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So You Want To Be An Inventor?



Synopsis

St. George and Small, the Caldecott Medal-winning team who created *So You Want to Be President?*, are back with another spirited and witty look at history-this time focusing on the inventors and inventions who have given us lightbulbs, automobiles, and all the other things that keep the world humming. *So You Want to Be an Inventor?* features some of the world's best-known inventors-Thomas Edison, Benjamin Franklin, Eli Whitney-as well as lesser-known geniuses like Georges de Mestral (inventor of Velcro), Wilhelm Roentgen (inventor of X rays), and Hedy Lamarr (inventor of a system that became the basis for satellite communication-who knew?). Whether you're a dreamer or a loner, a copycat or a daredevil, this book might just inspire readers to invent something that could change the world!

Book Information

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Age Range: 7 - 10 years

Grade Level: 2 - 5

Customer Reviews

The creators of the Caldecott Medalist *So You Want to Be President?* mirror that successful format in this enthusiastic, fact-filled picture-book tribute to predominately American and European inventors. Kids may be inspired to make history themselves when they learn that Benjamin Franklin was concocting new inventions by age 12. Solid advice such as "If you want to be an inventor, find a need and fill it" or "If you want to be an inventor, be a dreamer" precedes sections on people who

did just that. Famous innovations such as Eli Whitney's cotton gin share equal billing with ideas that never really took off, like Andrew Jackson Jr.'s adjustable eyeglasses for chickens or Franz Vester's coffin with escape hatch (in case the person inside was still alive.) The brief anecdotes about each inventor and invention don't offer much historical context, but readers will devour fascinating facts on the origins of Velcro (cockleburs on a Swiss engineer's pants) and the story of where the expression "the real McCoy" came from (the train lubricators of Elijah McCoy). Two female inventors--one who was fed up with dishpan hands and invented the first dishwasher, and actress Hedy Lamarr, who helped invent a system for guiding torpedoes by radio signals in World War II--accompany the otherwise male-heavy cast of characters. One-sentence biographical notes in the back list the inventors in alphabetical order and a bibliography concludes the book. David Small's lively, color-washed illustrations steal the show, zeroing in on comical moments in history and creative gleams of discovery to great effect. (Ages 7 and older) --Karin Snelson --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

With a lighthearted style similar to the collaborators' Caldecott Medal-winning *So You Want to Be President?*, this volume furnishes brief sketches of inventors and inventions both famous and little-known. As she did in the earlier volume, St. George invites readers into her exclamation point-studded narrative and introduces many of the clever contraptions with snippets of advice: "If you want to be an inventor, be a dreamer" and "Don't worry if people laugh at you." The latter remark leads into mention of "Fulton's Folly," Robert Fulton's widely mocked steamboat: "But the laughter lost steam in 1807 when Robert's Clermont chugged up the Hudson River from New York to Albany with paddle wheels churning and flags waving." Some readers may miss the kinds of details that tantalizingly cluttered the pages in the previous volume (here, Alexander Graham Bell's invention gets one paragraph: "When he grew up, he dreamed of people talking across distances maybe by electric signals. Electric signals it was!", leaving Small with less fodder for his portraits). Still, she includes intriguing tidbits, such as the fact that glamorous actress Hedy Lamarr, who fled Austria before WWII, worked with a friend to invent a system for guiding torpedoes by radio signals ("Her goal? Beat Hitler!"). Humorous touches infuse Small's illustrations (for Franz Vester's invention of a coffin with an escape hatch, the artist shows a hand reaching out of the grave as guests depart the funeral); readers will particularly cotton to his caricatures of such luminaries as Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson. All ages. Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

too cluttered not easy to read

Great book for kids

I bought this book for my nephew who is in high school and wants to be an engineer and inventor. He liked it. The reading level is below high school but it contains information about historical inventors such as Thomas Jefferson who invented some glasses for chickens. My nephew thought that was pretty weird!

This book is probably good for kids 8 - 12. Older people won't enjoy it as much. That's all I can think of.

Author Judith St. George and award winning illustrator David Small are back with a new and engaging look at history, and those who enjoyed their first collaboration, *So You Want To Be President*, are in for another captivating, fun-filled treat. So you want to be an inventor and you think you have what it takes. Take a peek inside the covers of this clever book, and find out a little about some of the famous and not-so-famous who have gone before you. Ms St. George's easy to read, short profiles are written in an entertaining, conversational style, and complemented by Mr Small's dazzling and humorous illustrations. Each bold and busy page is filled with history, trivia, fun-facts, and playful wit that whets the appetite and inspires. Perfect for youngsters 8-12, *So You Want To Be An Inventor* is a marvelous collection that celebrates ingenuity, and may just get your kids' creative juices flowing. Who knows, you may be living with the next Thomas Edison, Henry Ford, or Josephine Cochran (she invented the dishwasher).

This book keeps my son well informed about inventions, whether they were accidents or not.

In this book, there are 43 male inventors detailed and only 3 females. That's inexcusable. How difficult would it be to provide more balance? It doesn't have to be artificially 50/50. I understand that for a long, long time, women just were not allowed opportunities to invent. But that doesn't make it okay to present a 43:3 imbalance in a book intended to inspire children. Where is the inspiration for budding female inventors? I am utterly disgusted by this book.

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