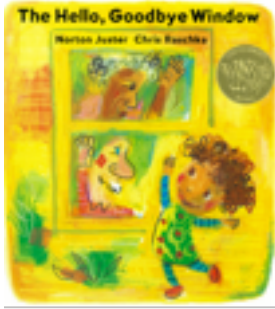


# Bravo! Chris Raschka



## Educator's Guide

An original exhibition organized by the  
National Center for Children's Illustrated Literature, © 2009



## The Hello, Goodbye Window

This 2006 Caldecott Award winning book, explores Nanna and Poppy's house through the eyes of a young girl. The kitchen window at Nanna and Poppy's house is for one little girl a magic gateway. Everything important happens near it, through it, or beyond it. Told in her voice, her story is both a voyage of discovery and a celebration of the commonplace wonders that define childhood.

She finds that the kitchen window is more than just a way to view the outside. It is magical to read how the window is seen as a mirror, or used to say hello to the garden or even view the stars at night. Lively illustrations by Chris Raschka accompany the young girl as she shares with readers the treasures throughout her grandparent's house. Throughout this story you feel the love that this granddaughter feels while she visits her Nanna and Poppy. You will never look through a window in quite the same way again!

### Classroom Connections:

**Language Arts: 110.5 English Language Arts & Reading, Grade 3 b (2), (5), (8), (9), (14), (18), (20).**

Before beginning the activities for this book, introduce to your students author-illustrator Chris Raschka. Review the book cover with students. Ask them to guess who the characters on the cover might be? Show students the Caldecott Medal on the cover. Explain the significance of this medal. This medal is awarded each year to the artist who illustrates the best American picture book and was named in honor of the nineteenth-century English illustrator Randolph Caldecott. Show an inside illustration from the book. Ask students how they think the artist Chris Raschka, created the illustrations for this book.

After reading the book, discuss the following:

- How do you think the young girl in the book feels about her grandparents, Nanna and Poppy?
- Ask students to share what special names they may have for their grandparents.
- Check student's comprehension of the book by asking them to name some of the things the young girl saw through the 'Hello, Goodbye Window'.
- Select several illustrations from the book to show to the class. Ask students why the illustrator used this style of art for the book. Why did the artist use such bright colors?

**What's the Secret Word?** Use this book to increase our students' vocabulary. Students will use the clues to find the secret word. Tape the clues for your selected word on your classroom window every day. The students will sit in front of the window, and write what they think the word might be. At the end of the week, have students write their own Hello, Goodbye Window story using the mystery word.

**Social Studies: 113.5 Social Studies, Grade 3 (b) - 1 (A), (B), (C), 2, 3, 17, 18**

- **Family Day:** Have students bring in several pictures of their grandparents or favorite relatives to create their family page. Each photo should have a sentence about why these people are a special part of their lives. All the pages can then be collected into a classroom album that will show and highlight the wonderful diversity of the classroom.

- **Family Tree:** Even young children are interested in where their relatives came from and what their life was like when they were young. Students can follow their ancestors' trails to make their family tree.
- **Biography Box:** Students will select a family member to learn more about them, and create a box with information about this person's life. In a shoebox the students will place information about the family member they want to learn about, an interview with them, and collect important information about their life from them and others. Start with the basics of name, birth date, birthplace, where they work, hobbies they may have, and how they are related to the student. Students can ask the family member for some small items that may represent them to add to the biography box, or students can draw and cut out some items that represent their family member. The students can do an oral presentation for the class on their special family member using a Bio-Poem.

<p>Title (Your Choice)</p> <p>First Name Only (or a nickname)</p> <p>Four Words or Phrases That Describe This Person (not a physical description)</p> <p>(Relationship: sister, brother, son, daughter, etc.) of . . .</p> <p>Who Loves . . .</p> <p>Who Feels . . .</p> <p>Who Needs . . .</p> <p>Who Gives . . .</p> <p>Who Fears . . .</p> <p>Who Likes . . .</p> <p>Resident of . . . (street, city, state, etc.)</p> <p>Last Name (or full name if the first line was a nickname)</p>
--

**Mathematics Connections: 111.15 Mathematics, Grade 3, 2(B), 3, 14**

Introduce Chris Raschka and graphs to the students in your class. Show some other books illustrated by Chris Raschka, such as Yo! Yes? or Arlene Sardine. Compare the art in these books. The students can chart the similarities and differences between the artistic style and media used.

**Art: 117.11 Art Grade 3 A (1), 3.2(A), (C)**

Chris Raschka's illustrations in this book have an abstract childlike quality to them. His inspiration was a painting done by a little girl. She did not use an eraser and went on layering her painting with different colors. Raschka adopted the same style for this book, using watercolor for the base, and layered it with pastels, and charcoal pencil.

- **Impressionist Art:** Artist Chris Raschka's illustrations in this book use an impressionistic style. Select several other impressionist artists to study with the class. Find pictures in a book or online to compare their artwork to the illustrations by Chris Raschka. Students can even try their own hand at creating an impressionistic painting and have an art show in the classroom or display them in the hallway.
- **Window to the World:** Have students create a window into their imaginations. Students can draw a picture of their very own 'Hello, Goodbye window'. Students can share their imaginative windows with the class and tell their stories.

*Activity:* Create a window with a magic land inside

*Artist Medium:* Watercolor, Pastel, and Charcoal Pencil

*TEKS Objectives:* 3a (1) - Creative Expression

3.2(a), (c)-Creative expression through personal observation, design skills, and produce drawings

*Medium:* Charcoal pencil, pastels and/or water color

*Technique:* Combining watercolor paints and pastels. Rub the pastel to create a smooth surface. Finish with a charcoal pencil to add details.

*Element of Art/Principle of Design:* Form, Line, space

*Vocabulary:* Form-shape or visual appearance of an object

Line- extending one-dimensional figure that has no curves

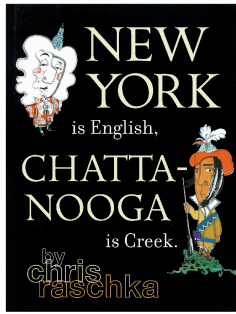
Space- 3-dimensional extent where objects and events occur

*Materials:* pastels, watercolor paint, paper

- Procedure:*
1. Using a pencil, draw out your window and magical land inside it.
  2. If using water color paints, paint where you want it
  3. Next lay down the pastel color.
  4. Using charcoal pencil, draw in the details.







## New York is English, Chattanooga is Creek

Chris Raschka was born in **Huntingdon**, Pennsylvania, which is named for Selma Shirley Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon in England. He grew up in **Lombard**, Illinois, named for Josiah L. Lombard, a landowner; then later lived in **Ann Arbor**, Michigan, named for the wives of John Allen and Elisha Rumsey, both named Ann. He now lives with his wife and son in **New York City**, named after the grand old Duke of York. City names come in lots of languages. A language gives a name a certain flavor. What flavor is your city?

### Classroom Connections:

**Language Arts: 110.6 English Language Arts & Reading, Grade 4 (b) 2, 3, 5, 13, 19, 23**

#### 126.3 Technology Applications

- *What flavor is your city?:* The students will research the name of their city, and why it was named so. They may wish to research if there is a particular event that changed or shaped their city for additional details to share with the class. If they were to name their city, what would it be and why?
- *About Me and My Time in Abilene:* Throughout history, cities have had wonderful stories to share. Although your students have lived much shorter lives, they have also had important experiences. Have students think about the events that have shaped their lives while living in the city. Ask the students to record his/her autobiography, using words and pictures.
- *Kid-Created Biographies:* Students create biographies on the people who have been a part of their community, city or someone in history that they want to know or know best. The students will use various skills to collect information, organize details, publish the biographies (i.e. printed report with book covers, title page and index page) and present the information.
- *Bio-Poem:* Students may construct a Bio-Poem for the city of their choice.
- *Fiction-Nonfiction Essay:* Kids can demonstrate their creativity by writing an essay in first person about any city. Students can run wild with their imagination e.g. Abilene: My Story, or New York Remembers.

**Social Studies: Social Studies: 113.5 Social Studies, Grade 3 (b) - 1 (A), (B), (C), 2, 3, 17, 18**

#### 126.3 Technology Applications

Increase your students' knowledge of their states!

- *City-Mania:* Students will get an opportunity to formulate a quiz based on our different cities. Each student will gather information on the location, nicknames, history, travel spots, population and other interesting facts of a city.
- *Presidential Roll Call:* Fasten a long (several feet) sheet of paper to your bulletin board or chalk board. As a class try to recreate a presidential time line, along with which states and cities the presidents were from.
- *My State of The Union Report:* Have each student work on an individual state report from the 50 states with its capitol, nicknames, flag motto, song, and any information they can gather.
- *Exploring the Past:* Have students choose significant events in our nation's history and prepare an A to Z representation of that time.



## A Foot In The Mouth

This book encourages readers and listeners to investigate poetry as sound. The 38 selections of great read-a-loud's ranging from old favorites like Lewis Carroll's "Jabberwocky" and A. A. Milne's "Us Two" to new discoveries like George Ella Lyon's "Favorite" and Charles R. Smith, Jr.'s "Where It Began." Skillfully chosen, the poems cover a thought-provoking array of topics weaving seamlessly from silly to solemn to spooky. The table of contents is arranged into poems for one voice, tongue-twisters, two voices, list poems, three voices, short poems, bilingual poems, rhymed poems,

limericks, and group poems. The illustrations are done in bright but soft watercolors, ink, and torn paper.

### Classroom Connections:

#### Language Arts: 110.6 English Language Arts & Reading, Grade 4 (b) 2, 3, 5, 13, 19, 23

Paul Janeczko offers some great tips for writing poetry for students.

- When you start writing your poem, take your time, do not rush! Jot down notes, make lists, tuck it away and let it rest for a few days.
- When you have written your draft that you are happy with, tuck it away, and let it rest for a few days. Then take a look at it with fresh eyes. You may like your poem a lot, or you may see some spots you think need improvement!
- Don't expect your poem to be perfect when it falls out of your head onto the page. It will need more work. That's how the writing process works, for every writer.
- Remember: Imagination rules! Don't be afraid to try something different.
- One last thing: Have fun!

Janeczko also suggests that children try their hand at writing various kinds of poems, and practice reading poems A-Loud! So have fun in your classroom. Have the students make their own book of poems for their unit on poetry. This is a great book to use before starting the unit on poetry.

#### Art: 117.14, Art Grade 4, 4-1, 4-2b (B), and 4B

*A Hand on the Paper:* Let the students explore the world of watercolors, artist Chris Raschka's medium of choice for this book and many others, to illustrate their own book of poems.

*Artist Medium:* Watercolor, ink and torn paper

*TEKS Objectives:* Art, Grade 4, 117.14: 4-1, 4-2b (B), and 4B

*Lesson Objectives:*

- Knowledge about watercolors, learning basic skill, experimenting with them
- Using Life experiences as some sources for their subject matter, such as family, friends, pets, and environment (where they live).
- To practice some of the same techniques and rules that Raschka uses when he illustrates. Raschka's advice to young children:
  - 1) Throw away the eraser! Work with your mistakes to create something extraordinary;
  - 2) Use both sides of the paintbrush to draw in shapes and mix colors.

*Medium for the lesson:* Watercolor, and origami or scrap book paper

*Objectives* (the learner will...):

- to work with the medium of watercolors
- to create paintings of their family or pets
- Mix colors to make new ones.

*Vocabulary:*

- Collage: is both an artwork made from objects that are glued down onto a surface, such as a piece of paper, canvas, or board, and the technique of making such an artwork.
- Patterns- the repetition of an element (or elements) in a work of art.
- Lines-A basic element of art, referring to a continuous mark, made on a surface, by a moving point.
- Cubism: An early 20th-century style and movement in art, especially painting, in which use was made of simple geometric shapes, interlocking planes, and, later, collage
- Shadow box: Background - objects located in the furthest part of the piece of artwork; Middle ground - objects found in the middle ground of the work; Foreground- objects found in the front most part of the work. They are the objects that are closest to the observer.

*Other Artist References:* Chris Raschka's art work in his books is very unrealistic. This unrealistic style is called impressionistic and abstract, which means that he only paints the overall impression of a subject matter; he does not try to reproduce exactly what he sees in front of him (ex.-his wolf. Even though you can tell that it is a wolf, does not look realistic. He simplifies the animal into basic shapes and lines). Using shapes and lines to create unrealistic images is called Cubism. An artist that painted like Raschka is Paul Klee (1879-1940), who was a German artist.

*Materials/Supplies:* Watercolor paper, watercolors- both liquid and watercolor plates, brushes, containers (to put water in), paper towels, origami or scrap book paper, glue.

*Procedures:*

1. Practice using watercolors, and learning that a different ratio of water and paint creates a variety of appearances. The students will be given bottled watercolor and watercolor cakes to expose them to different types of watercolors.
2. The children are encouraged to use the paintbrush in creative ways like using both the sides of the brush to mix colors and create patterns or textures.
3. The children will also learn mixing colors on the paper can produce unexpected results.
4. The children will draw a variety of characters. They can then collage their paintings with scrap book or origami paper to create their own illustration.
5. The students will use this to write their own poetry.

*Sample on the right.*

*Evaluation* (did the learner...?):

- Learn to work with the medium of watercolors
- Create a painting of their family or pets.
- Learn to mix colors to make a new palette of colors.



## Charlie Parker played be bop, John Coltrane's Giant Steps, and Mysterious Thelonious



Charlie Parker, John Coltrane and Mysterious Thelonious pay tribute to the music legends who personified what we refer to as the great American Classic Jazz.

Charlie Parker: Charles Parker, Jr. (August 29, 1920 – March 12, 1955) was an American jazz saxophonist and composer. He played the Alto Saxophone. Parker is often considered one of the most influential of jazz musicians. Parker played a leading role in the development of bebop, a form of jazz characterized by fast tempos, and improvisation based on harmonic structure. Parker's innovative approaches to melody, rhythm, and harmony exercised enormous influence on his contemporaries.

This was Raschka's first published book, and so is closest to his heart. While working in the studio, Raschka often heard a radio program called Bird Flight that played Charlie Parker's songs. He started this book as wanting to make a biography of Charlie Parker, but then he wanted more than anything to introduce Charlie Parker's music to children. In the beginning Raschka found Parker's bebop music hard to understand, but eventually he learned to love it. Raschka says that Parker's music is about invention, improvisation, repetition and being funny. These are the elements he tried to incorporate in the book. Raschka wanted *Charlie Parker played be bop* to embody some of the rhythm and the music in bebop and in Charlie Parker. The rhythm of the text is based on the rhythm of some of his music, particularly a piece called, "A Night in Tunisia." It goes, "bop-ba-da-bop-bop-a-du-bop, za-ba-da-bop-bop-a-du-dop.

John Coltrane: John William "Trane" Coltrane (September 23, 1926 – July 17, 1967) was an American jazz saxophonist and composer. Working in the bebop and hard bop idioms early in his career, Coltrane helped pioneer the use of modes in jazz and later was at the forefront of free jazz. Coltrane was younger than Charlie Parker. He played Jazz, with a Tenor Saxophone. He made about fifty recordings as a leader during his recording career, and appeared as a sideman on many other albums, notably with trumpeter Miles Davis and pianist Thelonious Monk. He influenced innumerable musicians, and remains one of the most significant tenor saxophonists in jazz history. He received many awards, among them a posthumous Special Citation from the Pulitzer Prize Board in 2007 for his "masterful improvisation, supreme musicianship and iconic centrality to the history of jazz."



Raschka says colors have their own sounds and flavors. So he used colors, shapes and characters instead of sound. For this book, Coltrane's song was adapted to the printed page by representing each instrument with a "performer": a kitten representing the saxophone (or John Coltrane), snowflakes taking the part of the rich color of harmony produced by the piano, a background for which the cat can be a part of, raindrops as drums/ drummer or percussionist, and boxes are for the bass, giving foundation. It is a Jazz Quartet. The characters depicting the instruments all refer to Coltrane's Jazz interpretation of the song My Favorite things. Coltrane's music is complicated and one critic called it "sheets of sounds." Raschka tried to create the book using sheets of color. He layered watercolor the way Coltrane's music and different instruments are layered, giving unexpected colors just like the music. Raschka initially started illustrating the book based on the composition My Favorite Things. You probably remember this song from the Sound of Music. You will see the raindrops, packages, whiskers, on kittens, and snowflakes from the song in these illustrations.

Thelonious Monk: Mysterious Thelonious is a story about Thelonious Monk and his music. Thelonious Monk (October 10, 1917 – February 17, 1982) was an American jazz pianist and composer who, according to *The Penguin Guide to Jazz*, was "one of the giants of American music". Monk had a unique improvisational style and made numerous contributions to the standard jazz repertoire. Often regarded as a founder of bebop, Monk's playing style later evolved away from that style. His compositions and improvisations are full of dissonant harmonies and angular melodic twists, and are impossible to separate from Monk's unorthodox approach to the piano, which combined a highly percussive attack with abrupt, dramatic use of silences and hesitations. Monk's manner was often said to be idiosyncratic. Visually, he was renowned for his distinctively "hip" sartorial style in suits, hats and sunglasses. He was also noted for the fact that at times, while the other musicians in the band continued playing, he would stop, stand up from the keyboard and dance for a few moments before returning to the piano. One of his regular dances consisted of continuously turning in a counterclockwise fashion, which has drawn comparisons to ring-shout and Sufi whirling. He is one of only five jazz musicians to be featured on the cover of *Time* (the other four being Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, Wynton Marsalis, and Dave Brubeck).

This book is based on a piece called "Mysterioso" that is a beautiful, very classical melody on a twelve-bar blues. The book is Chris Raschka's translation of that music into paint. The twelve tones of music are transformed into the twelve colors on a color wheel. In Mysterious Thelonious, you can simply go note by note and represent each of those notes in a piece of music as a spot and shape of color on the books page. Raschka illustrated the colors in the art into the geometric shapes for the different scales of the music. There are 3 primary colors (red, blue and yellow), which make 3 secondary colors (purple, orange, and green) which in turn will make 6 tertiary colors. Major scale has 8 full notes which Raschka compares to big steps. Each of the half step is compared to the 12 notes of this book. The text in the book follows the keys, as is explained in the beginning of the book.

## Classroom Connections

**Language Arts, Arts and Music: 110.6 English Language Arts & Reading, Grade 4 (b) 2, 3, 5, 13, 19, 23**

**117.14 Art Grade 4, (b) 1, 2, 3**

**117.12 Music Grade 3**

Students will enjoy this unit which is a combination of literary and visual arts.

*Objectives:*

1. To acquaint students with jazz through careful reading and analysis of selected jazz musicians and their music.
2. To enrich students' understanding of African-American influences in the foundation and history of jazz music.
3. To reinforce learning through the arts by creating a visual representation of the music that expresses their interpretations of the music.
4. To have students recognize how music and art can be integrated into literature studies.

*Materials:*

Copies of Charlie Parker played be bop, John Coltrane's Giant Steps and Mysterious Thelonious by Chris Raschka; CD player along with CD's from these selected artist, construction paper, crayons, color pencils, erasers.

*Procedure:*

Like music, every good book has a cadence. That rhythm flows through the story like the beats and the be-bops that your students will hear throughout this lesson. This activity is designed to encourage students to see and hear the connections between music, art and literature.

For this class activity, begin by selecting one of the biographies to read. In addition, you could have the students clap or tap to the rhythm upon a re-reading of these books.

Place a sheet of construction paper on each student's desk. Ask each student to close his or her eyes. Then play a piece of music from the musician whose biography was just read. Have the student listen to the music for a while. Then ask the students to open their eyes and begin to draw to music. Do this activity for all the 3 artists. Ask the students to write the artist name on the back of each drawing. Play the music from each four musicians and have the students guess which musician is behind each musical piece. Gather all the previous student drawings and ask the class which artist/music they think each drawing represents. Look for commonalities (i.e. symbols, color choice, lines, flow, shapes) in the drawings that reflect the students' perceptions of the musicians. Discuss how music can be visual. Discuss the rhythm of the music and relate it back to the readings.

After sharing the drawings and interpretations of the musicians and their music, students can discuss what constitutes great music (e.g. the rhythms, the lyrics, etc.) to them. Students can create a History of Jazz timeline. Open up student dialogue to cultural relevance of music. Other genres (e.g. country, classical) of music can be used for this assignment as well. Students could also use colorful clay or play dough to create sculptures of the music. In addition, students can search the web for further research their favorite jazz musicians. The following are more biography children's books on jazz.

**Any of Chris Raschka's books can be adapted to dramatization, music, language arts and mathematics. Patterns in music correspond to better understanding of patterns in mathematics. They also help understand the historical and cultural times of the era. Some of the books about family, and friendship, are excellent resources for Language Arts. Students will also learn to use picture clues as a valid and effective strategy in reading comprehension.**