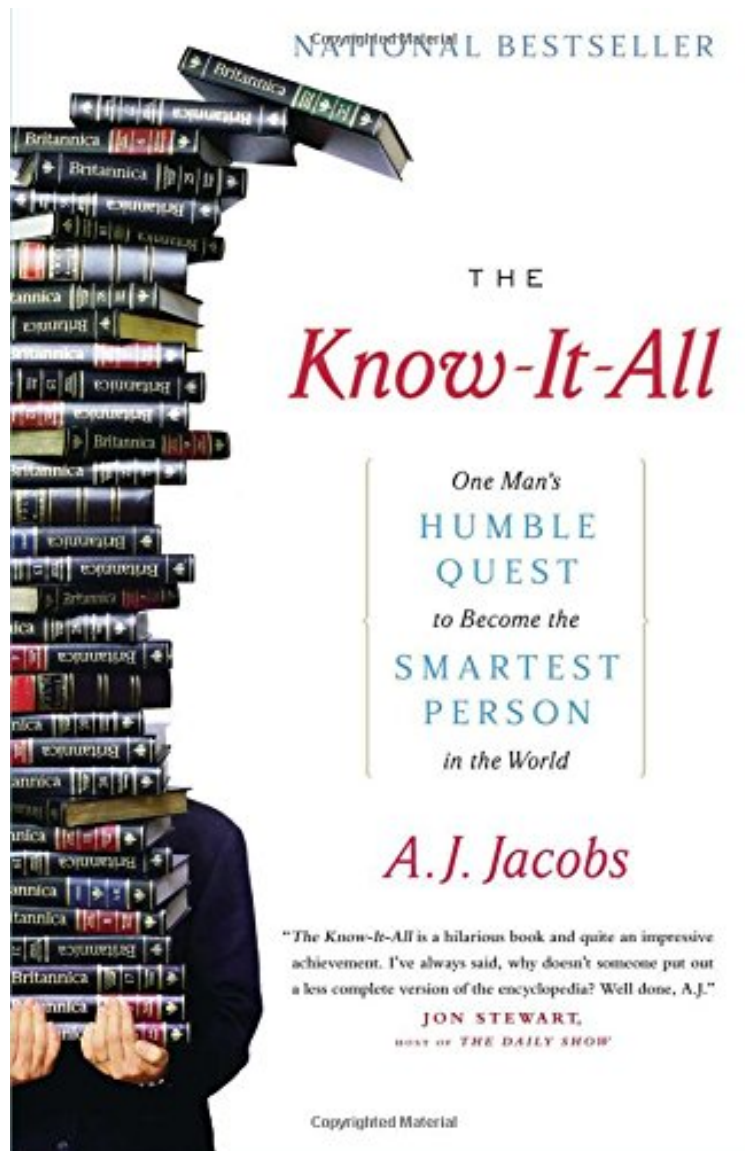


[Download free pdf] The Know-It-All: One Man's Humble Quest to Become the Smartest Person in the World

The Know-It-All: One Man's Humble Quest to Become the Smartest Person in the World

A. J. Jacobs

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#59696 in Books Simon Schuster 2005-10-10 2005-10-10 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.44 x 1.10 x 5.50l, .77 #File Name: 0743250621400 pages Great product! | File size: 29.Mb

A. J. Jacobs : The Know-It-All: One Man's Humble Quest to Become the Smartest Person in the World before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Know-It-All: One Man's Humble Quest to Become the Smartest Person in the World:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. fascinatingBy Theresa MayA truly quirky kind of book. The author attempts to read the entire 2002 encyclopedia in one year, intertwined with vignettes of his life. Frankly it sounds like it wouldn't be interesting at all. but it is. Maybe because I am an info junkie myself, but I think it is the writing. Snarky, sweet, funny, (I had to look him up in Wikipedia to see if he finally had a child, I just had to know) Another reviewer said he thought people liked the book because they liked blogs-wrong. I hate them ,but this guy's writing had me hooked. Going to see what else he has written. Well worth the reading.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A potentially irritating gimmick yields one of the most beautiful memoirs I have ever readBy Kurt ConnerThis book is not as good as *The Year of Living Biblically: One Man's Humble Quest to Follow the Bible as Literally as Possible*, but it's still a terrific read once it gets going. The story has a fascinating arrangement - each chapter covers one letter of the alphabet (except XYZ, which are lumped together), and the story is guided by alphabetical subheadings. A section with the title of an artist may lead to a snarky one-liner about the man's fetishes, while a section with the title of a mountain range yields a revealing meditation on a time that Jacobs was lost in that range (and the effect that the incident had on his relationship with his father). These longer musings, which are much more frequent near the end of the alphabet, make the book truly worthwhile, and Jacobs really seems to be baring his soul (as opposed to the difficult first sections, where he is only willing to bare his pop culture fluency and his most unusual trying-too-hard-for-attention personality quirks).The basic story is interesting, as Jacobs embarks on a quest to read the entire Encyclopaedia Britannica, but the quest is a self-centered one, and it is difficult to read the inconveniences suffered by Jacobs' wife and other family members when the reader knows that even Jacobs doesn't seem convinced that his pursuit has a worthwhile goal. As the book progresses, though, Jacobs matures as a storyteller and presents beautiful studies of intelligence and wisdom, along with honest struggles with infertility and with his larger-than-life father. By the end, this is a truly wonderful book, and I highly recommend it.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A-Z of Humor and Knowledge KINDLE EditionBy Mars VelvetWhat Kindle users want to know:Active Table of Contents for each letter chapter.You can browse chapter to chapter with one click.Formatting is nice and simple to read.Index available but is neither clickable or page numbered which makes an index useless.What readers want to know:This is a narrative of one man's adventure in reading the Encyclopedia Britannica. For select entries, the author expounds on the content and history and its application in his world (his wife, his job, etc.).It is humorous, enlightening, and fun. If you are a trivia or reference book enthusiast than this is your comfort reading! It has hilarity and heart. And even I, a reference book junkie learned a thing or too! The narrative is pleasant and makes the effort more enjoyable than just reading about entries.Jacobs has brought stunt authoring to the academics... or at least Jeopardy watchers! It makes you want to go back when information searching began with sifting through pages of a heavy set of leather bound books.

Part memoir and part education (or lack thereof), *The Know-It-All* chronicles NPR contributor A.J. Jacobs's hilarious, enlightening, and seemingly impossible quest to read the Encyclopaedia Britannica from A to Z.33,000 PAGES 44 MILLION WORDS 10 BILLION YEARS OF HISTORY 1 OBSESSED MAN To fill the ever-widening gaps in his Ivy League education, A.J. Jacobs sets for himself the daunting task of reading all thirty-two volumes of the Encyclopaedia Britannica. His wife, Julie, tells him it's a waste of time, his friends believe he is losing his mind, and his father, a brilliant attorney who had once attempted the same feat and quit somewhere around Borneo, is encouraging but unconvinced. With self-deprecating wit and a disarming frankness, *The Know-It-All* recounts the unexpected and comically disruptive effects Operation Encyclopedia has on every part of Jacobs's life -- from his newly minted marriage to his complicated relationship with his father and the rest of his charmingly eccentric New York family to his day job as an editor at *Esquire*. Jacobs's project tests the outer limits of his stamina and forces him to explore the real meaning of intelligence as he endeavors to join Mensa, win a spot on *Jeopardy!*, and absorb 33,000 pages of learning. On his journey he stumbles upon some of the strangest, funniest, and most profound facts about every topic under the sun, all while battling fatigue, ridicule, and the paralyzing fear that attends his first real-life responsibility -- the impending birth of his first child. *The Know-It-All* is an ingenious, mightily entertaining memoir of one man's intellect, neuroses, and obsessions, and a struggle between the all-consuming quest for factual knowledge and the undeniable gift of hard-won wisdom.

From Publishers WeeklyImagine, the original Berserkers were "savage Norse soldiers" of the Middle Ages who went into battle stark naked! Or consider the Etruscan habit of writing in "boustrophedon style." Intrigued? Well, either hunker down with your own Encyclopaedia Britannica, or buy *Esquire* editor Jacobs's memoir of the year he spent reading all 32 volumes of the 2002 edition that's 33,000 pages with some 44 million words. Jacobs set out on this delightfully eccentric endeavor attempting to become the "smartest person in the world," although he agrees smart doesn't mean wise. Apart from the sheer pleasure of scaling a major intellectual mountain, Jacobs figured reading the encyclopedia from beginning to end would fill some gaps in his formal education and greatly increase his "quirkiness factor." Reading alphabetically through whole topics he never knew existed meant he'd accumulate huge quantities of trivia to insert into conversations with unsuspecting victims. As his wife shunned him and cocktail party guests edged

away, Jacobs started testing his knowledge in a hilarious series of humiliating adventures: hobnobbing at Mensa meetings, shuffling off to chess houses, trying out for the American Crossword Puzzle Tournament, visiting his old prep school, even competing on *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire*. Indeed, one of the book's strongest parts is its laugh-out-loud humor. Jacobs's ability to juxtapose his quirky, sardonic wit with oddball trivia make this one of the season's most unusual books. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

From School Library Journal Adult/High School - When Jacobs, a pop-culture junkie and magazine editor, got a bee in his bonnet to read the entire abridged set of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* to stave off the decline of his recalled knowledge, his wife, family, and coworkers looked on with disbelief, amusement, and annoyance. They thought he'd give up on his quest, but fortunately he did not, for his recap manages to impart the joys of learning, along with a lot of laughs. The alphabetical arrangement of his book allows Jacobs to share highlights, many of which show his fixation on the morbid, the insane, and the grotesque in history. Cortes had syphilis. Descartes had a fetish for cross-eyed women. Throughout, the author digresses with anecdotes about such things as his trip to a Mensa meeting, his visit with Alex Trebek, and (mainly) his wife's attempts to get pregnant. While the pregnancy woes probably won't hold the same resonance with teens as with adults, they are all short, and soon there is another funny or gross item. As Jacobs wraps up, he leaves readers with the sense of satisfaction and wistfulness that often occurs when finishing a particularly satisfying book, only multiplied by the magnitude of what he has accomplished. This is a love note to human knowledge and the joys of obtaining it. - Jamie Watson, Harford County Public Library, MD Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

From Bookmarks Magazine Were in looking glass territory here, as many reviewers spent as much time on New York Times Book Review's hack-job as they did on Esquire editor Jacob's book. s of reviews are always awkward, especially when they flock to the defense of a book as harmless as Jacob's. Maybe *Know-It-All* isn't an intellectual treatise; but, then again, it isn't meant to be. Its pop culture-obsessed author clearly is out for some fun, often at his own expense. The alphabetical structure and wisecracking prose only underscore the playfulness of *The Know-It-All*, even if it gets certain factoids wrong. Which begs the question: what side of the "A" volume did Queenan wake up on? One must assume the backside. Copyright 2004 Phillips Nelson Media, Inc.