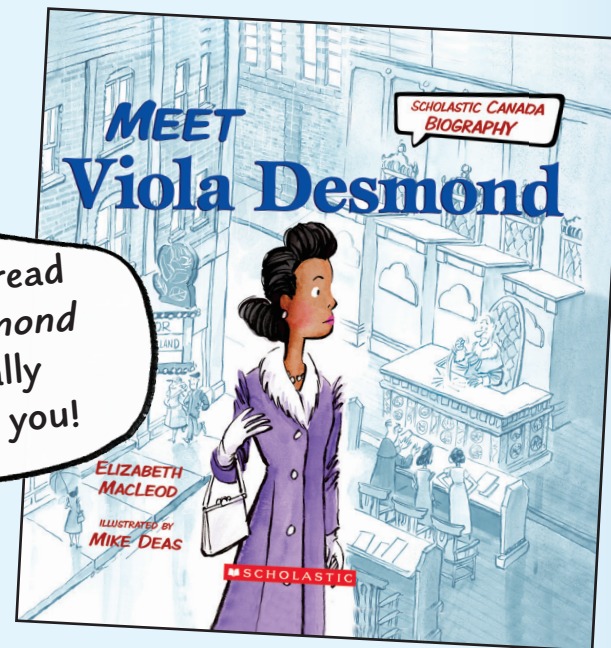


Meet Viola Desmond

A Book Review

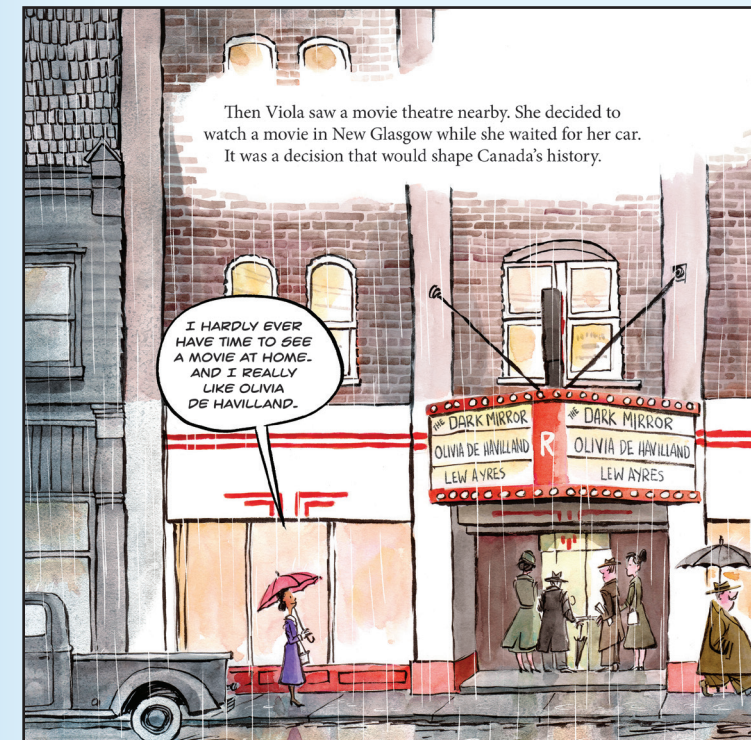


Hi, I'm Malia. I read *Meet Viola Desmond* and would totally recommend it to you!



The author of this biography is Elizabeth MacLeod and the illustrator is Mike Deas. A biography is a story about someone's life told by another person. It is usually told in chronological order. This biography introduced me to Viola Desmond and her legacy. The colourful art helped make the text easy to understand.

In the beginning of the book, we find out that Viola was from Halifax, Nova Scotia. She had lots of brothers and sisters! To support the family, her dad worked many jobs, including cutting hair. From a young age, Viola knew she wanted to open a hair salon. Because she was Black, no school in Halifax would train her. That was awful but it didn't stop Viola! She went to Montreal to go to beauty school. When she returned home, she opened her own hair salon. She had lots of Black customers. They automatically liked Viola because she was smart, caring, and funny. She started selling homemade beauty creams and trained other Black hairdressers. Viola was a successful businesswoman.



On a rainy November day in 1946, Viola ended up at a movie theatre in New Glasgow, Nova Scotia. After buying one movie ticket, she walked into the theatre and sat in a seat on the main floor. In this movie theatre, the main floor was reserved for White people. Viola didn't want to sit up in the balcony where Black people sat. She couldn't see the screen very well from up there. It's worth reading the book to see what happened to Viola and how her decision to sit in that seat changed Canada's history.

I like this chronicle because Viola stood up for herself and she was so brave. She is a great example of never giving up on your dreams. Another reason I like this book is that it has awesome illustrations. Thanks to the colourful art, I could imagine what life was like for Viola. I really connected to this book since Viola was a hairdresser and business owner like my mom. I find it pretty cool that Viola and my mom have these things in common.

Overall, the biography of Viola Desmond made me feel very sad because of the racism she faced. No one should be treated like that. This biography also made me feel happy because Viola's bravery sparked a movement for Black people to have equal rights. I think that having Viola's face on the 10-dollar bill is really the least Canada can do to celebrate how she shaped our history. It's too bad that there is no autobiography by Viola Desmond. I would read that, too!

