

**Book Title: Raising Blaze****Author: Debra Ginsberg****Publisher: Harper Collins****Year: 2002****ISBN: 0-06-000432-0****Type: Nonfiction****Reviewed by Jim Teagarden****Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS**

The unflinching account of a parent charged with "bringing up an extraordinary son in an ordinary world" is the basis of Ms. Ginsberg's book *Raising Blaze*. Her knowledge that her son was unique was present at the moment of his birth. What came much later was the knowledge that for many Blaze's differences would not be seen as gifts but as impediments to his success. His development was a mirror of his uniqueness: he never crawled but rather at age one stood and walked; by age four, he knew the complete works of Miles Davis; and by age five, assigned colors to the days of the week, letters, and later words. From his first day of kindergarten, Blaze was considered a "problem" in the classroom. The host of experts who sought to label him were equally frustrated and unable to reach a consensus on a diagnosis, course of intervention, or prognosis.

Writing with passion and humor, Debra Ginsberg provides the reader with a front row seat as she spins her tale of endless meetings with school personnel, psychologists, and many other professions, all of whom arrive with their answers to what makes Blaze "different" and convinced that their answer is the correct one.

A powerful advocate of her son and a compelling voice for those raising special kids, Ginsberg weaves her personal story of challenges and triumphs into a book that speaks for all parents. *Raising Blaze* is also a message of hope for all those who have difficulty in following Blaze's grandfather's advice to "give the teachers what they want". Throughout the book Ginsberg's message that a single person whether parent, teacher, or other can be a safe harbor in life's storm or can be the storm itself should be taken to heart by all privileged to work with the unique children of the world.