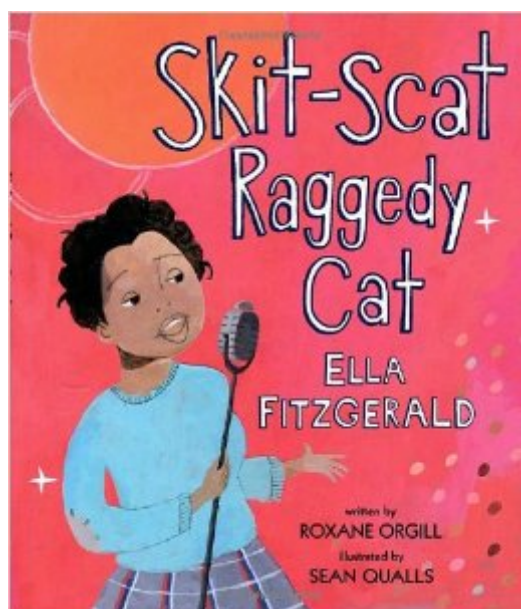


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# Skit-Scat Raggedy Cat: Ella Fitzgerald



## Synopsis

A swinging bio of young Ella Fitzgerald, who pushed through the toughest of times to become one of America's most beloved jazz singers. When Ella Fitzgerald danced the Lindy Hop on the streets of 1930s Yonkers, passersby said good-bye to their loose change. But for a girl who was orphaned and hungry, with raggedy clothes and often no place to spend the night, small change was not enough. One amateur night at Harlem's Apollo Theater, Ella made a discovery: the dancing beat in her feet could travel up and out of her mouth in a powerful song—and the feeling of being listened to was like a salve to her heart. With lively prose, Roxane Orgill follows the gutsy Ella from school-girl days to a featured spot with Chick Webb's band and all the way to her number-one radio hit "A-Tisket, A-Tasket." Jazzy mixed-media art by illustrator Sean Qualls brings the singer's indomitable spirit to life.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 820L (What's this?)

Hardcover: 48 pages

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Language: English

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Product Dimensions: 9.5 x 0.4 x 11 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (14 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #444,047 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #14 in [Books > Children's Books > Arts, Music & Photography > Music > Jazz](#) #99 in [Books > Children's Books > Biographies > Musical](#) #331 in [Books > Children's Books > Biographies > Women](#)

Age Range: 5 - 9 years

Grade Level: Kindergarten - 4

## Customer Reviews

My deep thanks to the author of this fine book, Roxane Orgill, and to the author, Sean Qualls, for his spot-on illustrations - "Skit Scat" is terrific! It is indeed true that Miss Ella Fitzgerald, the beloved "First Lady of Song" had a tough childhood, but she overcame it and went on to a fifty-year-plus career and THIRTEEN Grammy Awards. This book is a wonderful introduction to Ella for kids and I highly recommend it. I would also like to thank the author and illustrator for their kind mention of the

charitable foundation that Ella herself established. Fran Morris Rosman Executive Director The Ella Fitzgerald Charitable Foundation[...]

With her extraordinary voice and improvisational ability, Ella Fitzgerald gained fame as the First Lady of Song. Behind the emotions and grit of her singing came a childhood marked by excitement from gaining exposure to the jazz bands of Harlem, as well as tremendous pain from losing her mother. Ella was just a teenager when her mother passed, but this tragedy marked a downward spiral for Ella into a life of poverty, petty crime, reform school, and homelessness. At the age of seventeen, Ella had the chance to break free from this rut when she auditioned to appear in the Amateur Night competition at the new Apollo Theater in Harlem. Not only did she make the cut, she was voted top act and gained some much-needed exposure. Another amateur competition at the Harlem Opera House led to a spot on a band, which led to more attention and ultimately a long-term recording career as a premier vocalist. Carefully researched and beautifully illustrated, this biographical picture book pays tribute to Ella Fitzgerald and helps children learn more about her early years. Clearly intertwined in the text are a series of economics lessons related to poverty and to career development. The book gets high marks for its fine blend of narrative and artistry.

I read this to my 4th graders and began by playing the song "A Tisket, A Tasket" prior to reading the book...when we got to the lyrics in the book it was great to see how the students connected the book and the music. It helped them realize that this was a "real story". It is an excellent overview of Ella's life.

I always enjoyed listening to Ella Fitzgerald, but I never knew her story until I read this picture book for children. I loved hearing Ella's story of overcoming adversity – many times when we see celebrities, we don't realize that their success was not easily come by. The text is engaging and exciting – a definite page-turner. Bold yet simple illustrations help the reader connect with Ella's emotional journey throughout the book. I love the spread where she is peeking from behind a curtain on the stage of the Apollo Theater, watching dancers performing for an amateur night. As a former kindergarten teacher and parent, I feel the book is very valuable for home and classroom use, especially for grades 2 and above. How a parent can use this book: Launchpad for a discussion on overcoming any problem that faces us. Talk about various types of music – you can watch performances of Ella Fitzgerald on YouTube. Encourage your child to dream – we can be whatever we want to be. This is a great book that candidly portrays the difficult childhood

Ella had. Vivian Kirkfield Author - Show Me How! Build Your Child's Self-Esteem Through Reading, Crafting and Cooking

Definitely would not recommend buying this book for the little ones. I thought it was inappropriate for Roxane Orgills to speak of Ella as being 'not pretty' and having raggedy clothes, a big mouth, and squinty eyes, but 'she sure could dance!' Not at all. Not good for black babies needing see positive reflections of themselves in literature and life period. If you are going to be a non-black person writing a book on a black musicians, regardless of how much you know about their music, you really need to keep your white lens of the world out of it.

what better way to share the love of reading and jazz music....give your child the gift of an instrument and lessons....it is something that will stay with them for a life time....let them enjoy your passion and love of the incredible genius of Jazz greats such as Ella. But also good to share the biographies of those who overcame adversity & those Jazz greats that just couldn't overcome hardship, addiction, and emotional trauma. Why not teach children how the vicissitudes of life can either make or break people....Ella's Bio as well as Billie Holiday, Bix Biederbecke, Miles Davis, and Charlie Parker can serve as a way to share their genius as well as their triumphs and tragedies. Teach your children well; a shielded life can cause strife.....later down the road....

Heard about the book online and bought it immediately to share Ella's inspiring story with my 6 year old. My bad: this is not a book for small children. Although illustrated beautifully, it's written in a very awkward style that doesn't lend itself well to "storytime". It also pulls no punches: all the poverty, abuse, body image, and racism are right there on the surface, making it a major bummer despite the uplifting finale.

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