

Albert Einstein

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“Imagination is more important than knowledge.” So said Albert Einstein, a man known equally for his brilliant scientific discoveries and for his white mane of unkempt hair.

This book provides a concise, easy-to-understand overview of Einstein’s life and times. Each open page reads as a chapter in his life from his more difficult childhood years when kids teased him for being a “Biedermeier” (nerd) to his final years in America where he died in 1955. The book doesn’t give an in-depth explanation of the theories that made Einstein famous; rather the author lays the groundwork for understanding by describing the significance of these discoveries not only to the early half of the twentieth century but also to today’s world. The discussion places Einstein in the context of his surroundings. A brief history is provided on the development of physics, Einstein’s standing in the scientific community, and the impact that Nazi Germany and W.W.II had on his life and his work.

The author, who has also published biographies of Alexander Graham Bell, Lucy Maud Montgomery, and the Wright Brothers, as well as books about baking and crafts, writes succinctly and clearly. Not only is the text chockfull of fascinating details and insights—did you know Einstein was a failure at teaching? Or that later in life he was offered the presidency of Israel?—but the layout of the book draws readers in as well. The bulk of the text appears on the left side of each page, with a couple of sidebar graphics. The right side of the page is a balanced, visually appealing collage of photographs of Einstein and the significant people and places in his world, and quotes and captions that further the reader’s grasp of the man. A pen and ink illustrated Einstein, who speaks directly to the reader, also appears on most pages. Due to the addition of this highly visual component, readers can either read the book straight through or choose to browse individual pages.

The life of Einstein is of perennial interest to readers both young and old. This book, because of its accessible focus on the man, his work, and his philosophies on life, serves as a great first introduction. A timeline and index are included, making this book of value to elementary-age student reports.

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