'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.”

—Christopher Paul Curtis

Christopher Paul Curtis made an outstanding debut in children’s literature with *The Watsons Go to Birmingham—1963*, named a Newbery Honor Book and a Coretta Scott King Honor Book. His second novel, *Bud, Not Buddy*, won the Newbery Medal and the Coretta Scott King Award.
Christopher Paul Curtis was born in Flint, Michigan, the setting of many of his books. He was a great reader, but as a youth, he could not find books that “were about me.” After high school, Curtis spent 13 years on the assembly line of Flint’s historic Fisher Body plant, hanging 80-pound car doors on Buicks. This left him with an aversion to getting in and out of large automobiles—especially Buicks! He attended college at night and wrote during his breaks to escape the noise of the factory. He wrote his first book, The Watsons Go to Birmingham—1963, in longhand in the children’s room of the Windsor Public Library. His son Steven typed his father’s drafts into their computer and served as first reader.

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 1930s 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.

Curtis’s hobbies include playing basketball, collecting old record albums, and, of course, writing. His favorite books include anything by Toni Morrison, Kurt Vonnegut, or Zora Neale Hurston. He lives in Windsor, Ontario, Canada, with his wife, Kaysandra, and their two children, Steven and Cydney.

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