

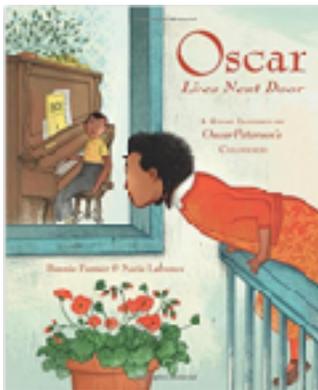
Pick and Choose Literature Study

Oscar Lives Next Door: A Story Inspired by Oscar Peterson's Childhood

by Bonnie Farmer

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“Long before Oscar Peterson became a virtuoso jazz pianist, he was a boy who loved to play the trumpet. When childhood tuberculosis weakened his lungs, Oscar could no longer play his beloved instrument. He took up piano and the rest is history: Oscar went on to become an international jazz piano sensation.

Oscar Lives Next Door is a fictional story inspired by these facts. The book imagines a next-door neighbour for Oscar named Millie, who gets into mischief with him but also appreciates his talents: Oscar hears music in everything, and Millie calls him a magician for the way he can coax melodies from his trumpet. Millie writes to Oscar during his long stay in the hospital for tuberculosis, and she encourages his earliest notes on the piano.

Set in Oscar's true childhood neighbourhood of St-Henri — now known as Little Burgundy — the book provides a wonderful sense of this 1930s neighbourhood where most of Montreal's Black working class population lived. Detailed digital illustrations make the community's culture and music almost tangible.

The book concludes with a page of informational text about the author's own connection to Little Burgundy and a short biography of the jazz legend.” from Amazon

This Pick and Choose Literature Study from Creative Homeschool Mom has a variety of activities based on the picture book *Oscar Lives Next Door: A Story Inspired by Oscar Peterson's Childhood*. This study is best if you read through the book together at least once, and choose the areas that you would like to find more about. Some are geared to younger children and some to older children, so you may want to choose what works best for you and your children. This is a great book to explore an interesting individual in Canadian history! Blessings! Natalie

Page 3 Daddy is a Pullman Porter on the railway. What is a Pullman Porter - why do you think he would be dog-tired by the time he got off the train? This link may help you explore more about Pullman Porters: <https://aprpullmanportermuseum.org>

Page 4 Root-a-toot toot goes Oscar's Trumpet. Here is an example of Trumpet music. Can you see how it would take a lot of power in your lungs to play the trumpet. <https://youtu.be/smoEeIV6FUK>

Page 5 Bing, Bang, Bop is a way of forming words that we call alliteration. Alliteration means the beginning of words start with the same letter. Slimy, slithery, snake...Red, rosy, rash...These are alliteration. Can you write your own alliteration?

Page 8 and 9 There are some hints that the story takes place in Montreal - can you see what they might be? As you read the rest of the book, can you find other hints? Montreal is a beautiful and interesting city. This video gives a few of the highlights of visiting Montreal: <https://youtu.be/4zLOHSsNcSE>

Page 8 Millie says that Oscar takes bigger strides than her. Can you measure your stride to that of your friends or family. You might want to get out a tape measurer and see how long your stride is compared to other friends of family. You may want to use a chart like this one to record your findings. Can you make some conclusions?
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1XgHN76thjTBKbNn7cnKR1ag7Y6p-5QVd7KJwN9TDehs/edit?usp=sharing>

Page 9 There is a cart going to market - the cart is being pulled by a horse. What clue does that give you about the time that this story takes place? Are there other aspects of the story that give you clues?

Page 11 Oscar and Mildred play a trick on Reverend James. How do you think that the Reverend knows who played the trick?

Page 14 What is Tuberculosis? Can you do some research and find out what it is?
<https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tuberculosis>

Page 14 Millie felt bad about the trick she played on Reverend James - she thought that is why Oscar got sick. Why do you think she felt that way?

Page 18 When we are sick it is nice to get notes from friends. Do you know anyone who is sick now? Could you send them a note or a picture to cheer them up?

Page 19 Have you ever had to wait a long, lonesome time for someone? Does it feel longer to wait when you are alone? Why do you think that is?

Page 21 What time of year do you think it is in the scene on this page? What was the clue?

Page 23 The Radio is playing soft jazz. Do you know what Jazz music is? Here is an example of Soft Jazz. How does it make you feel? <https://youtu.be/wKzMlKKNodA>

Page 25 Oscar is taking apart his trumpet. Here is a video of how a trumpet is made: <https://youtu.be/8NAaRQUtp9g> What did you find interesting about the way that they make trumpets?

Page 27 The inside of a piano is very interesting as the hammers with felt hats and the wires in front of the hammers. You may have a piano of your own to look at, and you may also want to watch this video from “How it Works” <https://youtu.be/D3atLHH50fM>

Page 28 There is cornbread cooling on the windowsill. Here is a recipe for cornbread. You may want to make cornbread and enjoy it with your family. <https://www.bettycrocker.com/recipes/cornbread/8990e15c-fc1d-4a8d-b8b3-4b37f45eca49>

Pages 30-31 tell about Oscar Peterson’s life. In 1972 he received the Order of Canada. What is the Order of Canada? <https://www.gg.ca/document.aspx?id=14940>

Page 32 Oscar also had his name on a stamp. Here is a stamp outline. Who would you put on a stamp if you could? Can you draw them here along with your stamp design. <https://www.edupics.com/coloring-page-postage-stamp-2-i9889.html>

Here is a news clip about Oscar Peterson’s death - It gives some information about his life and his music. <https://youtu.be/o1kkryclFiM>

*** I have used you-tube videos in this study. Some of them may not longer be available, please just let me know or find your own video content. Please watch the videos with your student to ensure there are no offensive content. You may want to add the you-tube link to a service that ensures no ads: here is one option: <http://viewpure.com>.***