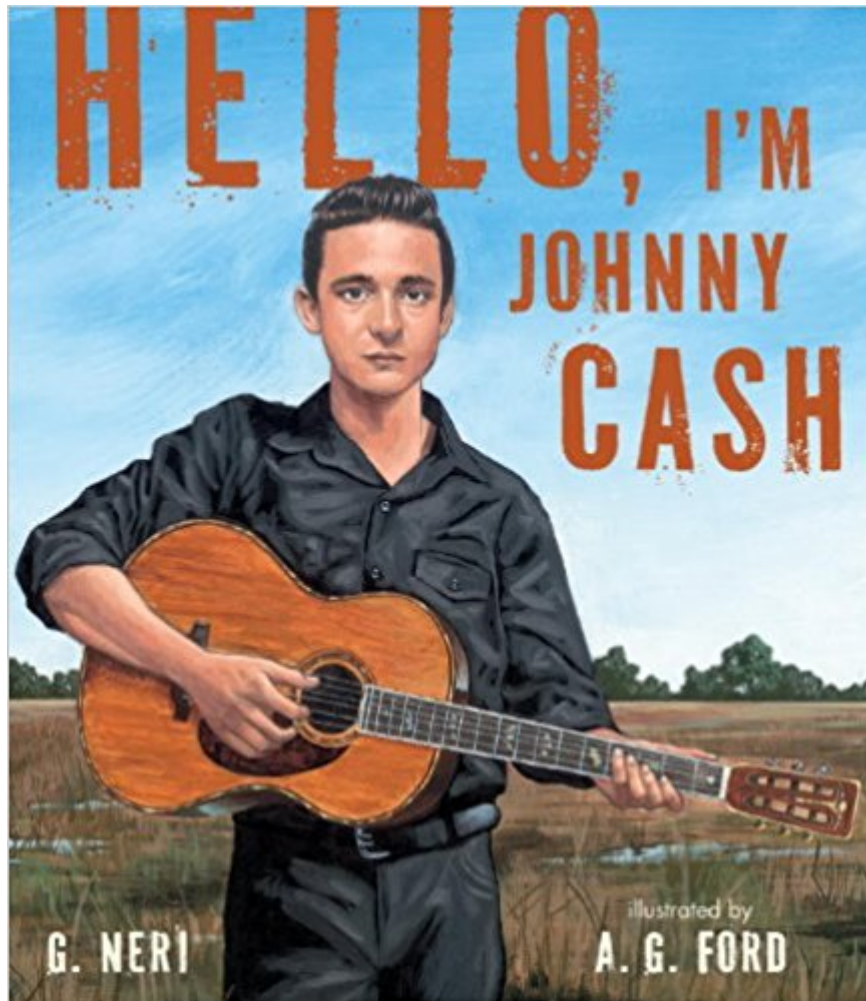




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# Hello, I'm Johnny Cash



## Synopsis

A stirring look at the early life of Johnny Cash, from his harsh but music-filled childhood to the first flush of stardom. There's never been anyone like music legend Johnny Cash. His deep voice is instantly recognizable, and his heartfelt songs resonate with listeners of all ages and backgrounds. G. Neri captures Johnny's story in beautiful free verse, portraying an ordinary boy with an extraordinary talent who grew up in extreme poverty, faced incredible challenges, and ultimately found his calling by always being true to the gift of his voice. A. G. Ford's luscious paintings of the dramatic southern landscape of Johnny Cash's childhood illuminate this portrait of a legend, taking us from his humble beginnings to his enormous success on the world stage.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 1020 (What's this?)

Hardcover: 40 pages

Publisher: Candlewick; 1st Edition edition (September 9, 2014)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0763662453

ISBN-13: 978-0763662455

Product Dimensions: 10.6 x 0.4 x 12.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.5 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 6 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,015,223 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #33 in Books > Children's Books > Arts, Music & Photography > Music > Rock #232 in Books > Children's Books > Biographies > Musical #662 in Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > History > United States > 1900s

Age Range: 9 - 12 years

Grade Level: 4 - 7

## Customer Reviews

Gr 3-5 • Even those who aren't fans of musician Johnny Cash will appreciate the beauty of this biographical picture book. Written in free verse, with colorful, realistic illustrations done in oil, this title poignantly portrays the powerful influences of poverty, religion, family, and music on Cash's life. When Cash was too young to work in the cotton fields, his father bought him a radio to keep him company. The boy could never turn it off, learning hundreds of songs that he sang

to anyone who stopped by to listen. It became clear he had a gift that was meant to be shared with the world, but hard work to earn money for the family and a stint in the Air Force delayed that dream. This is a biography of one musician as well as a tale of how the determination to pursue a dream can pay off. The oversize format suggests Cash's larger-than-life impact and image, but it also pulls readers in. Additional information is provided at the back, including more in-depth details about his life, a discography, and the ways in which the sociopolitical eras he lived through, such as the Great Depression and the birth of rock 'n' roll, impacted his music. This is a real tribute to the Man in Black, written in an easily accessible, engaging manner that demonstrates the qualities he possessed that make him a hero to so many. —Maggie Chase, Boise State University, ID

Even those who aren't fans of musician Johnny Cash will appreciate the beauty of this biographical picture book. Written in free verse, with colorful, realistic illustrations done in oil, this title poignantly portrays the powerful influences of poverty, religion, family, and music on Cash's life. ... This is a real tribute to the Man in Black, written in an easily accessible, engaging manner that demonstrates the qualities he possessed that make him a hero to so many. —School Library Journal (starred review) The narrative is well-researched, age-appropriate and beautifully expressive. The exquisite oil illustrations capture the setting and the emotion of each poem, allowing readers to feel as if they are there with J.R. as he works the harsh Arkansas fields or in the audience as Johnny whips the crowd into a frenzy plucking out his tunes on the guitar. An exceptional portrait of one of the most recognizable musicians of all time. —Kirkus Reviews (starred review) Neri and Ford do an impressive job of painting a portrait of the Man in Black that emphasizes his hardscrabble beginnings and lifelong love of music. ... On each oversize, two-page spread, Neri's straightforward free-verse lines describe a pivotal moment in Cash's life that contributed to his love of music. Working in perfect concert with the words are Ford's full-bleed, soulful oil paintings, which lovingly capture emotion —serenity in Cash's beatific face when he sings along with the radio; rapture when he hears June Carter sing for the first time. ... Parents eager to share Cash's signature boom-chicka-boom rhythms with their kiddos will appreciate this eloquent introduction to the iconic musician. —Booklist (starred review) Multiple columns of ragged-right-edge prose, rich in lyricism and boasting a driving cadence, deftly develop an intricate and detailed look at different moments and themes... Neri musters these elements together to track Cash's musical development and reveal the encouragement, mentoring, and lucky breaks that bolstered his own determination to make it in entertainment. ... Kids unenthusiastically facing a biography

report may find this to be a perfect balance of engaging reading and teacher-satisfying substance. •Bulletin of the Center for Children's BooksThe appealing biography succeeds in telling an information-packed story of one of country music's greats: readers will feel they know the "Man in Black" well by book's end. •The Horn BookIn free-verse poetry and images that recall the emotional directness of WPA murals and photography, Neri and Ford follow Cash from the grinding poverty and tragedy of his early years to the invention of his signature "boom-chicka-boom sound" and his breakthrough hit, "I Walk the Line." The images consistently strike a haunting chord—especially a twilight scene on a country road in which Johnny hears his first song on the car radio ("John couldn't believe/ that was his voice/ going out over/ the airwaves"). Readers will best appreciate this biography after hearing some of Cash's music—and they won't want to stop after hearing his story. •Publishers Weekly

Rooted in Cash's own recollections, free verse aptly captures for young readers the grit, soul, and spirit of the Man in Black. Extensive back matter gives context and guidance for further exploration. Illos by A.G. Ford are rich and evocative. Well done.

thank you! exactly what I needed to do a middle childhood psychology paper on. very nice book. illustrations are wonderful. glad I bought this book because I actually liked it. considering I only needed it for a book report.

This is a cool kids biography of the Man in Black. My little guy is obsessed and he was very excited for this book. It is geared towards older children and there is quite a bit of narrative. I ended up reading the book myself and then paraphrasing for my little one. He was quite content.

Very happy with this gift purchase!

Wonderful picture book about Johnny Cash; fantastic illustrations and beautifully-written text. Though this is designed for young readers, it would also make a thoughtful gift for any Johnny Cash fan on your list. I've got it on my coffee table right now and visitors can't help picking it up. It'll grab you from the first words: "Before he became Johnny Cash, he was simply called J.R. -- a name that stood for nothing, and nothing was all he had coming into the world."

Okay, I'm a Johnny Cash fan. But you don't have to be to appreciate this gorgeous book. I love the narrative, I love the way the illustrations coordinate perfectly with the story. I've given it as gifts this year to kids but now I think I'll get one for myself. It's that kind of all-ages, beautiful book. The history, the biography, the music, the fabulous oversized format= a perfect book for giving and for keeping.

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