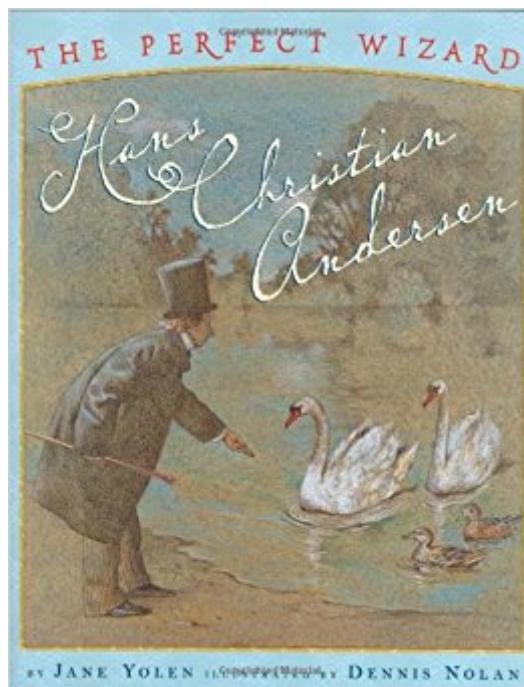


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# Perfect Wizard, The: Hans Christian Andersen



## **Synopsis**

He was the son of a cobbler-awkward, funny-looking, and perhaps a bit crazy. But Hans Christian Andersen went on to become the most beloved children's writer of all time. Here in rich detail that includes quotes from Andersen's own stories, Jane Yolen explores his youth and how his words were inspired by life experiences. His was a childhood that saw the death of his father, an early love for the theater, and the burning passion to become a writer against all odds. Lushly illustrated by Dennis Nolan, *The Perfect Wizard* is the ideal selection to celebrate the 200th anniversary of Andersen's birth on April 2, 2005.

## **Book Information**

Lexile Measure: 870L (What's this?)

Hardcover: 32 pages

Publisher: Dutton Juvenile; First Edition edition (February 3, 2005)

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ISBN-10: 0525469559

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Shipping Weight: 14.4 ounces

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars 4 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,071,075 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #92 in Children's Books > Children's Books > Biographies > European #303 in Books > Children's Books > Biographies > Literary #1008 in Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > Jobs & Careers

Age Range: 5 - 9 years

Grade Level: 1 and up

## **Customer Reviews**

Grade 1-5  
"Hans told lies, too. About his past life. About his present life. He called them fairy tales." Yolen uses these words at the start of her simple, wistful, and winsome portrait of a very complicated and, by most accounts, very unhappy man. From the humble, one-room shoemaker's house of his birth to his tortured schoolboy days, from the haunting trauma of his father's death to the eventual recognition of his genius, readers follow this persistent artist through the landscape of 19th-century Denmark on his quest for some kind of personal and professional peace. This volume, with its patrician wallpaper and sepia-tinged pastel pictures framed with gentle arches, is handsome where its ugly-duckling subject was, by his own reckoning, most assuredly not. In her affectionate,

fairy-tale-flavored narrative, Yolen pairs events from Andersen's life with excerpts from his stories, providing new and different interpretations of the tales in this context. Full-page paintings depict the realistic scenes, while smaller vignettes illustrate the fictional ones; these oval-shaped pictures seem to let viewers peer right into the meanderings of Andersen's yearning imagination. The quotes take on new and different meanings when readers see them connected, both visually and verbally, to real experiences and emotions. With a well-measured note from the author and a meticulous listing of excerpt sources, this is a carefully crafted, lovely, and loving tribute to the father of the modern fairy tale. —Kathy Krasniewicz, Perrot Library, Old Greenwich, CT

Gr. 1-3. This lively picture-book account of Andersen's life concentrates on his childhood and youth, which included a lengthy "ugly duckling" phase before his poverty and privation were overmatched by his hard work and determination. Meanwhile, Andersen developed his talents as a writer and eventually achieved international fame and literary immortality. Andersen grows from boy to man in a series of sensitive and often dreamlike pictures. Gracefully drawn and softly lit, the illustrations create a sense of another world through sepia and pale blue tones sparked with brighter colors. One large, full-page picture appears on each spread, facing a page with a few paragraphs telling his story and a passage from his fairy tales accompanied by a smaller picture illustrating the passage. The quotes from the tales relate to stages and events in the writer's life, but children are free to draw their own connections. This handsome biography is a fine choice to display or read aloud on April 2, which is International Children's Book Day and (no coincidence here) Hans Christian Andersen's birthday. Carolyn Phelan Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved

Awesome

Going to Denmark Soon...wanted to read more on the Great Danish Author Hans Christian Anderson!!

In 21st century America, Hans Christian Andersen would have a "label" for sure. Tenacious, single-minded, oblivious, and bragging, this book shows how those character traits worked out for Hans. My son picked this up because "Hans" is close to "Han" (as in Solo) and he needed to choose a biography of a writer. So it goes. I was blown away by the artwork -- large illustrations of Andersen's circumstances, plus small illustrations of the stories. Gorgeous book! Enjoy it for

yourself!

My son (age 8) and I did enjoy this book. I homeschooled and wanted him to know some of the major fairy tale writers. The book is detailed enough but short enough for him to learn and not be bored. It is a picture book in that there is plenty of information and story but visual enough for a squirmy 8 year old boy. I would advise that a parent might want to learn a little bit about H.C.A. so some of the stories you might advise your "listeners" to. H.C.A. wrote quite a few biographies with each one being a little different in information. Will the real Hans Christian Anderson please stand up? This is a great, perfect introduction.

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