ForeWord Reviews

JUVENILE NONFICTION

1,001 Skyscrapers
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Jeannie Meejin Yoon
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Take twenty-seven skyscrapers scaled to size, cut them into three pieces, and create a flipbook. The result is a different look at the architectural form of the skyscraper and a chance to create new buildings.

Arranged from the 1908 Singer Building in New York to the Shanghai World Financial Center scheduled for completion in 2004, the possibilities for creating something new are endless. Each building comprises two pages: an informational page that includes the name of the building, the architect or architectural firm who designed it, and the location and the year of completion; the facing page is the skyscraper. Each building has its own icon for reference.

Additional historical information is divided between the three sections. For example, the Woolworth Building, New York City, was completed in 1913, and designed by Cass Gilbert. The 793-foot tower is topped by a copper steeple, and designed when no building had ever been built that tall. Gilbert "chose the Gothic style for its emphasis on verticality." The Woolworth Building held the title of world's tallest building for sixteen years.

Although each building is interesting by itself, the fun begins when the pages are flipped. The spiral binding allows the reader to randomly choose a top, middle, and base. Flipping between buildings gives the reader the chance to design a distinctive building. The components of each skyscraper are there to be flipped—what would a building look like with a base of the Sears Tower, the middle of Citicorp Center, and the top of the Lipstick Building? This is an opportunity to find out.

Budding architects will enjoy this interesting look at well-known skyscrapers, and the opportunity to create new and strange buildings. 1,001 Skyscrapers will just be the beginning because of the possibility of almost 20,000 combinations, according to Yoon and Howeler. The introduction by the authors provides a brief history of the skyscraper in conjunction with poetry and art, and explains how the idea for the book was conceived.

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