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Inventions (Insiders)



Synopsis

Inventions Over Time **INSiders** brings inventions to life, with the most up-to-date information and state-of-the-art 3-D illustrations that practically leap off every page, stimulating minds and imaginations in a whole new way.

Book Information

Series: **Insiders**

Hardcover: 64 pages

Publisher: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers (March 10, 2009)

Language: English

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Product Dimensions: 9.8 x 0.5 x 10.5 inches

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Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars 34 customer reviews

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Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

Customer Reviews

My eight year old son enjoyed reading all the series including this one. It is part of his library collection, always excited to read (with some assistance) and share with his siblings.

Inseider Books are just great... my 9 year old son has most of them. This one is full of excellant graphics and easy to read stories which keep is interests captured! The only issue was that we had to return the first book since there was a razor cut down the front of the book. Most likely when it was unboxed from the bulk packaging. sent us a replacement book in a few days! Great book and great services!

While this book is very limited in scope, it does have some great timelines for inventions and the pictures are done extremely well.

This is a short book with excellent-looking graphics. However it has little information in it and the text and pictures fall short of explaining much. While it might entice people to look at it, there is little to sink one's teeth into. Looking at the sections on locks, for example, they focus on just a few elements. Biometric locks are illustrated with a schematic of the eye with a grid overlay and some of the nodes in the grids highlighted with circles. The text doesn't say anything about how it works; cool picture no info. (The picture is descriptive; if you know a scanner just compares key points with a reference database it makes sense, but that is not given as background.) The main part of the locks explanation describes the nearly ubiquitous cylinder lock that might be found on one's front door. One of the illustrations is wrong (one of the pins is higher than it should be before the key is inserted) and other locks (skeleton keys, warded locks) are just glossed over. Combination locks, locks on safes, bicycle U-locks, and fancier locks are not addressed at all even though they are more high-tech than the tumbler. If you want to learn about locks, this book is not a good place to start. I found the lack of information consistent throughout the sections. In many places (clocks is another example) I knew how these things worked and appreciated the illustration but thought that someone who didn't already know this (my 11 year old, for example) wouldn't be able to get much from it. All in all, I wouldn't recommend this book.

First of all this is NOT 3D in the sense of wearing the colored glasses and seeing the illustrations pop out of the page. The illustrations are cross sections, with much detail and side explanations (think DK Eyewitness book) but at a slightly higher reading level. Physically very well made, with heavy glossy paper and nice binding. These are the types of books I loved to have in my class when teaching mid school science. Kids can spend detailed time on each drawing or just skim what interests them when they have a few moments. For grown ups some of the text is a bit tiny, you might need your bifocals. Science content is solid but not in depth. Kids could use this book to find topics they are interested in, for further reading. I left the book laying on our coffee table for a week. My 13 year old boy read most of it, in bits and pieces and read sections that he found fascinating out loud. He found some of the history interesting (and the old cell phone laughable) My 10 year old girl leafed through it but did not show much interest. She does typically like Eyewitness books, but ones about animals or ecosystems. I would put the reading level at high level elementary/ to mid school level. Overall a nice book, but not a stellar one. Would have benefited from linking the topics together more, such as communication, transportation, exploration, calculation etc. Good for leafing through, piquing interest and prompting discussion.

This book introduces children to a variety of different inventions that are relevant to the present time. The best feature of the book are its illustrations. These highlight an invention (such as the automobile or the telephone) and show the development of the invention over time. The relatively terse descriptions highlight the history, important features, and interesting facts about the invention. The pictures are the best feature of this series. They are dramatic, highly detailed, and quite engaging for the book's core audience, children between the ages of 9 and 12. Unfortunately, the writing and length of the book seem to fall a little short. There are other series such as the Reader's Digest series (for example, *Reader's Digest ~ How Science Works*) or the DK Eyewitness series (for example, *Invention (DK Eyewitness Books)*) that cover more ground and have more detailed descriptions of the topics covered. If this were a contest for the best pictures, *Inventions* might eke out a win with its incredible illustrations. However, *Reader's Digest* (RD) and DK cover more topics, have more in depth writing, still have great illustrations, and have more potential educational value. *Inventions* is more the kind of book that you might take out of the library. These kinds of books help children understand their surroundings, but they seem to be more of a passing fancy than something they absolutely need on their book shelf. If you want to own these kinds of books there are other series such as David MacCauley's books (for example, *The New Way Things Work*) that contain even more incredible illustrations and a lot more prose. MacCauley's books work equally well on a child's bookshelf or your living room coffee table. Even though these are slated for 'young adults,' MacCauley can keep kids from ages 5 to adult engaged and always coming back for more.

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