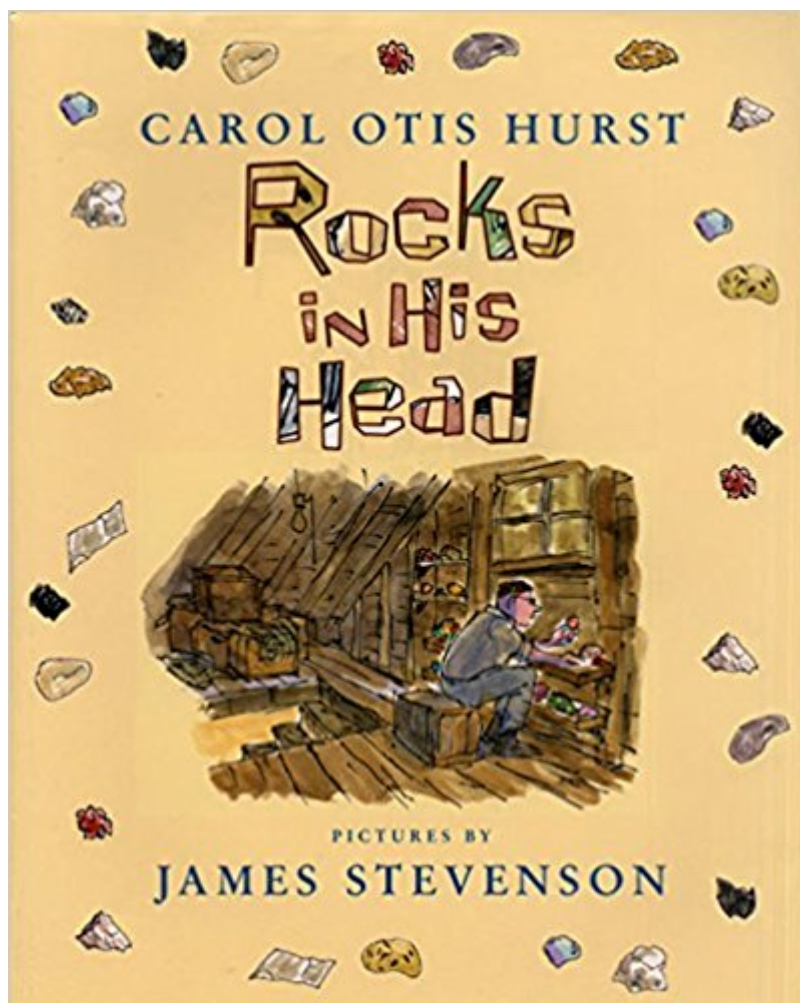


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# Rocks In His Head (Avenues)



## Synopsis

Some people collect stamps. Other people collect coins. Carol Otis Hurst's father collected rocks. Nobody ever thought his obsession would amount to anything. They said, "You've got rocks in your head" and "There's no money in rocks." But year after year he kept on collecting, trading, displaying, and labeling his rocks. The Depression forced the family to sell their gas station and their house, but his interest in rocks never wavered. And in the end the science museum he had visited so often realized that a person with rocks in his head was just what was needed. Anyone who has ever felt a little out of step with the world will identify with this true story of a man who followed his heart and his passion.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 440L (What's this?)

Series: Avenues

Hardcover: 32 pages

Publisher: Greenwillow Books; 1st edition (May 8, 2001)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0060294035

ISBN-13: 978-0060294038

Product Dimensions: 8 x 0.2 x 10 inches

Shipping Weight: 11.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.9 out of 5 stars 26 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #612,051 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #103 in [Books > Children's](#)

[Books > Education & Reference > Science Studies > Nature > Rocks & Minerals](#) #616

[in Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > Jobs & Careers](#) #1465 in [Books >](#)

[Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Family Life > Parents](#)

Age Range: 4 - 8 years

Grade Level: Kindergarten - 5

## Customer Reviews

With great affection and an appealing nostalgia, Hurst (Through the Lock, reviewed below) recounts the story of her father, an avid rock collector from the time he was a boy. When people commented that "he had rocks in his pockets and rocks in his head," he would answer with an agreeable "Maybe I have," then reach into his pocket and eagerly add, "Take a look at this one." This response, conveying both the hero's humility and passion, becomes a recurring refrain. Stevenson

conveys the fellow's easygoing manner with elegant pen-and-ink wash illustrations. Together, author and artist chart the boy's growth into manhood and touch on the world events that shape him. As a young man, he opens a filling station, where he displays his labeled rocks and minerals and learns how to repair the then-new Model T. After the Depression shuts down his business, he moves his cherished collection into the attic of his home, finding odd jobs wherever he can. The story's conclusion will prove as satisfying to readers as it was to Hurst's father: the director of the local museum offers him a dream job the position of curator of mineralogy. Dominated by earth tones, Stevenson's artwork convincingly evokes both the personality of this endearing protagonist and the period in which he lived. An emphatic endorsement for youngsters to follow their passions. Ages 5-up. Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc.

PreSchool-Grade 3-Hurst tells the story of her father's passion for rock collecting in this gently humorous picture book. "People said he had rocks in his pockets and rocks in his head. He didn't mind. It was usually true." As a boy, he collected rocks. When he grew up, his carefully labeled rock collection occupied a place of honor on the back wall of his filling station. However, once the Depression hit and the filling station closed, he had to look for work. When there was none to be found, he would go to the science museum, where he eventually attracted the attention of the director. A stint as the nighttime janitor, combined with his unquenchable love for rocks, eventually led to his being named Curator of Mineralogy, despite his lack of a college degree. The narrative has the polish of a family story often told, and the author paints a touching picture of a man who quietly pursues his passion, no matter what others think. Stevenson's watercolor-and-ink illustrations, with their trademark sketchy style, capture the mild-mannered hero perfectly. Rendered in a palette of soft sepia tones, these warm pictures call to mind an earlier era. Pair this book with Lynne Barasch's *Radio Rescue* (Farrar, 2000), a similar biographical tale set in days gone by. Kathleen Kelly MacMillan, Carroll County Public Library, Eldersburg, MD Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc.

This picture book tells the true story of the author's father, who collected rocks and dreamed of working with them in some way. Instead, he married, raised a family, and ran a gas station -- all the while collecting rocks, labeling them, and showing them to anybody who asked about them. Then came the Great Depression and Hurst's father, like millions of other people, was out of a job. When he wasn't looking for work, he spent time in a nearby museum, looking at the rock collection. This turned out to be his lucky break: you'll have to read the story to find out the results of the lucky

break. The illustrations, by James Stevenson, bring an uncommon common man to life. A warm, wonderful, true life story.

This book is one of my favorite stories. Better yet, it is a true story of a man with a passion for rocks. His life-long interest became his life's work as well. He is an inspiration to all. This book was a gift to my grandson who likes to find rocks as well as a gift to his parents as a reminder of how important a hobby --and a passion for learning --can be. This is a book for people young and old, and especially anyone who likes to find rocks.

Charming illustrations and a true story make this book a "gem." The author is writing about her father who went from running a gas station to being curator of a large museum all because of his love of rocks. There are several lessons here for my students - perseverance, hard work, following your passion, all mixed with a bit of rock science. A nice combination.

Really enjoyable

This is a lovely little book that will help children not only learn to read but will interest them in geology too. It would be great for a school library.

Got this to read to my second grade class, as we were studying rocks and minerals. They really liked it!

Sweet story of hope and realization. It's never too late to do what you LOVE!

I got this as a christmas present for my dad (he's a geologist), and the simple story and lovely illustrations work great together. My dad loved it =)

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