Byrne, Chrissie Hynde, etc.) only to find a book that would truly be at home on the shelf of a child (except - what child would find Robertson's story "interesting"?) Read the description before purchasing. If little Joanie or Jimmy likes the music of the Band or Dylan or Mr. Robertson, this book is for her/him. The illustrations are OK but the text is simplistically written, uh...like a children's book - an expensive children's book. You could argue that an over-simplified story about a musician such as Robertson only trivializes the work he's done, both with The Band and as a solo artist. Considering his accomplishments, Robertson's story deserves to be told in full.

“Story-teller” it is, as in the blood, father and son. Since I am personally touched by Robbie's compositions and performances, and always seek out his interviews, I am happy to have this book in hand by Sebastian Robertson. The story includes Robbie's early inspirations, influences and motivation into a music career and his persistent work to be excellent. Loved the illustrations, the time line and personal photos, and particularly the interview at the end.

In this beautifully told and richly illustrated story, Robbie is revealed as a boy falling in love with music and storytelling, driven by a sustained fire of inspiration. This same fire is mirrored in the love and drive of the son and author, intent on telling the personal story of his father's journey. It will delight young readers and provide a valuable and compelling tale for parents to share with their own child. Dreams can be followed and achieved!

A beautiful book that tells a true-life fairy tale come real about a boy and his dream. Great for the grandchildren of the fans of The Band. Unfortunately, after waiting for decades for his side of the story to balance the blasts from Levon Helm's "This Wheel's On Fire", with previous ventures being aborted, I was dissappointed that the story of the end of The Band and Robertsons subsequent ventures in recording and movies were not dealt with more.

it was okay.

Nicely historical and beautifully illustrated, this will inspire kids to pursue the impossible, be nice to their mothers, and practice, practice, practice. Very nice messages throughout, and the exercise at the end to interview your parents would work well in grade schools. A truly lovely work.

An awesome way to inspire and pass on a bit of rock and roll history to your child!

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