

## Text Set to Accompany

# Blue Grass Boy: The Story of Bill Monroe, Father of Bluegrass Music

### Primary Sources & Research Materials

These texts tell readers more about Bill Monroe and his music.

[Video: Bill Monroe on His Way Back to the Old Home](#)

This documentary clip shows Bill Monroe walking through the remains of his childhood home and sharing memories of his mother. His childhood home has since been restored and preserved as a gathering place for bluegrass fans and musicians.

[Audio Clips from Smithsonian Folkways](#)

In the sidebar of this artist spotlight on Bill Monroe, visitors to the Smithsonian Folkways site can hear audio recordings of a few songs from Bill Monroe and the Blue Grass Boys, including "Wayfaring Stranger" and "Watson's Blues."



[Video: Bill Monroe & the Blue Grass Boys: Blue Moon of Kentucky](#)

This video clip shows Bill Monroe & the Blue Grass Boys performing Blue Moon of Kentucky, which was famously covered by Elvis Presley on the flip side of his first single.

### Content Connections

These texts explore topics such as Kentucky and the history of bluegrass music, as well as its future.

[Virtual Tour: Bluegrass Music Hall of Fame](#)

If you can't visit the Bluegrass Music Hall of Fame in person in Kentucky, you can enjoy a virtual tour in the form of videos on the eras of bluegrass music. In the "Dawn of the Bluegrass Era" video, you can hear from Hall of Fame Director Chris Joslin on how Bill Monroe influenced the beginnings of bluegrass.



[Radio Segment: Children's Band Brings Diversity to Bluegrass](#)

This 5-minute radio segment tells the story of Jam Pak Blues 'N' Grass Neighborhood Band, a music group that has welcomed more than 200 children to the world of bluegrass music over the past 25 years. The radio clip and the photos attached to the article (including those of a "canjo" made from a string and a soda can) may inspire listeners to get involved in the future of bluegrass music.

[Britannica Kids Article: Kentucky](#)

In this article, readers can learn more about the state that Bill Monroe called home. The article explores Kentucky's regions, people, culture, and more. The article also points out Kentucky's connection to the history of music.



[NPR Segment: How Black bluegrass musician Arnold Shultz's forgotten legacy lives on in the genre today](#)

This 11-minute radio segment explores Arnold Shultz's impact on the work of Bill Monroe and other bluegrass musicians. Listeners will learn how Arnold Shultz's legacy inspired the International Bluegrass Foundation to develop a fund to encourage more people of color to play bluegrass music.

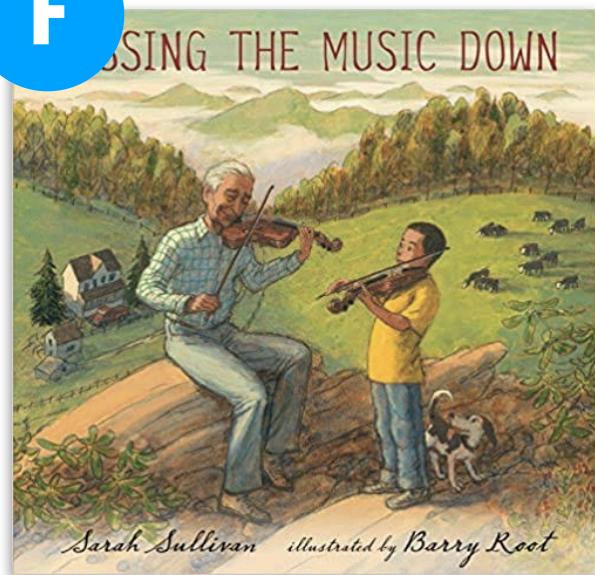


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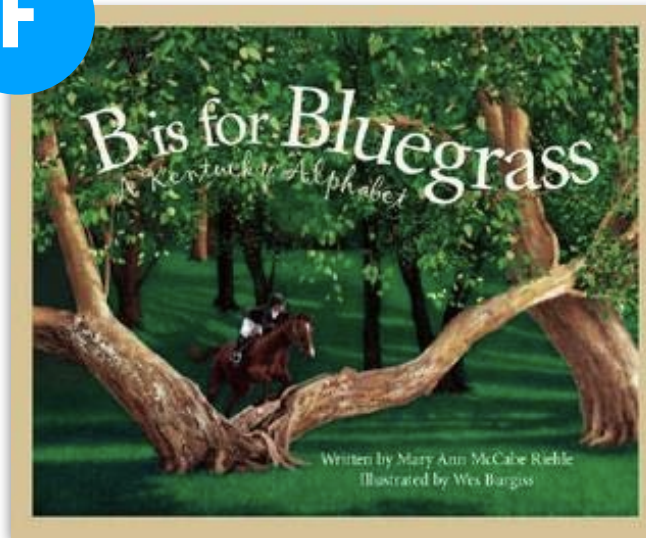
### Texts to Pair with *Blue Grass Boy*

These fiction and nonfiction texts can be read alongside *Blue Grass Boy* for deeper exploration of music history, Kentucky history, and other topics.

**F**

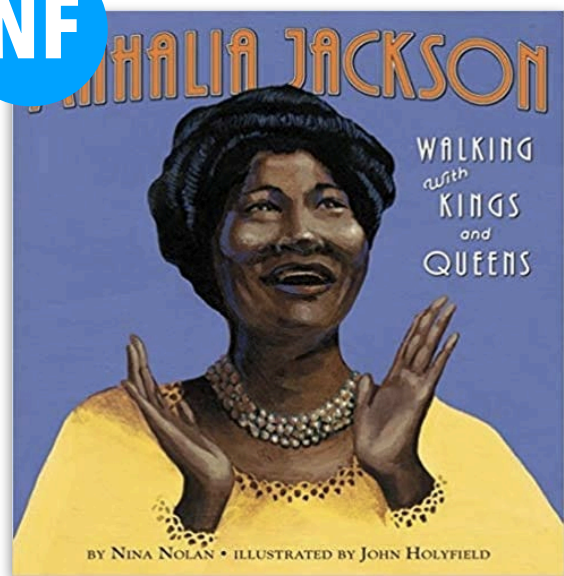
*Passing the Music Down*  
By Sarah Sullivan

This picture book explores how musical traditions can be passed down from one generation to the next, much like bluegrass music.

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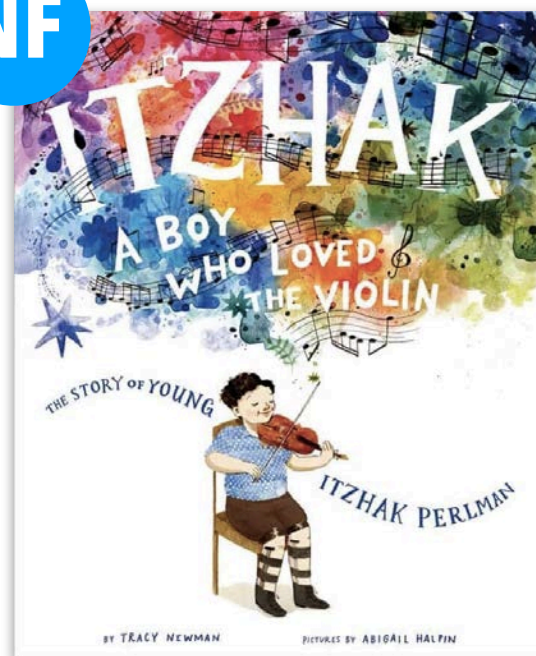
*B is for Bluegrass:  
A Kentucky Alphabet*  
By Mary Ann McCabe Riehle

In this book, readers take a horseback ride through the rich history and beautiful landscape of the Bluegrass State.

**NF**

*Mahalia Jackson: Walking  
with Kings & Queens*  
By Nina Nolan

Mahalia Jackson and Bill Monroe were both born in 1911! Readers will enjoy comparing and contrasting their musical journeys and styles.

**NF**

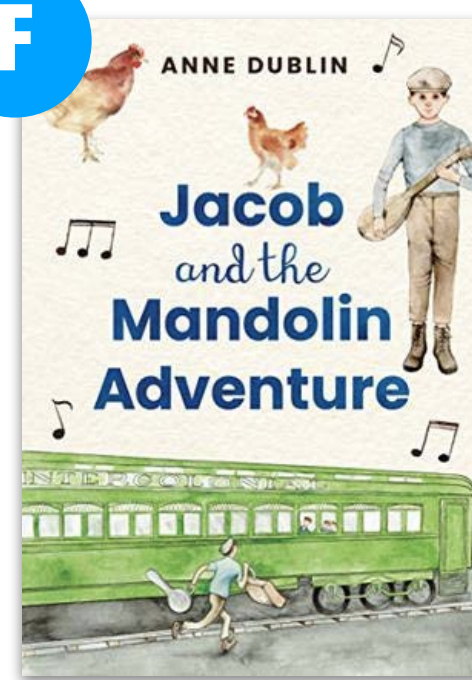
*Itzhak: A Boy Who Loved the Violin*  
By Nina Nolan

*Blue Grass Boy* may spark readers to wonder about the childhood experiences of other musicians. This picture book biography highlights violinist Itzhak Perlman.

**F**

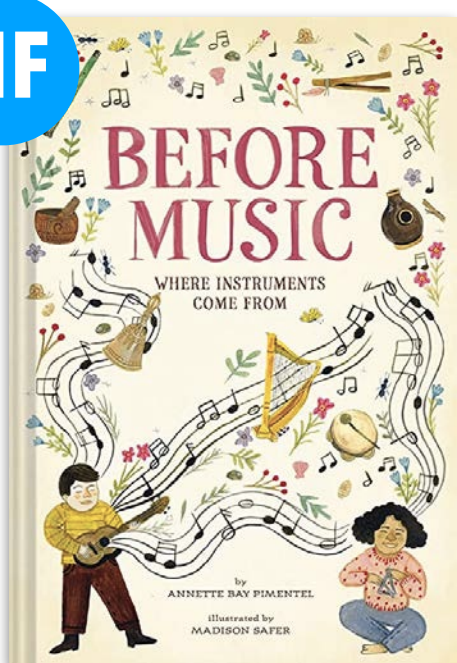
*88 Instruments*  
By Chris Barton

Much as Bill Monroe had the mandolin as his instrument of choice, the protagonist of this book seeks to find the instrument that's just right for him.

**F**

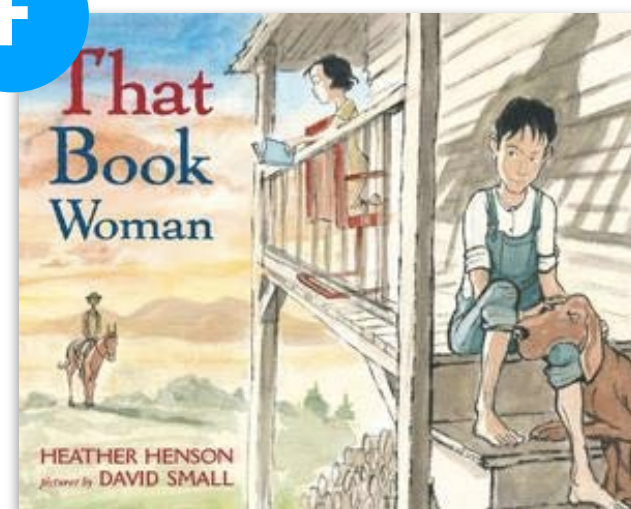
*Jacob and the Mandolin Adventure*  
By Anne Dublin

This middle-grade historical fiction novel tells the story of a Jewish immigrant making his way from Poland to Canada with his beloved mandolin.

**NF**

*Before Music: Where  
Instruments Come From*  
By Annette Bay Pimental

Where do instruments come from? Readers can find out in this nonfiction picture book.

**F**

*That Book Woman*  
By Heather Henson

This historical fiction picture book explores a slice of life in rural Kentucky. Readers interested in Bill Monroe's home state may enjoy seeing another depiction of Kentucky in the past.

**F** = Fiction**NF** = Nonfiction