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Beatles



Synopsis

How did four cheeky lads from Liverpool – John, Paul, George and Ringo – become the greatest rock band in the world? Mick Manning and Brita Granström tell the amazing story of The Beatles with captions and strip pictures for fans of all ages. The story begins with John Lennon's Liverpool childhood, his Auntie Mimi, his school band The Quarrymen; the developing friendships with Paul McCartney and George Harrison and the forming of The Beatles together with Stu Sutcliffe and Pete Best. From amusing adventures in Hamburg to the arrival of manager Brian Epstein and record producer George Martin. Then Ringo Starr joins the group; fame and screaming fans; the famous tour to the USA; the making of the albums, key hit songs and early films; then the later years, with the gigantic Sgt Pepper album, their visit to India, the making of Magical Mystery Tour. Finally the break-up of the band and the new beginnings of solo careers for the Fab Four.

Book Information

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Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

Customer Reviews

Gr 3-7 • This enchanting picture book presents a concise, child-friendly overview of the Beatles for those with little to no knowledge of the group, starting with a quick look at the four's childhood days and ending with their breakup in 1970. In an upbeat tone, Manning covers familiar ground, briefly discussing some of the four's most famous songs and providing bite-size synopses of watershed moments, while Granström affectionately re-creates iconic images of the group,

such as their arrival in America and their legendary rooftop performance at Apple Records. Loose-lined, cartoonish illustrations full of speech bubbles add a comic-book tone, imbuing the work with a whimsical, lighthearted air. Sidebars interspersed throughout and a time line at the end provide some historical context. Manning glosses over events that would be inappropriate for younger readers (for example, the band's amphetamine-fueled, sex-soaked early experiences in Hamburg, Germany are cheerfully transformed into descriptions of the boys "dressing in leather and doing crazy things: screaming into their microphones, telling jokes and stomping their feet"), and many details, including marital transgressions and most of the conflict within the band, are left out entirely. The result is a portrait of the Fab Four as a fun-loving, goofy quartet— an image of which manager Brian Epstein himself (who was responsible for the group's more clean-cut initial look) would've approved. A charming introduction to a beloved pop group and its cultural and historical impact.

—Mahnaz Dar, School Library Journal

This slim, cheeky book is a delightful introduction to the Beatles, and the fresh, lively art will draw kids right in. The book is arranged chronologically, beginning in 1940. Readers get insight into the early days of John, Paul, and George; then the story widens as John, Paul, and George come together as bandmates and eventually Ringo joins them. In short order, Beatlemania takes over first England and then the world. By 1970, that particular story is over, but the colorful blocks of art and text explain what happened to each of the Beatles after the band broke up. Each spread is dominated by a cartoon-style drawing, with other bits of information appearing in illustrated sidebars. What was happening with the band is often juxtaposed with what was happening in the world, but much of the emphasis is on how songs came to be. This is clearly an import (references to the Just William stories and jelly babies aren't really explained), but readers will make connections through context. A bouncy way to meet the Beatles. Grades 4-6.

--Ilene Cooper

A book for my son. He loves it.

good

They love the Beatles, and they love this book! Two little boys, nine and seven, coached by their parents towards the classics, my grandsons were thrilled with this book.

This book arrived with binding torn up. I just haven't sent it back yet.

This picture book on The Beatles is definitely written for kids, and that's not a bad thing at all. It hits all the high points, following the Fab Four individually (but superficially) from just before they meet and form the World's Greatest Band until the break up. There are no big revelations that most adults wouldn't already know, and no references to drug antics or general nastiness. While the drawings are more on the cartoonish side, I could actually see some influence of Lennon's art work in them, and felt they did a good job illustrating the action. It's all very clean and general, and a good guide for anyone wanting to introduce the next generation to the Beatles. Two things did jump out at me, however. One is the mention, in a small frame about Strawberry Fields Forever, of how Lennon "escaped" to a remembered happy place. But it's the addition of the information that modern therapy techniques urge us all to visit a safe place in our heads when we are worrying about something that pulled me totally out of my enjoyment of the reading. It was unnecessary and not a good extension for the story. Secondly--and this is something at which I just have to smile--there is an explanation of what a "single", an LP, and an EP are, including descriptions of the A side and B side. I am officially old. This is a good picture book that will gently give the outline of the rise of the Beatles, and most adults will enjoy it as much as any child.

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