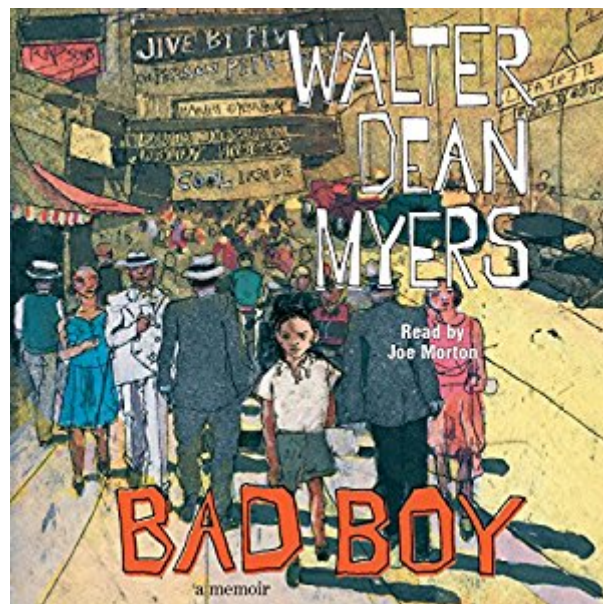


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# Bad Boy



## Synopsis

FOR USE IN SCHOOLS AND LIBRARIES ONLY. A Coretta Scott King Award winning author tells young readers what it was like being raised in Harlem, the town of Sugar Ray Robinson and Langston Hughes, in the 1940s and 1950s. --This text refers to the School & Library Binding edition.

## Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 4 hours and 55 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: HarperAudio

Audible.com Release Date: September 2, 2005

Language: English

ASIN: B000B9NDK4

Best Sellers Rank: #18 in Books > Teens > Biographies > Literary #35 in Books > Teens > Biographies > Cultural Heritage #40 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Children's Books > Biographies & History

## Customer Reviews

Please be aware of these two books with VERY SIMILAR TITLES- One by Walter Dean Myers, *Bad Boy: A Memoir*, the other- *Bad Boy* by Olivia Goldsmith. As I was looking at the reviews of Myers' book, I was caught off-guard by the numerous negative comments regarding his writing. After further investigation, it seems that many are commenting on Goldsmith's book. Just a heads up for those writing and reading these reviews.

This is a straightforward and workmanlike autobiography by a prolific writer of works for young readers, and is probably best for kids as young as eight through young teens. Myers' voice is calm and reflective. He has looked back on the vanished world of his 1940's and 50's Harlem childhood and adolescence with a deceptive calmness, and a pleasing recall of detail. School, friends, teachers, family life, community life, and (not insignificantly to Myers, a voracious reader) the covers and contents of pulp novels and magazines, as seen through a child's eyes - are all here. Some of the more disturbing facts of his young life are reported on in a deadpan manner that at first seems almost flat. In one emblematic incident, a well-meaning teacher asks him his career plans, and upon hearing that Myers hopes to become a lawyer, flat-out tells him he can't, since he has a speech

defect. Myers made trouble, and he matter-of-factly tells why. Kids will appreciate his thoughtful explanations and self-understanding. But Myers was also a reader - not just for escape, but for the love of literature- and he lets us in that that process (and its consequences to his social life), too. The chapters "Bad Boy," "I Am Not the Center of the Universe," and "Stuyvesant High" are particularly useful for their descriptions of important and formative experiences. This is a story that is told humbly. It lacks melodrama not because Myers' early life was dull, but because Myers is a quiet writer; he trusts himself and his legions of young readers. He invites them in this quiet memoir to enter his quite remarkable experiences - and to form their own opinions. I enjoyed this sensitive (but not humorless) story very much, and came away with renewed interest and respect for its author. Completely worthwhile.

The book *Bad Boy* by Walter Dean Myers is a memoir of the author's life. Set mostly in Harlem, the book follows Myers' troublesome childhood and the challenges he faced with his family life, his adoption, and his behavior. Though a bright child, he had a quick temper and a speech problem. This got him into many bad situations and unfortunately partly led to his "downfall" in school. In *Bad Boy*, I loved how the setting of the book is in Harlem, where I have visited many times. I am familiar with many of the places he "relaxed" in and feel connected to him somehow. The book is wonderfully written and shows that in the end, even a "troubled" boy can succeed. The author was adopted by Herbert and Florence Myers and many times talks about his biological and natural families in the book. He gets the Dean in his name from his biological father and the Myers in his name from his adoptive father. The book shows the world of poverty, something that I am not acquainted with at all. It showed me that everyone does not have the things that us "middle class" kids have. All in all, he was raised in a bad situation, but turned out good in the end. In a teenager's view, parents are wrong. Period. In reality, they are only wrong sometimes, not all the time, or, just don't understand. In the end of the book on page 205, his father says, "You wrote stories when you were a boy. You're a man, now." This shows that his father didn't understand his passion for writing, and thought that writing was not "man's work". I believe there were many small themes in the book. *Bad Boy* highlighted racism, teenage hood, and poverty just to name a few. As an African American teenager, I have experienced some, but not all of the things he has. I think that the main theme of the book is misunderstanding. When he spent all his time reading and writing his mother didn't understand him. When he skipped school, no one really understood him and he was sent to a social worker. Racism is product of misunderstanding. Even now, I don't understand why he skipped school, but then again, I haven't been adopted, or live in Harlem, or have a passion for reading. I

have not walked in his shoes. That is one of the reasons I read this book, so that I could see what his life was like. So that I could enter an unfortunate teenager's life and realize that I am truly blessed. All in all, this book is one of the best books I have read. I would recommend it to anyone in the hallway at school, or passers by on the sidewalk. His writings are geared toward children and teenagers, so it is a more appealing book to that group than to adults, but adults should read this too. Maybe they can venture into the life of a teenager, or a child in poverty. Maybe they can remember their childhood and how the world was so different then. A lot can be learned from this book, but I think that the most important thing is the acceptance of ideas and others.

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