

# ELVIS

IS KING!

WRITTEN BY  
JONAH WINTER

ILLUSTRATED BY  
RED NOSE STUDIO

HOW A BOY  
BECAME  
A LEGEND



# ELVIS *IS* KING!

## CLASSROOM ACTIVITY GUIDE

### About the Book

Elvis Presley—the beloved King of Rock 'n' Roll—comes to vibrant, gyrating life in this extraordinary picture-book biography from an award-winning author and the winner of a *New York Times* Best Illustrated Book Award.

In singlepage chapters with titles like “The First Cheeseburger Ever Eaten by Elvis” and “Shazam! A Blond Boy Turns Into a Black-Haired Teenager,” readers can follow key moments in Presley’s life, from his birth on the wrong side of the railroad tracks in the Deep South to playing his first guitar in grade school to being so nervous during a performance as a teenager that he starts shaking . . . and changes the world!

### About the Author

**JONAH WINTER** is the author of dozens of picture books, among them *Here Comes the Garbage Barge!* (4 starred reviews, *New York Times* Best Illustrated Book Award); *Lillian’s Right to Vote* (4 starred reviews); *Ruth Bader Ginsburg* (3 starred reviews, *New York Times* Best Illustrated Book Award); *Mickey Mantle: The Commerce Comet* (2 starred reviews); and *The Secret Project* (5 starred reviews). Visit him at [jonahwinter.com](http://jonahwinter.com).



Grades: Preschool–3 • HC: 978-0-399-55470-4  
GLB: 978-0-399-55471-1 • EL: 978-0-399-55472-8

### About the Illustrator

**CHRIS SICKELS**, the creative force behind the award-winning **Red Nose Studio**, has illustrated *Here Comes the Garbage Barge!* by Jonah Winter (4 starred reviews, *New York Times* Best Illustrated Book Award) and *The Secret Subway* by Shana Corey (3 starred reviews, Amazon Best Children’s Book of 2016). His 3-D illustrations are built from wire, fabric, wood, found objects, and more. His work has appeared in the *New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal* and as a poster for the NYC subway. He has been awarded three Gold Medals and one Silver Medal by the Society of Illustrators. Visit him at [rednosestudio.com](http://rednosestudio.com) or on Twitter at [@rednosestudio](https://twitter.com/rednosestudio).



# CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

## Find the Objects

Invite students to look closely at the book's endpapers, which show objects from the illustrations with short captions about what they are made of. Next have students take the challenge to find each of the objects on the endpapers in one of the illustrations. Then assign pairs of students a double-page spread to study carefully. They should identify objects in the pictures and discuss how the pictures and text work together to convey information and emotion. Share with students the photographs of the illustrator's studio, showing shelves of objects at [rednosestudio.com/biography](http://rednosestudio.com/biography).

## Your Life in Poems

The author uses short, lively poems to narrate Elvis's life. Have each student write four short poems about their life, modeled on the book. The poems should have vivid titles and use a conversational style like Winter's poems do. The student can use a first-person or third-person voice. Each poem should cover a stage or event in their life, which can be as everyday as starting school or learning to ride a bike or more dramatic like moving homes or losing a loved one. Have them share the poems in small groups, comparing them, and asking and answering questions.

## Ain't Nothin' But a Hound Dog

Explain to your students that in 1956, Elvis's version of "Hound Dog" became the first song in history to reach number one on all three *Billboard* charts (Pop; Country & Western; and Rhythm & Blues) at the same time. It has sold about ten million copies worldwide. Play the song for them and post the lyrics so they can see them. Have students compare the style of the lyrics to the poems in the book. Then hold a discussion about the music, the song, Elvis's singing, and why they think the song was so popular.

## Set the Scene, Write the Story

In the classroom, gather together as many small objects as possible that could be used to set a scene such as those in the illustrations by Red Nose Studio. Have students bring in objects from home, too. Students should spend time looking at the objects and then choose ones that form a story in their mind. Each student should arrange a scene like the illustrations. When they're happy with the arrangement, ask the student to write a brief story that reflects what's happening in the scene.

## Musical Adjectives

Play some of Elvis's songs for your students, and ask your students to describe the music. Define the term adjective, and ask them to come up with adjectives that they would use to describe the song. Then ask them what image comes to mind when they think of that adjective. On the reproducible activity below, have your students record their adjectives and draw the image or feeling that comes to mind.



This guide was written and prepared by Kathleen Odean, a former school librarian, who gives workshops on new children's and young adult books. She chaired the 2002 Newbery Award Committee and served on the 1996 Caldecott Award Committee.

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# MUSICAL ADJECTIVES

Listen to a song by Elvis Presley, and write down adjectives that describe the music and lyrics.  
On the rest of the paper, create color illustrations that also respond to the music.

**ADJECTIVE**

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**SONG**

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**ADJECTIVE**

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**ADJECTIVE**

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**ADJECTIVE**

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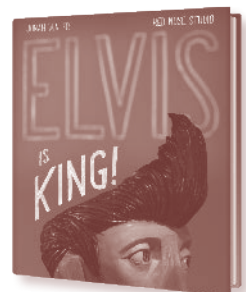
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**ADJECTIVE**

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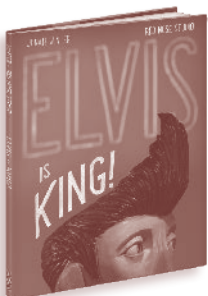
**REPRODUCIBLE**

# FAVORITE TUNES

Ask five friends or family members to name their favorite song.

Record the name of the person interviewed, the song title, the performer, and why the person loves the song. In class, discuss the results and why music matters so much to people.

| Person Interviewed | Song Title | Performer | Why they love it |
|--------------------|------------|-----------|------------------|
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