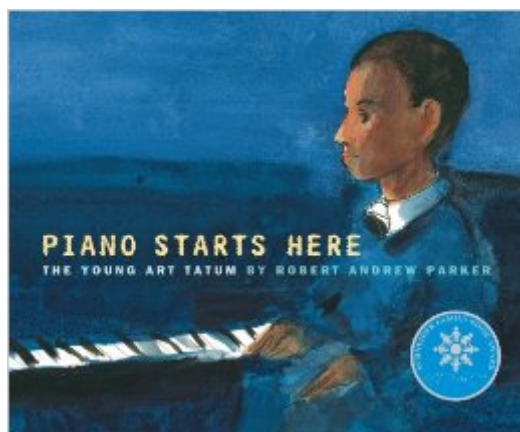


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# Piano Starts Here: The Young Art Tatum



## Synopsis

Regardless of whether they've heard of jazz or Art Tatum, young readers will appreciate how Parker uses simple, lyrical storytelling and colorful, energetic ink-and-wash illustrations to show the world as young Art Tatum might have seen it. Tatum came from modest beginnings and was nearly blind, but his passion for the piano and his acute memory for any sound that he heard drove him to become a virtuoso who was revered by both classical and jazz pianists alike. Included in the back matter is a biography and bibliography.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: AD840L (What's this?)

Hardcover: 40 pages

Publisher: Schwartz & Wade (January 8, 2008)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0375839658

ISBN-13: 978-0375839658

Product Dimensions: 11.4 x 0.4 x 9.4 inches

Shipping Weight: 15.2 ounces

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (9 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #584,130 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #24 in [Books > Children's Books > Arts, Music & Photography > Music > Jazz](#) #141 in [Books > Children's Books > Biographies > Musical](#) #805 in [Books > Children's Books > Biographies > Multicultural](#)

Age Range: 4 - 8 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 3

## Customer Reviews

A book that tells of the childhood of the great jazz piano player, Art Tatum (1909-1956), who, though stricken with blindness when very young, went on to become a keyboard wonder. Beautifully illustrated and sensitively written, it fills you with joy and an urge to listen, or re-listen, to a miraculous musician.

Art Tatum was a little boy born in Toledo. His father was a mechanic and his mother, who loved to sing in church, did a lot of cleaning. His mother played the piano, but mostly it sat "quietly in the corner," until one day he became tall enough to hit the keys on the keyboard. He banged at it, played with one finger, two fingers and before you could wink an eye it started to sound very good.

Even his mother said it did. He loved to play on the piano and didn't care much about night or day and because his eyes were so bad he really couldn't tell the difference. "Don't wear out that piano today," his father said to him before he left for work. Art just loved his piano. By the time he was ten he was asked to play in church. A little case of jitters immediately went away when he touched the keyboard. Later he was asked to play at the YMCA, then at a bake sale and even someone's birthday party. "My, my, isn't he something," his mother gushed. More and more he was asked to play until he became famous, but he still remembered and loved "all the people who helped" him. This was a wonderful story. It was written in a gentle, sing song tone and was quite inspiring. The watercolors meshed quite well with the text. In the back of the book Robert Andrew Parker writes about actually meeting and listening to Art play. There is a brief, but very interesting biography of art and a bibliography. This book would be very appealing to any jazz fan and will be appreciated and loved even by those unacquainted with his work.

The story of Art Tatum has been told too rarely -- it's a delight to have this wonderful book written by an impassioned author. Even more amazing is the gorgeous artwork, also done by Mr. Parker. Strongly recommended.

Our 6 year has been taking piano for several years now. We bought this book to inspire her and it's wonderful. It is about Art Tatum and it is descriptive and engaging to our daughter. The illustrations are lovely!

My eleven year old granddaughter liked this because she takes piano. Liked the fact that it was a true story.

Gorgeously rendered watercolor illustrations and first-person-perspective text contribute to the dreamy feeling of a young boy with poor eyesight growing up to become one of the world's jazz greats. Combine this with vintage recordings and old YouTube videos of the man himself for maximum impact.

Excellent biography of Art Tatum as a child -- he was an incredible jazz pianist who began at a very early age. Reinforces the values of practice and modesty. Great illustrations. Play his music while you read this with your children. Wow!

Would have liked more of a story about his life rather than cartoons. Hard to read as print was very small.

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