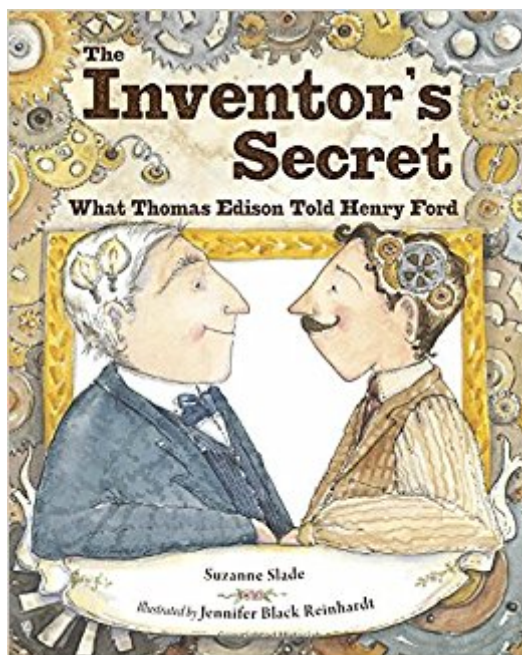


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# The Inventor's Secret: What Thomas Edison Told Henry Ford



## Synopsis

\* 2017 NSTA Best STEM Book List K-12\* \* NSTA Outstanding Science Trade Book for Students K-12 \*Thomas Edison and Henry Ford started off as insatiably curious tinkerers. That curiosity led them to become inventors--with very different results. As Edison invented hit after commercial hit, gaining fame and fortune, Henry struggled to make a single invention (an affordable car) work. Witnessing Thomas's glorious career from afar, a frustrated Henry wondered about the secret to his success. This little-known story is a fresh, kid-friendly way to show how Thomas Edison and Henry Ford grew up to be the most famous inventors in the world--and best friends, too.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: AD590L (What's this?)

Hardcover: 48 pages

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Language: English

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Product Dimensions: 8.4 x 0.4 x 10.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.6 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 9 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #170,702 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #49 in Books > Children's Books > Science, Nature & How It Works > Inventions & Inventors #160 in Books > Children's Books > Biographies > Science & Technology #307 in Books > Children's Books > Cars, Trains & Things That Go > Cars & Trucks

Age Range: 6 - 9 years

Grade Level: 1 - 4

## Customer Reviews

Gr 3-6 "Emphasizing the power of perseverance, this cheery picture book alternates between the lives of two inventors, beginning with Thomas Edison, who was 16 years Henry Ford's senior. Many of Edison's major inventions are touched on, and young Ford is portrayed as curious as to the secret of Edison's success. Ford continues to work on developing engines and designing cars and finally seizes the opportunity to meet Edison in person. The two go over Ford's designs, and Edison urges the younger man to "keep at it!" With that, Ford discovers that "he'd known Thomas's secret all along!" a realization illustrated with a light bulb over Ford's head. The rest of the story focuses

on Ford's work on creating a car for all Americans, which resulted in the Model-T. Fanciful watercolor sketches depict Edison and Ford dreaming, inventing, and working, with a variety of expressions on their faces. The drawings are framed on the page, providing an old-fashioned feel. Inset images provide details and information on their inventions. The front and endpapers are filled with sketches of various light bulbs and gears in muted brown tones. The early lives and activities of these men are covered briefly. The factual text emphasizes how both started as dreamers who took action. Back matter includes a section on Edison and Ford's friendship, more material about the inventions, author and illustrator notes, and extensive source notes with citations for dialogue and other facts. VERDICT A suitable addition for those seeking biographies of inventors.â™™ Tamara Saarinen, Pierce County Library, WA

What would a renowned, established inventor have to say to a hopeful young tinkerer? Slade precedes her description of a historical meeting with interwoven accounts: one of Thomas, a disaster-prone experimenter who parlays an early interest in gadgets and electricity into a pen that produces multiple copies, a phonograph, and hundreds of other popular innovations; the other of Henry, born 16 years later, whose yen to produce a practical, inexpensive motor car encounters obstacle after frustrating obstacle. At last, hoping for insight into Edison's success, Henry buttonholes the great inventor at an 1896 dinner. The two instantly fall into a technical discussion, climaxed by the excited Edison's "Keep at it!" . . . the author and illustrator close with fuller notes on major Edison-ian inventions, the development of the Model T, and particularly the lifelong friendship that the encounter kindled between these two giants of industrial technology. . . .-Kirkus Reviews "What's his secret?" That's the question dogging Henry Ford as he watches Thomas Edison's phonograph and incandescent bulb take off, while his own attempts to create steam and gas engines sputter. Slade shifts between the developing careers of both men until, while discussing engines with Edison at a dinner in 1896, Ford gets his answer: "Keep at it!" Edison shouts encouragingly. Reinhardt's mixed-media artwork includes several lighthearted moments (parallel scenes featuring Edison and Ford as children highlight the explosive results of early failed experiments). Extensive endnotes discuss Slade's and Reinhardt's processes and several of the inventions mentioned, along with a time line and source notes. It's a rewarding look at the importance of persistence, as well as the friendship that developed between these prominent inventors.Â™™ Publishers Weekly Emphasizing the power of perseverance, this cheery picture book alternates between the lives of two inventors, beginning with Thomas Edison, who was 16 years Henry Ford's senior. Many of Edison's major inventions are touched on, and young Ford is

portrayed as curious as to the secret of Edison's success. Ford continues to work on developing engines and designing cars and finally seizes the opportunity to meet Edison in person. The two go over Ford's designs, and Edison urges the younger man to "keep at it!" With that, Ford discovers that he's known Thomas's secret all along! "a realization illustrated with a light bulb over Ford's head. The rest of the story focuses on Ford's work on creating a car for all Americans, which resulted in the Model-T. Fanciful watercolor sketches depict Edison and Ford dreaming, inventing, and working, with a variety of expressions on their faces. The drawings are framed on the page, providing an old-fashioned feel. Inset images provide details and information on their inventions. The front and endpapers are filled with sketches of various light bulbs and gears in muted brown tones. The early lives and activities of these men are covered briefly. The factual text emphasizes how both started as dreamers who took action. Back matter includes a section on Edison and Ford's friendship, more material about the inventions, author and illustrator notes, and extensive source notes with citations for dialogue and other facts. VERDICT A suitable addition for those seeking biographies of inventors.-School Library Journal

This dual picture-book biography of how Thomas Edison inspired Henry Ford succeeds in showing the emotional side of the life of an inventor: success requires more than just one or two "or even two dozen" attempts.

Reinhardt's soft, amiable watercolor, ink, and colored-pencil artwork provides a lot of visual detail about both Edison's and Ford's passions, while Slade's text explains each man's inspiration and the way his inventions fundamentally changed the world. Ample source notes and a comprehensive dual time line help explain some of Slade and Reinhardt's depictions of Ford and Edison, and photo-illustrated notes about each inventor's most memorable creations provide substantial information to get kids started on research projects. While there are abundant compilations for kids about inventions and inventors, Slade and Reinhardt keep the focus solidly on the human element of frustration, persistence, and the power of a mentor. It's an unusual angle and well executed, which makes it a good fit for STEM-oriented programs as well as storytimes about the benefit of good friendships.-Booklist

I loved reading biographies as a child. *THE INVENTOR'S SECRET: WHAT THOMAS EDISON TOLD HENRY FORD* is a book about curious and imaginative creators I would have cherished. The opening immediately draws one in with wonderful language and the enticing lure of a secret. Author Suzanne Slade begins the story focusing on the younger years of Thomas Edison and Henry Ford (16 years younger than Edison). The reader observes the thoughts and experiences of Thomas and Henry through Jennifer Black Reinhardt's rich and detailed

watercolor and ink illustrations. As Henry grows up and keeps hearing about Thomas' inventions, he is beyond curious and wants to know how they work. I love how Slade crafts their first time meeting in person over several pages. This meeting where the secret is shared changes both of their lives forever and a 30-year friendship forms. Beyond the skillful story and inspired illustrations, all of the information shared at the end of the book is a phenomenal bonus. From the joint timelines of each man's life and an explanation of their friendship to details about their inventions and informative source notes, this book is a wonderful addition to any personal collection (it is now in mine) as well as being a great gift (I got one for my sister's third grade classroom too). It has been awarded the National Science Teachers Association's 2016 Outstanding Science Trade Book for Students K-12.

Ms Slade writes so well for the young audience bringing the spirit, not just the factoids, of science alive for them. I purchased this with a 7 y.o. in mind. He's very curious and very bright and working on his tenacity. He really enjoyed the book as did his little sister and a 13 year old cousin who started off humoring me but asked some good follow-up questions. Next year we're off to the Ford Edison house in Fort Myers!

This is an inspiring story of persistence told in a very fun and engaging way! The illustrations are fantastic!

Great

Delightful. The author reveals how Edison and Ford both spent a lot of time "trying out" various models of their inventions. This is an important lesson for our students to learn--change/improvement/innovation takes time. AND another lesson implied in the book is that inventors sometimes need encouragement from each other. In the book, Ford, looking for advice from Edison, finally gets a chance to talk to him about his plans for a motor car and Edison exclaims, "Keep at it!" That's his advice--and so Ford does. This could be read aloud in 2nd-4th grades as a way to launch a science or integrated ELA/Science unit of study focused on inventions or on the daily practices of scientists/inventors. Prompts for writing in response might be, "What is one of the main ideas in this book?" and "Why is this main idea important to people today?" BTW - It's a long picture book. Worthy of reading aloud more than once and then placing in the classroom library for independent or shared reading. Suzanne Slade is a "go to" author for nonfiction to include

in your classroom library and to read aloud to students.

This delightful story starts when Thomas and Henry were curious boys who spent most of their time running experiments and getting into trouble! This book is filled with history nuggets and an afterward sharing Thomas and Henry's special friendship, how the author came to write the book, and the challenges the illustrator had to accurately illustrate the book. It also includes snippets of information on several inventions of both Thomas and Henry. A great introduction to two twentieth century men who changed the world. It was awarded the NSTA 2016 Outstanding Science Trade Book for Students K-12. Susan Roberts, Book Reviewer Books4theCuriousChild.com

What a great book that connects tenacity and work ethic to intelligence. After following along to the story during bedtime, my five-year-old daughter turned to me with a wide grin and said, "I'm going to be like Henry Ford someday." I will be gifting this book to every family with young children.

This is a great book for children that not only tells about the inventors and their inventions, but the friendship that they actually shared with each other! Such an intelligent author for parents who want their kids to actually learn some history!

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