

CHRISTOPHER PAUL CURTIS

"To me the highest accolade comes when a young reader tells me, 'I really liked your book.' The young seem to be able to say 'really' with a clarity, a faith, and an honesty that we as adults have long forgotten. That is why I write."



Born in Flint, Michigan, Christopher Paul Curtis spent his first 13 years after high school on the assembly line of Flint's historic Fisher Body Plant #1. His job entailed hanging car doors, and it left him with an aversion to getting into and out of large automobiles—particularly big Buicks. Curtis's writing—and his dedication to it—has been greatly influenced by his family members, particularly his wife, Kaysandra. With grandfathers like Earl "Lefty" Lewis, a Negro Baseball League pitcher, and 1930's bandleader Herman E. Curtis, Sr., of Herman Curtis and the Dusky Devastators of the Depression, it is easy to see why Christopher Paul Curtis was destined to become an entertainer. Christopher Paul Curtis made an outstanding debut in children's literature with *The Watsons Go to Birmingham, 1963*. His second novel, *Bud, Not Buddy*, is the first book ever to receive both the Newbery Medal and the Coretta Scott King Author Award.

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Bud, Not Buddy

By Christopher Paul Curtis

About this Book:

A 10-year-old orphan with nothing but an old suitcase, a blanket and some flyers to his name, Bud, not Buddy Caldwell is determined to find his long-lost father, no matter where it might lead him. Bud has been moving from home to home all his life due to the sudden death of his mother, and he is determined to find his real home, a place where he knows he belongs. Bud's mother left him with flyers of a talented Jazz band, leaving Bud with the impression that his dad, who is featured on the front, is still performing and will be in Grand Rapids for a show. With hopes of reconciling with his father, some flyers that his mother left him for guidance, and his precious suitcase, Bud embarks on an unforgettable journey that will lead him where he never imagined.

Discussion questions:

1. What makes Bud so self-conscious and protective of his name? What is special about his name?
2. Describe the relationship between Bugs and Bud. Why do you think Bugs was so important to Bud? What made the two alike, and why?
3. Talk about the significance of Bud's experiences at Hooverville. What did Bud remember most about that stop, and why? What do you think the Hooverville community resembled to Bud? How do you think Bud felt when he missed the train?
4. What were his feelings toward the situation regarding Bugs?
5. Describe Bud and Deza Malone's relationship, and its significance. What did he remember most about her and their romantic night?
6. How does Bud feel towards "Herman E. Calloway" in his first encounter with him? How does he feel towards him after the alarming news? Do his feelings change?
7. Bud seems to really like Miss Thomas, as he refers to her as "the most beautiful woman in the world." Who do you think Miss Thomas resembles?

Resources referenced:

kidsreads.com, teenreads.com, bookrags.com, teachingbooks.com, multcolib.org, barnesandnoble.com,
And MPL Staff.