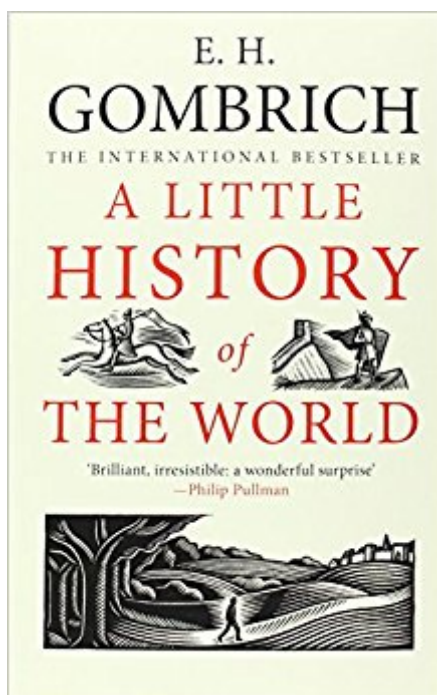


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A Little History Of The World (Little Histories)



Synopsis

E. H. Gombrich's bestselling history of the world for young readers tells the story of mankind from the Stone Age to the atomic bomb, focusing not on small detail but on the sweep of human experience, the extent of human achievement, and the depth of its frailty. The product of a generous and humane sensibility, this timeless account makes intelligible the full span of human history. In forty concise chapters, Gombrich tells the story of man from the stone age to the atomic bomb. In between emerges a colorful picture of wars and conquests, grand works of art, and the spread and limitations of science. This is a text dominated not by dates and facts, but by the sweep of mankind's experience across the centuries, a guide to humanity's achievements and an acute witness to its frailties.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Starred Review. This is an unusual work for Yale: a children's history originally published 70 years ago. But it is a work one can quickly come to love. Gombrich, later known as an art historian, wrote this primer in 1935, when he was a young man in Vienna (it was soon banned by the Nazis as too "pacifist"). Rewritten (and updated) in English mainly by Gombrich himself (who died in 2001, age 92, while working on it), the book is still aimed at children, as the language makes clear: "Then, slowly the clouds parted to reveal the starry night of the Middle Ages." But while he addresses his readers directly at times, Gombrich never talks down to them. Using vivid imagery, storytelling and sly humor, he brings history to life in a way that adults as well as children can appreciate. The book

displays a breadth of knowledge, as Gombrich begins with prehistoric man and ends with the close of WWII. In the final, newly added chapter, Gombrich's tone sadly darkens as he relates the rise of Hitler and his own escape from the Holocaust. "Children, he writes, "must learn from history how easy it is for human beings to be transformed into inhuman beings" and ends on a note of cautious optimism about humanity's future. (Oct. 13) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

This is the first English translation of a book written in 1935 in German and translated into 18 languages. Thirty years later, a second German edition was published with a new final chapter. In 40 brief chapters, Gombrich relates the history of humankind from the Stone Age through World War II. In between are historic accounts of such topics as cave people and their inventions (including speech), ancient life along the Nile and in Mesopotamia and Greece, the growth of religion, the Dark Ages, the age of chivalry, the New World, and the Thirty Years' War. Much of this history is told through concise sketches of such figures as Confucius, Alexander the Great, Hannibal, Jesus Christ, Charlemagne, Leonardo da Vinci, Napoleon, and Columbus. Gombrich was asked to write a history geared to younger readers, so the book is filled with innumerable dates and facts, yet it is one to be read by adults. With 41 black-and-white woodcut illustrations and nine maps, it is a timeless and engaging narrative of the human race. Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved

This is exactly what it says it is...a LITTLE history of the world....the size of the book alone should be an indicator of that. As a historian, a history teacher and a homeschool mom, I love this book when paired with more in depth material. I have read many negative reviews (go to the 1 stars for this especially) and have found almost to a T that they are all commenting on the fact that religion is brought into the telling. Religion is a part of history. It was everywhere until very recently and until this day and age, it has always been the color of stories and history books. The way that history is written and interpreted, the objectives that are brought into history - and they ALWAYS are - is called zeitgeist, or the spirit of the age. In a nutshell, this is a lovely book meant for children. It is meant to appeal to their sense of wonder.

This is a pleasant little book with a whole lot that is missing, but still plenty enough that's sewn together in a meaningful narrative to provide kids of all ages with a thoughtful journey through the ages. Gombrich's respectful and conversational voice encourages you, the reader, to evaluate the

history as it unfolds. This is a nice literary device to help the stories stick. The result is not just a stack of stories, but rather a conversation that you're invited to participate in to envision history with your own values and imagination. It's thoughtful and educational history. If you don't know your world history, and wanna learn some basics from a book, it doesn't get any more fun than this. Enjoy!

When I saw Little History of The World in ' site I knew (at once) it was the perfect one for me! I looked inside the book and I read all reviews about it. I ordered the illustrated edition and I fell in love with the book immediately. I bought another one and gave it to a friend as a gift. She loved it too. Reading sites I discovered there is a CD edition of this book, and I ordered it too. It is exactly the same story in a pretty good reading. Gombrich is a famous art historian and he wrote The Story of Art (a best seller). I strongly recommend you buy both Gombrich's books, if you are the kind of person who likes to have the best reference in your library.

This is a great book for kids and will hopefully get my neice and nephew interested in history, which is a subject I dearly love and enjoy reading about. My only objection is to the vocabulary. There are High School graduates out there, however sad it may be, that would need a dictionary to help them with this book. Much less preteen kids! I would like to hope that my neice and nephew will do exactly that, use a dictionary (more likely the internet, I suppose) or ask their parents for help - but I just don't know.

I gave this book to my 14-year-old son, who is very interested in world history, as a Christmas gift. He devoured the entire book over his two-week Christmas break. He said this was the best book on world history that he has ever read. As he read, he Googled and read about different parts of history within the book. I was very impressed. If you know a teen or older adolescent who is interest in history this is definitely the book for them.

I really enjoyed the book and audio narration. The storytelling approach to history is not comprehensive but it does give an overview in a memorable way. It has a very European perspective. It was written pre World War II but a final chapter was added which added World War II and commented on past chapters. As you are reading that last chapter, be sure to go back to the previous chapters and read them again. This is a wonderful book for adults to read and discuss with kids and then use the Internet and Library to research the questions which will invariably come up.

Gombrich delivers what he promises, "A Little History." To a reviewer who is a reader, rather than a historian, the book conveys to young students a story with a conscience, but not with a politically correct agenda, which pleases this reader in spades. It is meant to be read aloud to the student, presumably by a parent or teacher. It is conversational, it doesn't pander or speak down to the audience, it occasionally asks a question, or throws in a comment. First published in 1936 - the lazy reviewer neglects to determine the number of printings- in the German, the little classic (280 pages) was translated into English in 2005. That should attest to someone's idea of the work's worthiness. Although meant for kids, Gombrich writes as if at least some of the material had come to the student's attention before. Few words need to be defined, there is no overload of names or dates, and a few maps are included. It is apparent that Gombrich was writing for a student whose standards were more demanding than in today's America. It would be a shock to this reviewer's system to find that fifty per cent of contemporary high school seniors would pass a test covering the material in "A Little History." Alas. The work is Euro-centric, as the author acknowledges. The American Civil War gets less than one page of treatment. But it works within the context of Western civilization, Gombrich's focus. Gombrich revised the material while in his nineties, during the 1990's. He commented on a couple of shortcomings contained in the original work, and his effort to correct them, which speaks well for his ethics. Who is ready to hear this book? A very bright eight or nine-year-old, perhaps, especially if the emphasis is put on the idea that it is a student's first pass, revealing a very big picture. Multiple readings might be useful as the student ages. I should have given it five stars.

Very charming! This book is written in a different style from a different time, but the facts are very accurate.

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