

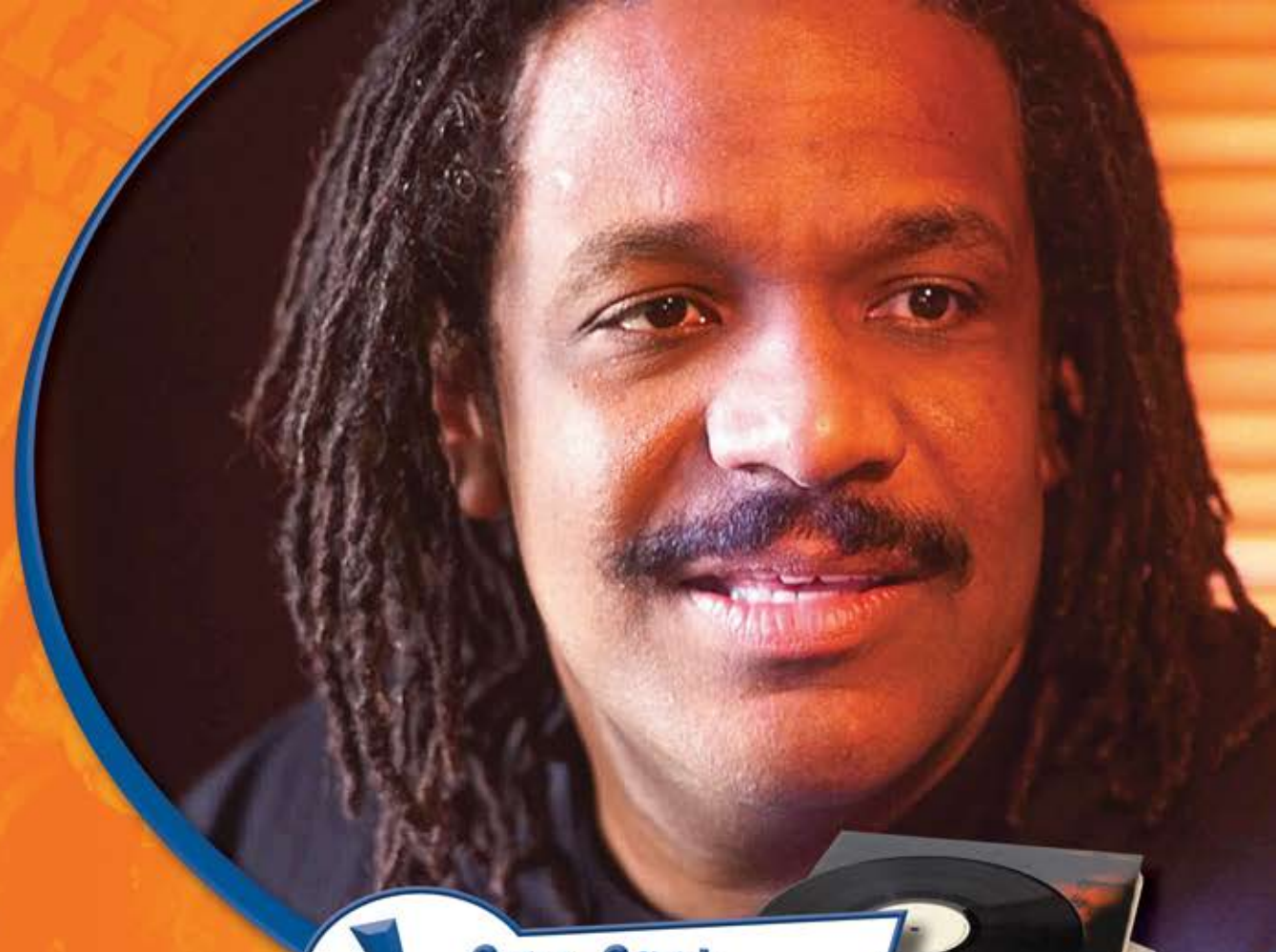
Searching for a Voice

Christopher Paul Curtis was born on May 10, 1953. He grew up in Flint, Michigan, and was the second of five children.



“The highest praise comes when a young reader tells me, ‘I really liked your book.’”

Christopher Paul Curtis



! fun fact

Christopher likes to listen to music. He owns more than 3,000 records!



Christopher liked playing basketball and baseball. He also liked to write. When he was about 10 years old, he told his family he wanted to be an author.

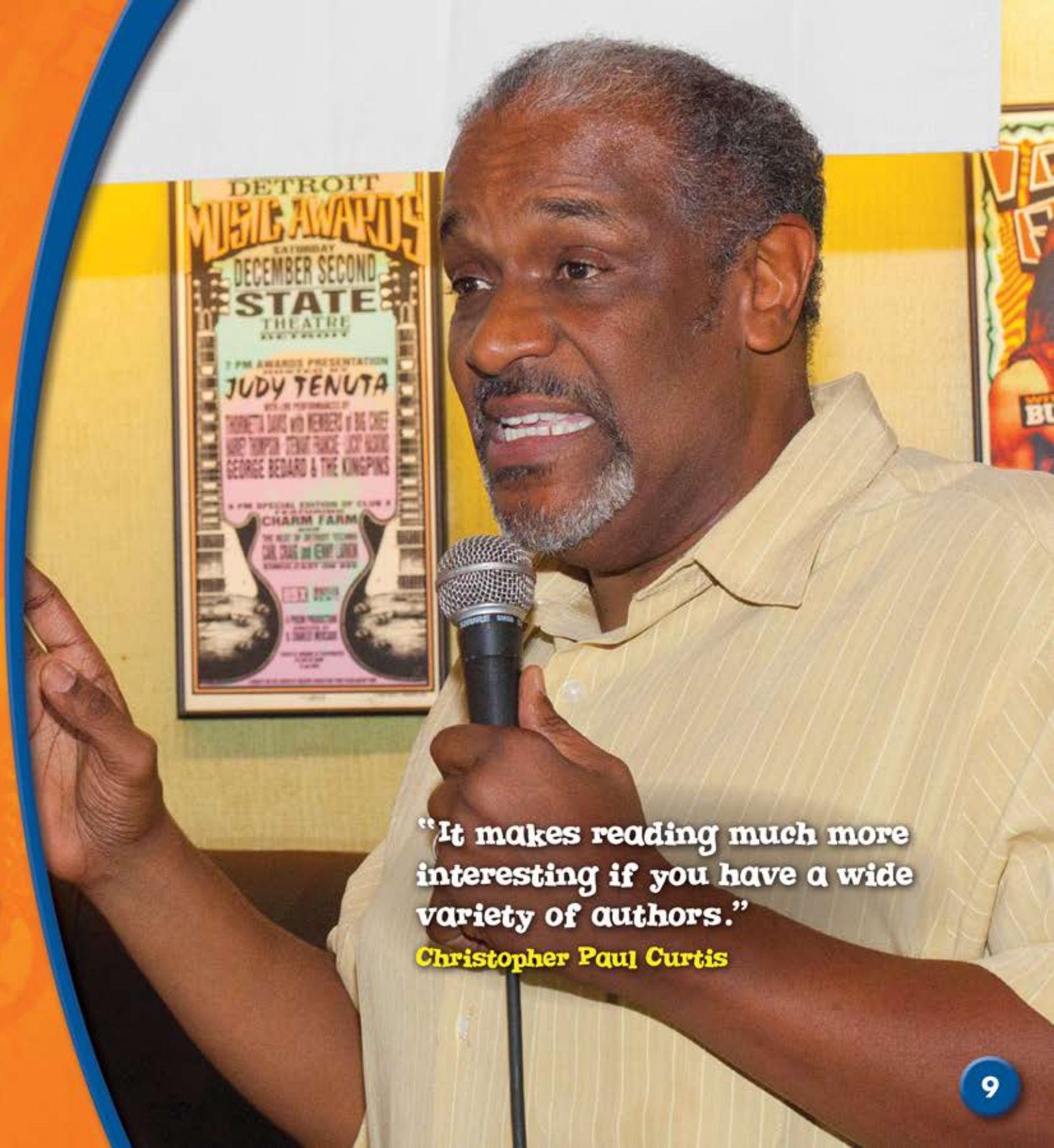
Christopher was also a reader. However, he struggled to find books he connected with. At the time, few children's books were written by African-American authors.

Instead, he read magazines and comic books. Some of his favorites were *Superman*, *Batman*, and *MAD* magazine.



! fun fact

On Saturdays, Christopher's family often went to the library together.

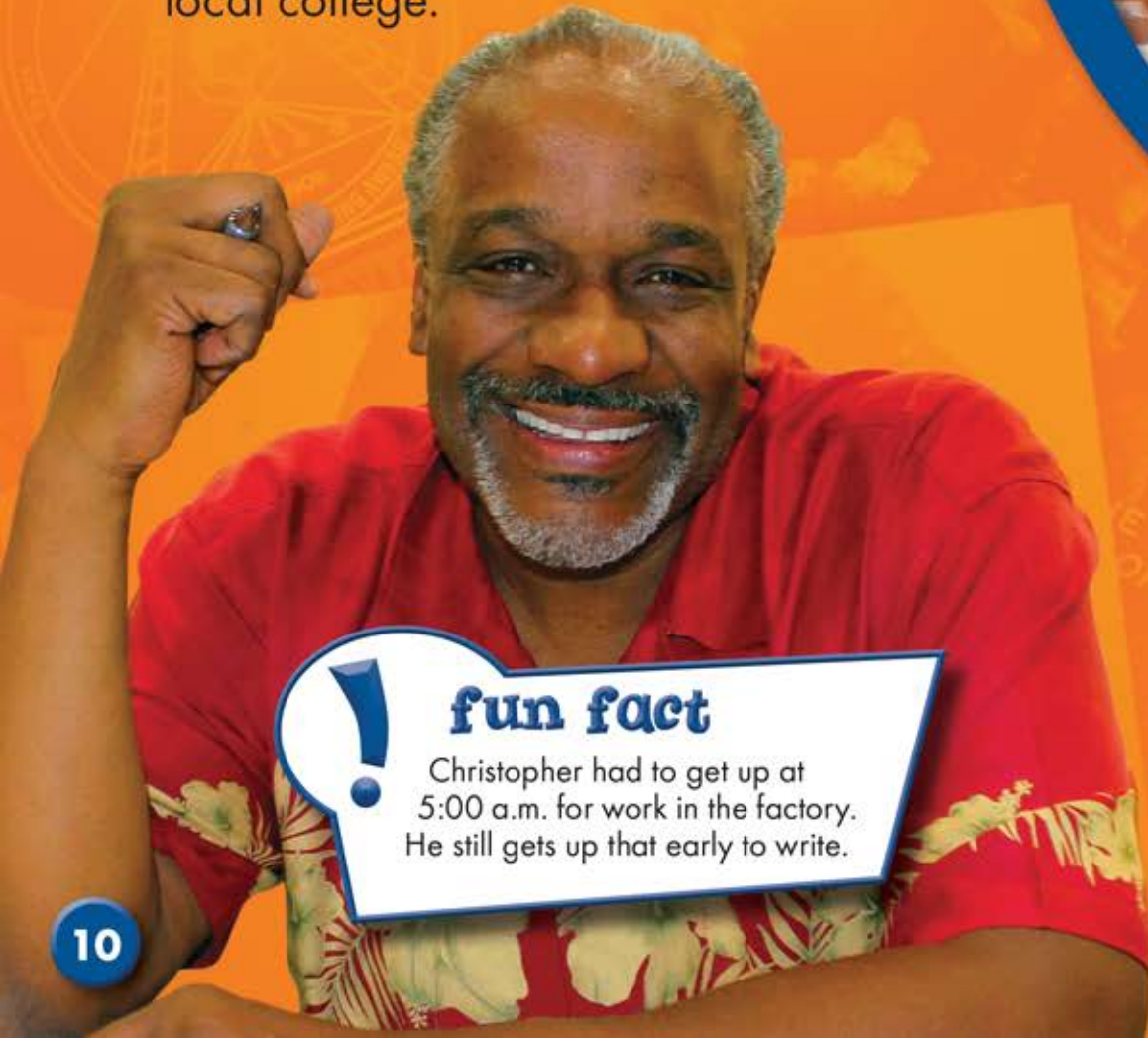


"It makes reading much more interesting if you have a wide variety of authors."

Christopher Paul Curtis

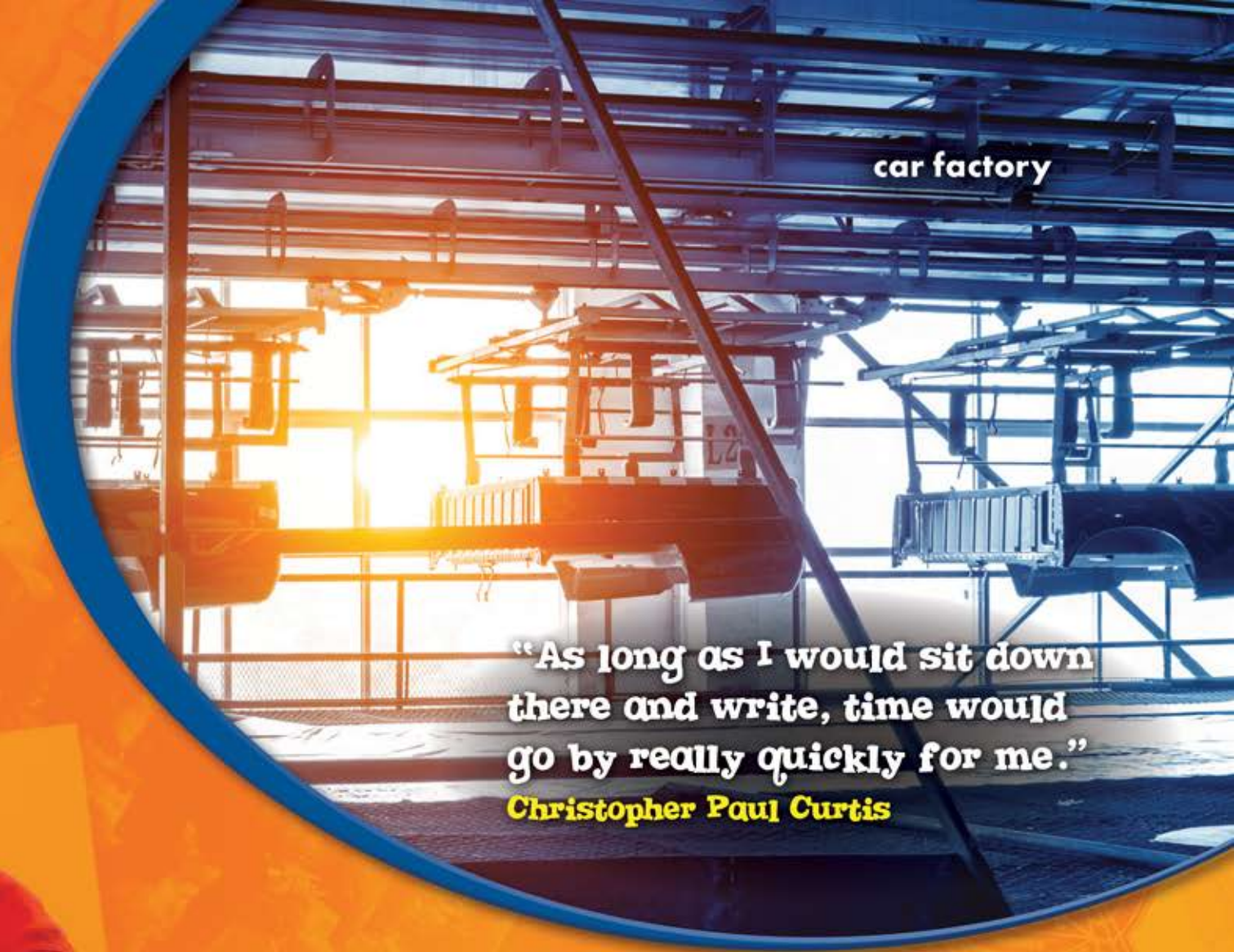
A Budding Interest

After high school, Christopher's parents wanted him to continue his education. Instead, he took a job at a factory putting cars together. He also took night classes at the local college.



! fun fact

Christopher had to get up at 5:00 a.m. for work in the factory. He still gets up that early to write.



car factory

“As long as I would sit down there and write, time would go by really quickly for me.”

Christopher Paul Curtis

The job paid well, but Christopher did not enjoy working on an assembly line. He often grew bored during his breaks. He wrote letters and sketched stories to pass the time.