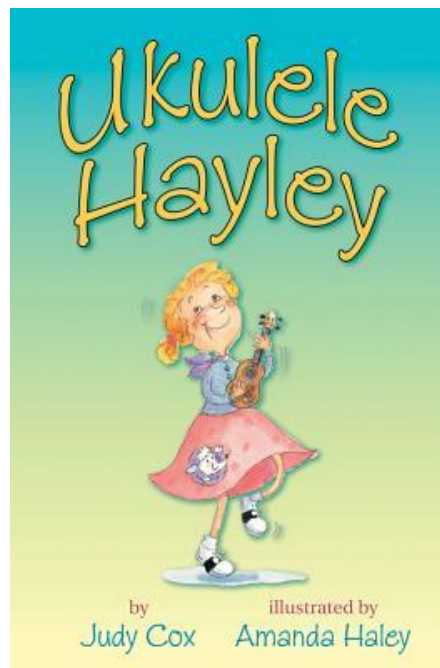




Ukulele Hayley

Judy Cox , Amanda Haley (Illustrator)

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Hayley has finally found her talent playing the ukulele! But after she starts her ukulele band at school, word comes that the music program and teacher are going to be cut. Hayley devises a plan to help ensure that doesn't happen. Basics on learning to play the ukulele are included in the back of this lively chapter book.

Ukulele Hayley Details

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From Reader Review Ukulele Hayley for online ebook

Jtimko says

"Untalented" Hayley purchases a ukulele at a garage sale and begins to learn to play it in hopes of finding her own special talent. This leads to a win at the talent show, a school ukulele club and a showdown at a school board meeting when the school music program is threatened.

Beginning chapter book readers will delight in the ingenuity of Hayley. Short sentences and a realistic plot will allow the young reader to read through the book with ease. Her ability to overcome her shyness and stage a successful campaign will encourage young readers to take a chance on something. Cute cartoon-like illustrations add to the worth of the book. This would be a suitable purchase for the library serving young readers. Recommended for grades 2 through 4.

Teresa Scherping Moulton says

Hayley is shy. And she's always being called "shrimp" or "too young." But when she hears about an upcoming talent show, she thinks she's ready to come out of her shell. After finding an old ukulele at a garage sale, and inspired by a ukulele-playing forebear, Hayley practices relentlessly and impresses her school with her talent show performance. Other kids are suddenly interested in the ukulele, and pretty soon Hayley has organized a ukulele band. With the help of their music teacher, they even get a gig playing at a senior center. But rumor has it that the school is going through budget cuts, and the music program may be the prime target! Can a former "shrimp" make a difference, or is this the end of Ukulele Hayley?

I can't say this was the most thrilling book I've ever read, but writing early chapter books is tough. There were a lot of things I liked about this, despite the simple language and sentence structure. Although the ending is pretty optimistic rather than realistic, I did like the realistic details included like how setting up an official school club might work or that you need a permit to hold a rally. I like that the book showed the hard work and teamwork necessary to get attention to an issue. And from what little I know about the ukulele from learning to play it myself, this aspect was very realistic!

I would recommend this book to grades 1-4, especially those who like music and realistic school stories. Readalikes might include *Cody and the Fountain of Happiness* by Tricia Springstubb and *Big News! (Emma Is On the Air #1)* by Ida Siegal.

Caryn Caldwell says

When Hayley's third-grade teacher announces an upcoming talent show, Hayley is dismayed to realize she doesn't have any show-worthy talents. But then she discovers an old ukulele at a garage sale. With the help of a few mentors -- and a lot of practice -- Hayley becomes very good at her instrument. So good, in fact, that she spearheads a ukulele club for her classmates. But the school budget has fallen short, and the entire music program may be at risk. Hayley and her uke-playing friends will have to work hard to save the music.

Hayley is a fun, spunky character. Her kindness, determination, and creativity are admirable, and she's easy to root for. The voice is pretty adult at times, and the ending is a little too pat. Still, kids will likely have fun following Hayley's journey, and it could be a wonderful inspiration for music-lovers everywhere. I wouldn't be surprised if it even spurred a few ukulele players among its readers.

Barbara says

Third grader Hayley Godwin is used to be ignored or dismissed because she's too young or too small to do what her siblings and friends do. But when she hears that the school will have a talent contest, she desperately wants to be involved. After buying a ukulele at a yard sale, she practices hard, enlists the help of the school music teacher, Mr. Y, and wins over her school mates. Suddenly, it seems as though everyone wants to learn to play the ukulele, and despite several obstacles, Hayley keeps playing and surmounting the roadblocks in her way. When the School Board cuts funding for music classes, she and her classmates organize a protest to make the School Board members reconsider their decision. It's hard not to like Hayley and fail to applaud her persistence and how she finds her voice so she can speak out on the things that matter. Not only is the story interesting, but the illustrations show depth to Hayley as she thinks about her great-great-aunt Ruby who didn't let polio stop her from playing the instrument.

Christie says

Here's my 8-yr old's summary of the book:

It is about Ukulele Hayley. She is a girl. She looks at a photograph and sees one of her great-grandmothers with a ukulele, I think. And then she gets a ukulele at a garage sale, and she doesn't know how to play it. It just goes twang, twang, twang, twang. She brings the ukulele to Mr. Y, the music teacher. He tunes the ukulele. She forms a band. Mr. Penwick and other people vote to take the music away from school. Her brilliant plan is to have a concert right before the meeting. She wants them to change vote number one. Yes, and Mr. Y gets to keep his job.

Mary says

Hayley believes that she is the only untalented member of her family so when she buys a ukulele at a garage sale, she is determined to play it. Hayley not only learns to play it, but forms a band, and eventually becomes involved in saving the school's music program. A satisfying story about believing in yourself, caring about others, and the benefits of learning to play a musical instrument.

Doranne Long says

Hayley is an adorable little 3rd grader who learns to play the ukulele. She not only makes beautiful music but makes the world a better place. I enjoyed reading Ukulele Hayley, a modern children's book. It was fun, with good messages. I loved the clever writing; " Were you worried....? "Never"... "Well maybe....Make that some of the time...Well actually I worried all of the time....But.....lots of people believe in the power of music..."

Edie says

A charming story about a shy girl who finds her "voice" through music, particularly a ukulele. Hayley is small (and unhappy about the moniker "shrimp" that seems now attached to her) and shy and unsure of her talent (when the new music teacher announces a talent show) but the whimsical purchase of a ukulele changes all of that. Hayley's family is definitely middle class, struggling with dad's job loss but in a positive way, she is loved in an absent-minded kind of fashion and the laid back nature of the story helps it to ring true. The importance of music in how it brings kids together, builds confidence and creates community is clearly revealed in the development of the story. I knew the resolution would be a good one but I still couldn't put it down.

Mindy says

Somewhat mixed about this one. But mostly it was a cute story about a quiet girl discovering something worth standing up for. Plus there are tips for learning the ukulele at the end. Love that.

I didn't love the fact that Hayley is inspired by a photograph of a relative (that she never knew) who played the ukulele in a band despite wearing a leg brace (polio). There was a bit of if-she-can-play-uke-with-a-leg-brace-i-can-definitely-do-it, which is annoying and ridiculous. A leg brace has nothing to do with playing a ukulele.

Unfortunately, it's probably realistic.

Overall, I liked the book. I read it aloud to my 5yo, and she wants to learn to play the uke now.

Angie says

Hayley finds an old ukulele at a garage sale. She learns how to play and starts a uke band at school. The school board wants to cut costs so they are going to cut the music program at school. Hayley and her friends organize a protest at the school board meeting to get the music program reinstated. Learning the ukulele really brings Hayley out of her shell and helps her make friends and make a difference in her school. There is a good lesson in here about standing up for yourself and for what is right. Nice beginning chapter book.

Gail Shipley says

This is a well-written book about a young girl who plays the ukulele and gets her music teacher to help her start a band. As the year progresses she learns the music teacher is to lose his job due to budget cuts. Hayley comes up with a plan to try to save the music department. Reading Ukulele Hayley brings to the fore the plight of educators today and shows that no one is too young to try to solve big problems. Ukulele Hayley is an easy read for younger children.

Tasheena says

I'm 34 but I needed something light and easy to read after reading some serious books. I picked this children's book out since I play the ukulele. It's a great book with great messages for kids. Highly recommend!

Abby Johnson says

Hayley's school is having a talent show and Hayley desperately wants to be in it, but she's super shy and doesn't know what she would perform. Then Hayley comes across a ukulele at a yard sale and buys it. Soon she's learning to play and discovering that it's tons of fun! But when budget cuts threaten the music program at her school, Hayley will have to take the lead to save the day.

It's an okay story, but I prefer Jasmine Toguchi, *Drummer Girl* by Debbi Michiko Florence for a story about a girl learning a new talent for a school talent show and *The Last Holiday Concert* by Andrew Clements for a story about kids standing up against music cuts in their school.

Ms. Yingling says

Hayley wants to find something to do in the school talent show, so she's thrilled when she buys a vintage ukulele at a garage sale. She convinces her very busy music teacher to show her the basics, and ends up getting a large number of students to join her in forming a ukulele band, just like her great-aunt had. The economy is tight, though, and working against her-- not only is her father back in school after losing his job, but the school board is working on budget cuts-- which will include cutting music. Hayley and her band rally and manage to restore the program with some help from senior citizens at a nursing home the bad visited.

Strengths: This is a nice, realistic story. I especially enjoyed how Hayley's family was portrayed. In the picture of them heading off to garage sales, they are all on bikes, and ALL wearing helmets.

Weaknesses: Not that students would notice, but I thought the issue of the budget cuts was not done realistically. The school board member is shown as pompous and uncaring, and I doubt that even donated money would save the music program. (My district just went through this, and lots of cuts were made to music, despite the efforts of supporters.) My other slight beef is that *Holiday House* covers are routinely... meh. Not horrible, but not good, either. I had a whole box of ARCs from Baker and Taylor, and when I laid them all out of the table, I could tell which ones were from this publisher. I know it's expensive to do good covers, but it's more of a formatting issue, somehow. Can't quite put my finger on it.

Teresa Bateman says

Hayley is the shortest kid in her third grade class. She also feels like she has no particular talent. Then she buys a ukulele at a yard sale and the school music teacher gets her started on her new instrument. Soon Haley is forming a ukulele club at school, practicing and improving her own talent, and helping other students feel like part of a group. When budget cuts threaten the school's music program, Haley rallies the troops to save the music. This is a fun, light story, perfect for easy chapter book readers. Haley's activism teaches a good

lesson, and the author does a wonderful job of creating realistic, empathetic characters. Hey, this even made ME want to play the ukulele!
