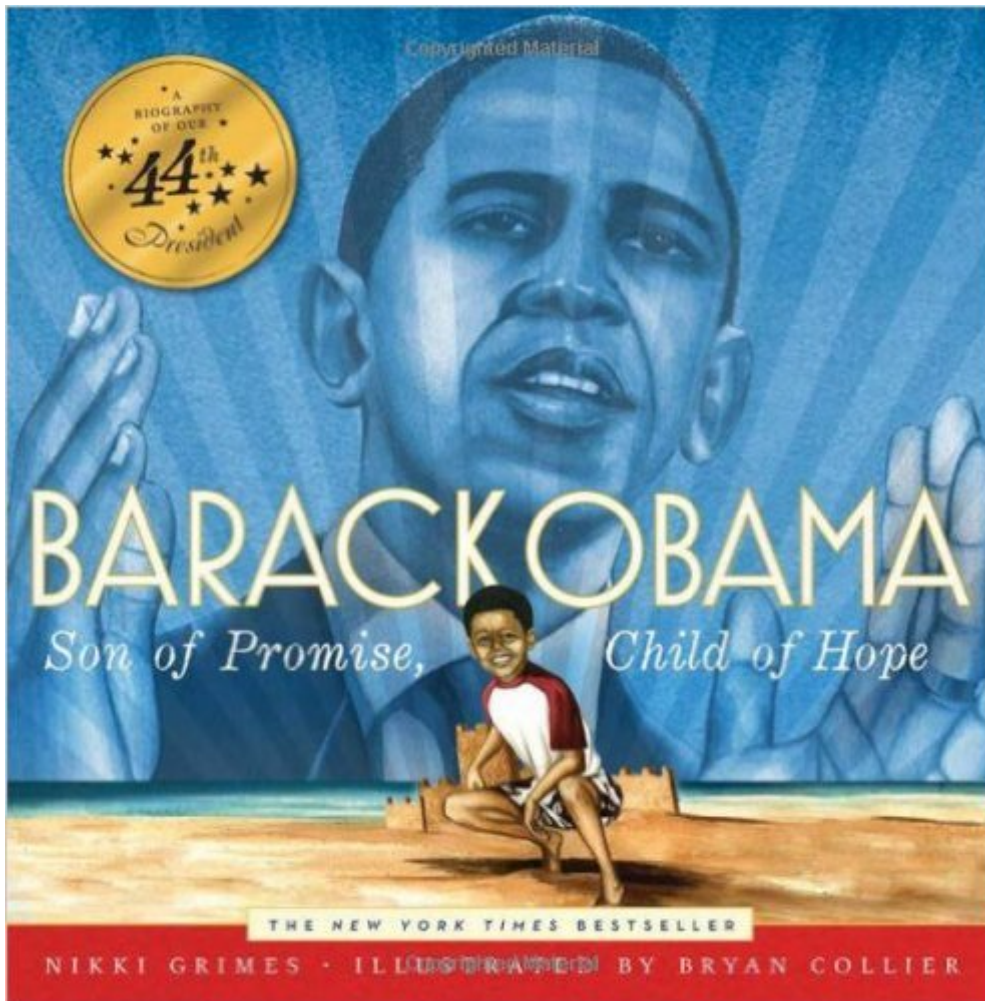


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# Barack Obama: Son Of Promise, Child Of Hope



## Synopsis

Barack Obama is the story of an exceptional man, as told by Nikki Grimes and illustrated by Bryan Collier, winners of the Coretta Scott King Award. Ever since Barack Obama was young, Hope has lived inside him. From the beaches of Hawaii to the streets of Chicago, from the jungles of Indonesia to the plains of Kenya, he has held on to Hope. Even as a boy, Barack knew he wasn't quite like anybody else, but through his journeys he found the ability to listen to Hope and become what he was meant to be: a bridge to bring people together. This is the moving story of an exceptional man, as told by Nikki Grimes and illustrated by Bryan Collier, both winners of the Coretta Scott King Award. Barack Obama has motivated Americans to believe with him, to believe that every one of us has the power to change ourselves and change our world.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 630L (What's this?)

Hardcover: 48 pages

Publisher: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers; Library Binding edition (August 26, 2008)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1416971440

ISBN-13: 978-1416971443

Product Dimensions: 10 x 0.4 x 10 inches

Shipping Weight: 1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 2.9 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (106 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #424,830 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #149 in [Books > Children's Books > Biographies > Political](#) #153 in [Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference >](#)

[Government](#) #604 in [Books > Children's Books > Biographies > Multicultural](#)

Age Range: 5 - 8 years

Grade Level: Kindergarten - 3

## Customer Reviews

My third graders really enjoyed this book, and they're a pretty picky group. I almost didn't buy it after reading some of the negative reviews, but I'm glad I did. Quite frankly, some of the negative reviews sound like they were written by people who didn't even read the book.

I took a look at this book at my local bookstore a few days before November 4, and at that time I giggled at the very bright, technicolor pictures of the book. I also winced a little at the

dangerously-close-to-hubris conceit of writing such a book before the election results were known. How could you tell a complete story about a historical figure unless you knew what the ending was? At the time, though, I thought this was a harmless book, and was still giddy (and terrified) at the thought of Election Day coming up. Now, after the euphoria has subsided a bit, I took a second look at this book. I didn't laugh at it much this time around. I still winced when I read it, and not in a good way. Some good things about the book: The final pictures were practically prescient (it almost matched the Obamas' election night picture, with the Obama parents walking out with Sasha and Malia by their sides); it was interesting to see the beginning illustrations and interpretations of Obama's childhood pictures, and the rest of the book telegraphed the giddy hope of Big Expectations that many, many people felt that night. However, I thought the asides from the mother and her child were a little distracting, a "forced" questioning innocence from the child and an almost condescending tone from the mother. Most distracting, as noted by other reviewers, was the "Lion King/Messiah/Star Wars/Chosen One" kind of vibe given to Obama throughout the narrative. This was the dangerously-close-to-conceit part of the book that made me wince. While it's good to teach children to respect the President of the United States, this book fairly jumps across the line from respect to breathless worship. President-Elect Barack Obama is an ordinary man. A deeply talented speaker, brilliant thinker and professor (Harvard Law School, people!), and arguably the most disciplined politician I've ever seen--BUT, an ordinary man. A devoted loving husband and father, BUT an ordinary man. He's NOT "The One/Golden Child/Messiah/Moses Of The 21st Century", and it's dangerous to put him on that pedestal. Having said all that, when I read this book as expressive poetry instead of literal historic narrative, the technicolor visual and literary flourishes were easier to take. (Though I fervently wish they picked a different picture for the front cover!) If you don't mind the hyperbole--or if you're an "Obama Otaku" (Anime fans will know what I mean)--then the in-your-face nature of the narrative in this book won't phase you at all. In fact, reading this book with any less attitude than TOTAL WORSHIP AND EUPHORIA (caps meant) will probably make you nauseous. Otherwise, if you're looking for a more sober historical book for your child, I would steer clear of this one.

This is painful to read. "White voters would never vote for a black president" This book presents BO as the savior of the country, fighting against the odds to win despite horrible white people. Hello? How dare this be presented to young children. Good job to Nikki Grimes for producing an overtly racist / anti-white book for young children. For parents, grandparents and anyone else of ANY race that might consider this book and want to teach children

that people really can vote for reasons other than race - skip this book and don't look back.

...if it is, then this book manages to. I'm pretty neutral about Barack Obama as a person and a candidate, but the messianic message in this utterly insipid book makes me roll my eyes over and over again. The language is decent enough on a technical level for that age group, though patronizing. When he starts seeing the ghosts of JFK and MLK and references are made to Langston's Harlem, I'm not sure that the kids that the book is aimed at are going to pick up on the references. The illustrations are passable in the beginning, but as it continues, they become more and more over-the-top (Barack Obama crying in church, Barack Obama praying with a butterfly perched on his clasped hands, Barack Obama glowing with a heavenly aura). Cramming this political tripe into a children's book is bad enough, but the heavy-handed treatment and political sloganizing makes it unbearable.

I'm a 2nd grade teacher. I went to Barnes and Noble tonight and one of my missions was to look at the picture books regarding the presidential candidates (I knew that there had to be a few by now) to read to my students during our daily read aloud times. I want to be able to present each of the candidates in a fair manner. While at the store I found this book. The book is SO heavy-handed (I looked to see if it hadn't been written by, endorsed by, or if the profits weren't going directly to the DNC). Barack comes across as a Moses for our times. He is spoken to by "Hope", and later on it seems that Hope turns into the voice of God. God doesn't just stir his soul but recites sentences/a paragraph, and seems to anoint him a modern-day prophet. The child in the book even compares him to Joseph of the new testament. This is going WAY too far (unless of course we are to expect The Book of Barack to be added to the Bible any day now). Actually, the heavy-handed writing made me laugh as I rejected even the possibility of bringing it into the classroom. I do, though, allow adult guest readers to bring in books of their choosing when they join us for read alouds. I started to wonder how I would handle the situation if someone brought in this book. My solution will be to apologize immensely and then mention, "Oooops, we were suppose to go to the art room for a special presentation. We'll have to reschedule this read aloud." There is no way I could present this book to my students. I might as well read the Bible and replace major names with Barack. PLEASE publishers! Give us DECENT books about the candidates. (\*A note to Barack (though I doubt he will be taking time to read my little review): Do you endorse these books or comments that compare you to Biblical figures???? I think you would do your campaign well to tell people to start considering you to be a mere man. You aren't a rock star. You aren't a prophet. I think these comparisons might

wear on people and lose you an election.)

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