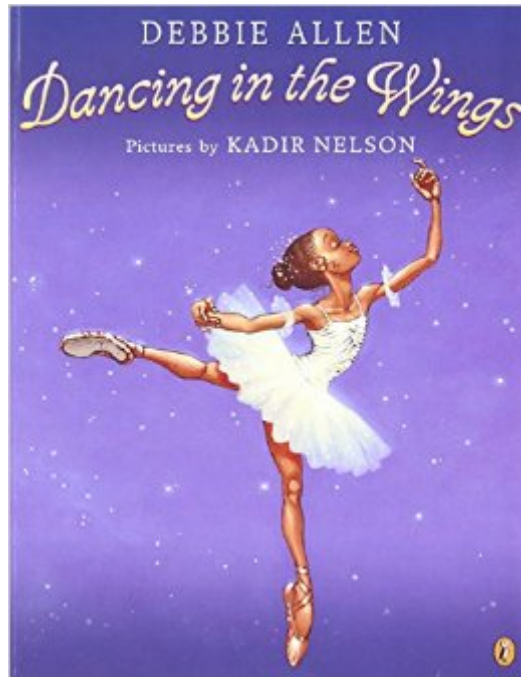


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# Dancing In The Wings



## Synopsis

Sassy is a long-legged girl who always has something to say. She wants to be a ballerina more than anything, but she worries that her too-large feet, too-long legs, and even her big mouth will keep her from her dream. When a famous director comes to visit her class, Sassy does her best to get his attention with her high jumps and bright leotard. Her first attempts are definitely not appreciated, but with Sassy's persistence, she just might be able to win him over. *Dancing in the Wings* is loosely based on actress/choreographer Debbie Allen's own experiences as a young dancer.

## Book Information

Paperback: 32 pages

Publisher: Puffin Books; Reprint edition (December 1, 2003)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0142501417

ISBN-13: 978-0142501412

Product Dimensions: 8.5 x 0.1 x 11.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars Â Â See all reviews Â (155 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #12,421 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #13 in Â Books > Children's Books >

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Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > Self-Esteem & Self-Respect

Age Range: 4 - 8 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 3

## Customer Reviews

I'm a fifth grade elementary school teacher and work in a black neighborhood. Recently our theme for the week was the biography of the famous ballet star, Evelyn Cisneros. Unfortunately, our school library did not have any information on Cisneros at the time. Instead, our media specialist read this wonderful book by Debbie Allen of "FAME" fame. Well, let me tell you, my students never laughed so hard during a book. They just simply loved it. Put-downs are a fact of life, especially (and unfortunately) in elementary school. I think the students really got the message loud and clear and in a fun and interesting, not preachy, way. As a class, we discussed how people are different and we need to accept others without making fun of them. It was also clear that we sound horrible when we tease and taunt each other, too. There were really great points of discussion above and beyond ballet and dancing. Debbie Allen is truly talented and not just as a dancer! My students learned

about the world of ballet, which was new to them. They were engaged while being read to and afterwards enjoyed talking and laughing about this book. I found it to be a tremendous teaching tool in that it opened up many topics of discussion that week and students connected to this book in an exciting way. It spoke to them in their own language and that's a difficult thing to do! My students can be hard to reach through books and yet Debbie Allen accomplished it with ease. The pictures were a delight, very expressive. I will buy this book now and use it in my classroom every year. I strongly recommend this book as a teaching tool, in all neighborhoods. I hope Allen writes more for children soon.

As a woman who is used to being the tallest female in the room, this book was a delight for me. It's clear to her father and I that our 3 year old daughter will be following in the footsteps (size 10 1/2) of her mother. We read this book now and then because it's never too soon to promote a positive self-image. I want my daughter to embrace her size and be proud of who she is.

I love books that are entertaining and teach a valuable lesson, which this book does. My 4-year old daughter absolutely loves Sassy!! When we read this book, she says that she is Sassy! My daughter recently had her recital after her first year of dance classes. This has been one of her favorite books during the year and in "preparation" for her recital. This book really touched my heart because my daughter is slim and tall for her age (the tallest in her dance class). She was also the only African-American in her class, which was a new experience for her. I love the way the book illustrates how being different doesn't have to be a negative, but can be a positive, depending on how you respond to it (an early lesson in self-esteem and the beauty of diversity)! My daughter had a wonderful time in her ballet class and was not teased for being different. But I'm sure it will happen one day, as it does with all children. When it does, we can refer to her "Sassy book."

This book was a refreshing antidote to the cruelly dismissive attitude our society in general, and the ballet world in particular, regularly takes towards tall girls.

This is your basic book about accepting diversity - in this case, the main character's height - as a good thing. Indeed, our main character realizes another lesson, which is that it's good to stand out sometimes :) The artwork is very expressive, and the language is very realistic. I will note that it's a pretty wordy book and that the characters are often insulting to one another, criticizing each other's appearance, talent (or lack thereof), and just generally having an attitude. Nothing other than what I

expect from their approximate age range, really - like I said, it's realistically written. However, it's probably better suited for the older end of the 4 - 8 group for these reasons.

I love this book because of the gorgeous illustrations, inspiring story and diverse cast. What I didn't love is the sassy attitude and borderline potty mouth the main character has. I bought it for my little sister and wasn't as excited about handing it over to her as I thought I'd be. I certainly don't want her using phrases like "your mama" and calling people ugly. Sassy also talks back to her teachers and tears down her peers and that is never addressed. Again, it's a sweet book with magnificent illustrations, but the 'tude was disappointing.

This book is about a ballerina who is taller than the rest of the students who take ballet and so is made fun of by them. Nobody is tall enough to be her partner so she never can display her talent until one day a man comes in to hold auditions for a dance festival. No one thinks that she can make it. Will she have a chance to show off her true talent? I enjoyed reading this book because it shows that even though other people may think that you can't succeed, it really depends on how YOU feel and how determined you are.

The first time I read this book, I was in love. I'm a fan of both Ms. Debbie Allen and Mr. Kadir Nelson, so I knew that the story and the artwork were going to be wonderful, but I never expected it touch me as it did. I don't have any children, but I have two nieces who at a very early age showed they were going to carry our family's legacy of being beautifully tall athletic women. I could feel Sassy's plight and I'd wished I had this story during those awkward adolescent years. Needless to say I've brought three copies and it is one of our favorites reads.

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