

# Books by the Stack



## **The Mighty Miss Malone by Christopher Paul Curtis**

"We are a family on a journey to a place called wonderful" is the motto of Deza Malone's family. The twists and turns of their story reveal the devastation of the Depression and prove that Deza truly is the Mighty Miss Malone.

**Why you'll like it:** Heart-felt. Thought-provoking. Funny.

**About the Author:** Christopher Paul Curtis is an African-American writer of children's books. He may be known best for the Newbery Medal-winning *Bud, Not Buddy* and the critically acclaimed *The Watsons Go to Birmingham – 1963*.

### **Questions for Discussion**

1. Describe the Malone Family.
2. What is the purpose of the "Chiefs and Children's Chow Chats?"
3. Which family member is the first to lose sight of this purpose?
4. How are Deza & Jimmie's relationship with their parents?
5. How does the fishing trip change the Malone family?
6. Deza is an outstanding student, and Jimmie is a very good singer. Why does it take Mr. & Mrs. Malone longer to appreciate Jimmie's talents than it does to recognize Deza's abilities?
7. How does Deza continue to achieve in spite of the grades she receives in Flint?
8. Discuss Jimmie's reason for not wanting his mother to know that he is singing in a nightclub. How does she come to accept his achievement?
9. How do the Malones possess better survival skills than the Carsdales?
10. The Malones come face to face with racial bigotry. Discuss how the librarian displays prejudice

when she tells Deza and Clarice that Joe Louis is “credit to your race.” (p. 75)

11. What does Mrs. Malone mean when she says, “You have to know which battles are worth fighting.”(p. 83)
12. How is Deza a victim of prejudice in the Flint school? Discuss how she deals with it.
13. What does Mrs. Needham mean when she tells Deza, “If we lose you, we’ve lost this country. If we can’t get you to your true path, it’s the failure of every-one from President Roosevelt right down to me.” (p. 38)?
14. Discuss how Deza accepts the responsibility for the hope that Miss Needham places on her.
15. How does Mrs. Malone realize that Deza represents hope for the family and her people?
16. Discuss how Jimmie returns hope to the family. What is the symbol of hope at the end of the novel?
17. What is the meaning of the phrase, “Every cloud has a silver lining.” Which character contributes most to the silver lining?

*(Questions issued by publisher)*

