

Crown: An Ode to the Fresh Cut
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Awards: Newberry Honor, Coretta Scott King Author Honor, 2018 Ezra Jack Keats New Writer Award, 2018 Kirkus Prize for Young Readers, 2019-2020 Texas Bluebonnet Award

An ode is a poem written in praise of something or someone. This story is much like a poem. There are many similes and metaphors. Some of the language usage will be unfamiliar to you. And there are names of hairstyles that may be unfamiliar to you. They were to me to! Just look, listen, and enjoy!

Introduce yourself. Tell your group where you are from, where you are now, and what you enjoyed about the book.

Discussion questions:

Look at the picture on the book cover. What adjectives would you use to describe how the boy feels?

As the boy walks across the barbershop floor, what images does he use to compare the barber to an artist?

The boy says, "He'll drape you like royalty to keep the fine hairs off your neck." Why do you think he feels like royalty?

What are some other metaphors or similes in the story?

Why do you think the story is called crown? What is the play on words?

Read page 10. What is the meaning?

What are some themes in the story?

The book is a Caldecott Honor Book, which honors the artist. Do you think this book is worthy of that honor? What is your opinion of the illustrations?

Do you have a favorite illustration?

When you read the book, you have to turn the book sideways to look at the last picture. Why do you think the artist made that decision?

Look at the back cover and find the name of the barber shop. Explain the double meaning.

What message do you think a child might get from this book?

This boy feels more confident after he's had a hair cut. What other things can help you feel confident, brave, and optimistic?

Has your hairstyle changed because of the pandemic? How do you feel about your new look?

I hope you have time to read and discuss the author's note at the back of the book.