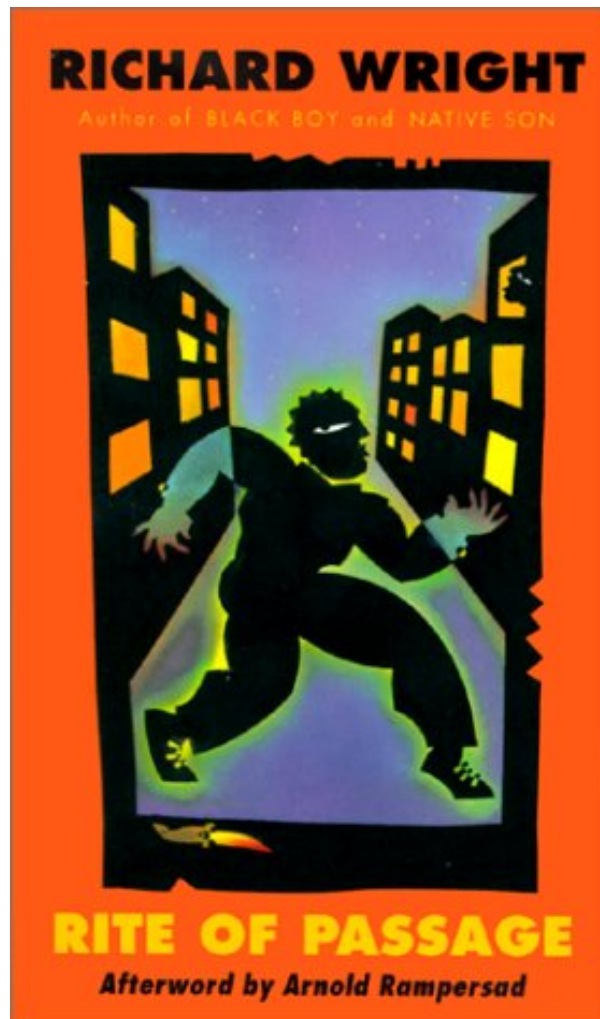


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RICHARD WRIGHT

Author of *BLACK BOY* and *NATIVE SON*



RITE OF PASSAGE

Afterword by Arnold Rampersad

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From Publishers Weekly

This posthumously published novella depicts the brutal conditions facing young African American men in 1940s Harlem. Though written more than 50 years ago, its portrayals of crime, alienation and adolescent disillusionment remain "highly relevant," said PW. Ages 12-up.

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Gerry Larson, Chewning Middle School, Durham, NC

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RITE OF PASSAGE BY RICHARD WRIGHT PDF

Harlem. The late 1940s. Fifteen-year-old Johnny Gibbs loves his parents, respects his teachers, and is a model student. Suddenly, his familiar world falls apart. Johnny learns he is really a foster child who the welfare authorities have decreed now must go and live with another family. Stunned by the revelation, Johnny runs away. The startling events that follow, during Johnny's nightlong confrontation with alienation and loneliness, will inexorably push him past the frontiers of childhood and into an unknown, violent world beyond. *Rite of Passage*, Richard Wright's never-before-published story of Johnny Gibbs's fall from grace, is as pertinent to the fate of many young people today as it was when it was first conceived nearly fifty years ago.

- Sales Rank: #14856239 in Books
- Published on: 1996-01
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: .65" h x 4.24" w x 7.08" l,
- Binding: School & Library Binding
- 160 pages

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2 of 2 people found the following review helpful.

Rite of Passage - a one day journey

By Max Mudd

Rite of Passage is a short book that takes place over the period of one day. Johnny, a fifteen year-old goes from goody-goody two shoes teacher's pet momma's boy to knife fight "don't mess with me or I'll cut you up" gangster boy. The story started with Johnny getting straight A's in school, walking home to his bowl of soup waiting for him. When he gets there, he finds out his parents aren't his real parents. He is going to go to another foster home. His "parents" were supposed to tell him a year earlier, and they never did. He waited in disbelief and anxiousness until his new parents arrived, then he had no other choice in mind and ran. He ran to his best friend, Billy, who let him join his gang, that Johnny never knew about. He had stolen some candy bars to live off of and Billy's gang let him join after he spared their leader in a death fight. He later went out mugging people for money, and it ended when he went to sleep. It ended very abruptly, and went very fast. It was kind of hard to follow, and had some strange moments. I would recommend this book to people that like a book with a very realistic look on life. It was a good book, but I wouldn't have wanted to read it if I didn't have to.

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

Great story but not enough

By A Customer

I did not really like the book, Rite of Passage. I thought the story was too short and that the ending was not conclusive enough. All the events of the story happen in less than one day. It could have been developed a lot more. In the story, there were some things that were brought up that seemed would be important later, but as I finished the book I realized they were not mentioned again. Also, there was no real ending to the story. With some literature, this form of ending works well. It sometimes leaves the reader hanging and makes them think. But when I finished this story, instead of that feeling I had more of the feeling, "That's it?"

There were some good points to the story too. One thing was that it caught my sympathy. I felt the same emotions that the characters were feeling. I was worried for them and felt sorry for them! It also made me think about how people are less fortunate, and how other people feel. We see sad people every day, but do we really stop to think about how it would be to be them?

I would not really recommend this book to other people. I thought that it was too depressing and did not have a conclusion! Maybe the reason I did not like it was because I like being happy, but I do not know. I think this would be a great beginning and middle to an interesting book, but it needs something more.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

Rite of Passage

By A Customer

In *Rite of Passage* by Richard Wright, Johnny Gibbs has a wonderful life: he gets all A's in school, has great friends, and he loves his family. But his whole life changes in an instant. Rushing home with the thought of his mother's delicious stew in mind, he finds out that the family he had known and loved his entire life, were not his own. They were his foster family, and he is shocked to find out, too, that he is being sent away to live with another, brand-new, family. Johnny has no other choice but to run. In one single day his life seems to take a wrong and drastic turn, and his world becomes an inescapable bad dream.

I recommend reading *Rite of Passage* because of its simple but involving story, exciting events, and the lessons it teaches the reader about life, family, and love. You feel like you're right beside Johnny as he goes through his "rite of passage." You get close to him, understand his character, and feel his pain.

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