

Education A Very Short Introduction Very Short Introductions

Education: A Very Short Introduction
Science and Religion: A Very Short Introduction
Psychology: A Very Short Introduction
Mathematics: A Very Short Introduction
Writing and Script: A Very Short Introduction
Learning
Structural Engineering: A Very Short Introduction
Child Psychology
Rousseau: A Very Short Introduction
Metaphysics: A Very Short Introduction
Rastafari: A Very Short Introduction
Development
Viruses: A Very Short Introduction
The Periodic Table
Modern India: A Very Short Introduction
Postcolonialism
Taxation
The Sun: A Very Short Introduction
Sikhism: A Very Short Introduction
Adolescence: A Very Short Introduction
Robotics: A Very Short Introduction
Demography
History: A Very Short Introduction
Universities and Colleges
The Future
Human Rights
Human Rights: A Very Short Introduction
Critical Theory: A Very Short Introduction
Economics: A Very Short Introduction
Marine Biology: A Very Short Introduction
The Book of Common Prayer: A Very Short Introduction
Reading: A Very Short Introduction
Education: A Very Short Introduction
The Quakers: A Very Short Introduction
Engineering: A Very Short Introduction
Lakes: A Very Short Introduction
Education: A Very Short Introduction
Rhetoric: A Very Short Introduction
Projects: A Very Short Introduction
Branding: a Very Short Introduction

Education: A Very Short Introduction

This seminal work—now available in a 15th anniversary edition with a new preface—is a thorough introduction to the historical and theoretical origins of postcolonial theory. Provides a clearly written and wide-ranging account of postcolonialism, empire, imperialism, and colonialism, written by one of the leading scholars on the topic Details the history of anti-colonial movements and their leaders around the world, from Europe and Latin America to Africa and Asia Analyzes the ways in which freedom struggles contributed to postcolonial discourse by producing fundamental ideas about the relationship between non-western and western societies and cultures Offers an engaging yet accessible style that will appeal to scholars as well as introductory students

Science and Religion: A Very Short Introduction

Today many people take reading for granted, but we remain some way off from attaining literacy for the global human population. And whilst we think we know what reading is, it remains in many ways a mysterious process, or set of processes. The effects of reading are myriad: it can be informative, distracting, moving, erotically arousing, politically motivating, spiritual, and much, much more. At different times and in different places reading means different things. In this Very Short Introduction Belinda Jack explores the fascinating history of literacy, and the opportunities reading opens. For much of human history reading was the preserve of the elite, and most reading meant being read to. Innovations in

printing, paper-making, and transport, combined with the rise of public education from the late eighteenth century on, brought a dramatic rise in literacy in many parts of the world. Established links between a nation's levels of literacy and its economy led to the promotion of reading for political ends. But, equally, reading has been associated with subversive ideas, leading to censorship through multiple channels: denying access to education, controlling publishing, destroying libraries, and even the burning of authors and their works. Indeed, the works of Voltaire were so often burned that an enterprising Parisian publisher produced a fire-proof edition, decorated with a phoenix. But, as Jack demonstrates, reading is a collaborative act between an author and a reader, and one which can never be wholly controlled. Telling the story of reading, from the ancient world to digital reading and restrictions today, Belinda Jack explores why it is such an important aspect of our society. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Psychology: A Very Short Introduction

Starting with an examination of how historians work, this "Very Short Introduction" aims to explore history in a general, pithy, and accessible manner, rather than to delve into specific periods.

Mathematics: A Very Short Introduction

The Quakers are a fascinating religious group both in their origins and in the variety of reinterpretations of the faith since. Emerging from the social unrest of the English civil war, the Quakers have gone on to have an influence way beyond their numbers: be it their continued stance against war or their pioneering work against slavery. At the same time, Quakers maintain a distinctive worship method to achieve the direct encounter with God which has been at the heart of the movement since its beginning. This book charts the history of Quakerism and its present-day diversity, and outlines its approach to worship, belief, theology and language, and ecumenism. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Writing and Script: A Very Short Introduction

From the schools of ancient times to the present day, Gary Thomas explores how and why education has evolved has it has.

Examining education worldwide, he explains the way schools work, noting how curricula are remarkably consistent around the world. Delving into some of the big questions, Thomas explores the history of education in this Very Short Introduction. Considering various styles such as progressive versus formal, he also explores the ideas of some of the big theorists, including Piaget and Vygotsky. Looking at different forms of education and styles of teaching, he considers the ways in which education is being improved by matching styles of learning to teaching, and ensuring that schools are more inclusive and meaningful for a broader range of students. He finishes by considering the ways in which education may develop over the coming century. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Learning

The debate between science and religion is never out of the news: emotions run high, fuelled by polemical bestsellers like *The God Delusion* and, at the other end of the spectrum, high-profile campaigns to teach 'Intelligent Design' in schools. Yet there is much more to the debate than the clash of these extremes. As Thomas Dixon shows in this balanced and thought-provoking introduction, many have seen harmony rather than conflict between faith and science. He explores not only the key philosophical questions that underlie the debate, but also the social, political, and ethical contexts that have made 'science and religion' such a fraught and interesting topic in the modern world, offering perspectives from non-Christian religions and examples from across the physical, biological, and social sciences.. Along the way, he examines landmark historical episodes such as the trial of Galileo by the Inquisition in 1633, and the famous debate between 'Darwin's bulldog' Thomas Huxley and Bishop Wilberforce in Oxford in 1860. The Scopes 'Monkey Trial' in Tennessee in 1925 and the Dover Area School Board case of 2005 are explained with reference to the interaction between religion, law, and education in modern America. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Structural Engineering: A Very Short Introduction

Economics has the capacity to offer us deep insights into some of the most formidable problems of life, and offer solutions to them too. Combining a global approach with examples from everyday life, Partha Dasgupta describes the lives of two children who live very different lives in different parts of the world: in the Mid-West USA and in Ethiopia. He compares the

obstacles facing them, and the processes that shape their lives, their families, and their futures. He shows how economics uncovers these processes, finds explanations for them, and how it forms policies and solutions. Along the way, Dasgupta provides an intelligent and accessible introduction to key economic factors and concepts such as individual choices, national policies, efficiency, equity, development, sustainability, dynamic equilibrium, property rights, markets, and public goods. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Child Psychology

The generation into which each person is born, the demographic composition of that cohort, and its relation to those born at the same time in other places influences not only a person's life chances, but also the economic and political structures within which that life is lived; the person's access to social and natural resources (food, water, education, jobs, sexual partners); and even the length of that person's life. Demography, literally the study of people, addresses the size, distribution, composition, and density of populations, and considers the impact the drivers which mediate these will have on both individual lives and the changing structure of human populations. This Very Short Introduction considers the way in which the global population has evolved over time and space. Sarah Harper discusses the theorists, theories, and methods involved in studying population trends and movements. She then looks at the emergence of new demographic sub-disciplines and addresses some of the future population challenges of the 21st century. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Rousseau: A Very Short Introduction

Today it is usually not long before a problem gets expressed as a human rights issue. Indeed, human rights law continues to gain increasing attention internationally, and must move quickly in order to keep up with a social world that changes so rapidly. This Very Short Introduction, in its second edition, brings the issue of human rights up to date, considering the current controversies surrounding the movement. Discussing torture and arbitrary detention in the context of counter terrorism, Andrew Clapham also considers new challenges to human rights in the context of privacy, equality and the right to health. Looking at the philosophical justification for rights, the historical origins of human rights and how they are formed in law, Clapham explains what our human rights actually are, what they might be, and where the human rights movement

is heading. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Metaphysics: A Very Short Introduction

Engineering is part of almost everything we do - from the water we drink and the food we eat, to the buildings we live in and the roads and railways we travel on. In this Very Short Introduction, David Blockley explores the nature and practice of engineering, its history, its scope, and its relationship with art, craft, science, and technology. He considers the role of engineering in the modern world, demonstrating its need to provide both practical and socially acceptable solutions, and explores how engineers use natural phenomena to embrace human needs. From its early roots starting with Archimedes to some of the great figures of engineering such as Brunel and Marconi, right up to the modern day, he also looks at some of its challenges - when things go wrong - such as at Chernobyl. Ultimately, he shows how engineering is intimately part of who and what we are. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Rastafari: A Very Short Introduction

What is learning? How does it take place? What happens when it goes wrong? The topic of learning has been central to the development of the science of psychology since its inception. Without learning there can be no memory, no language and no intelligence. Indeed it is rather difficult to imagine a part of psychology, or neuroscience, that learning does not touch upon. In this Very Short Introduction Mark Haselgrove describes learning from the perspective of associative theories of classical and instrumental conditioning, and considers why these are the dominant, and best described analyses of learning in contemporary psychology. Tracing the origins of these theories, he discusses the techniques used to study learning in both animals and humans, and considers the importance of learning for animal behaviour and survival. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Development

Society's attitudes to rhetoric are often very negative. Here, Richard Toye provides an engaging, historically informed introduction to rhetoric, from Ancient Greece to the present day. Wide-ranging in its scope, this Very Short Introduction is the essential starting point for understanding the art of persuasion.

Viruses: A Very Short Introduction

What is a university? What is the University? How have universities evolved over the centuries? How might they change over the coming decades as the physical and organisational entity most identified with "higher education" being delivered to over 250 million students? What will be the impact of digital- and distance-learning, of commercial for-profit new entrants to the higher education market, of government austerity, of globalization, of student consumerism? Exploring the origins and the concept, the idea and the ideal, of the university, this Very Short Introduction discusses one of the world's oldest, most resilient, and most adaptable institutions. David Palfreyman and Paul Temple consider the links between universities and the economy, and the role of universities within society. Highlighting some of the key questions surrounding the position of universities, they ask how the university can be politically accountable for its taxpayer funding, if it needs to be autonomous to function effectively as a public good. Are professors professional enough in their teaching practices at a time that increasing tuition fees transform students more and more into consumers? And just what does "academic freedom" for university faculties really entail? ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

The Periodic Table

The Sun, as our nearest star, is of enormous importance for life on Earth - providing the warm radiation and light which allowed complex life to evolve. The Sun plays a key role in influencing our climate, whilst solar storms and high-energy events can threaten our communication infrastructure and satellites. This Very Short Introduction explores what we know about the Sun, its physics, its structure, origins, and future evolution. Philip Judge explains some of the remaining puzzles about the Sun that still confound us, using elementary physics, and mathematical concepts. Why does the Sun form spots? Why does it flare? As he shows, these and other nagging difficulties relate to the Sun's continually variable magnetism, which converts an otherwise dull star into a machine for flooding interplanetary space with variable radiation, high-energy particles and magnetic ejections. Throughout, Judge highlights the many reasons that the Sun is important, and why scientists engage in solar research. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a

new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Modern India: A Very Short Introduction

From its obscure beginnings in Jamaica in the early 1930s, Rastafari has grown into an international socio-religious movement. It is estimated that 700,000 to 1 million people worldwide have embraced Rastafari, and adherents of the movement can be found in most of the major population centres and many outposts of the world. *Rastafari: A Very Short Introduction* provides an account of this widespread but often poorly understood movement. Ennis B. Edmonds looks at the essential history of Rastafari, including its principles and practices and its internal character and configuration. He examines its global spread, and its far-reaching influence on cultural and artistic production in the Caribbean and beyond. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Postcolonialism

Tax revenues pay for many public services, including roads, health care, and education. However, it has become a contentious political issue of public debate. In this volume, Stephen Smith explains the role that taxes play in a modern economy and describes some of the main taxes used by most developed and developing countries. It considers the key issues: the question of where the burden of taxation really lies, how taxation affects the economy, and the effects of tax evasion and tax avoidance.

Taxation

Today it is usually not long before a problem gets expressed as a human rights issue. An appeal to human rights in the face of injustice can be a heartfelt and morally justified demand for some, while for others it remains merely an empty slogan. Taking an international perspective and focusing on highly topical issues such as torture, arbitrary detention, privacy, health and discrimination, this Very Short Introduction will help readers to understand for themselves the controversies and complexities behind this vitally relevant issue. Looking at the philosophical justification for rights, the historical origins of human rights and how they are formed in law, Andrew Clapham explains what our human rights actually are, what they might be, and where the human rights movement is heading. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect

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The Sun: A Very Short Introduction

Writing is a defining marker of civilisation; without it there could be no accumulation of knowledge. Andrew Robinson tells the fascinating story of the history of writing, considering its development, and examining the enormous variety of writing and scripts we use today.

Sikhism: A Very Short Introduction

In this 'Very Short Introduction' Robert Jones discusses the rising omnipresence of brands, and analyses how they work their magic. He considers the incredible potency of brands as a commercial, social, and cultural force, and looks at the many different kinds of brands that exist - from products, services, and artistic properties, to companies, charities, sports clubs, and political parties. Defining what we mean by the word 'brand', he explores both the positive and negative aspects of brands. Finally Jones considers the business of branding, and asks whether the idea of brands and branding is starting to decline, or whether it has a long future ahead.

Adolescence: A Very Short Introduction

An introduction to metaphysics offers questions and answers covering such issues as properties, changes, time, personal identity, nothingness, and consciousness.

Robotics: A Very Short Introduction

The aim of this volume is to explain the differences between research-level mathematics and the maths taught at school. Most differences are philosophical and the first few chapters are about general aspects of mathematical thought.

Demography

The periodic table of elements, first encountered by many of us at school, provides an arrangement of the chemical elements, ordered by their atomic number, electron configuration, and recurring chemical properties, and divided into periodic trends. In this Very Short Introduction Eric R. Scerri looks at the trends in properties of elements that led to the

construction of the table, and shows how the deeper meaning of the table's structure gradually became apparent with the development of atomic theory and, in particular, quantum mechanics, which underlies the behaviour of all of the elements and their compounds. This new edition, publishing in the International Year of the Periodic Table, celebrates the completion of the seventh period of the table, with the ratification and naming of elements 113, 115, 117, and 118 as nihonium, moscovium, tennessine, and oganesson. Eric R. Scerri also incorporates new material on recent advances in our understanding of the origin of the elements, as well as developments concerning group three of the periodic table. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

History: A Very Short Introduction

This Very Short Introduction provides an up-to-date, authoritative, and accessible guide to modern child psychology, from birth to early adolescence. Beginning with infancy, Usha Goswami considers the process of attachment and bonding, showing how secure attachments enable the development of self-understanding. Exploring childhood learning, ranging from aspects of language and thinking to cognitive reasoning, Goswami looks at how babies and toddlers develop an understanding of the physical, biological, and social worlds, and develop complex abilities like language and morality. Demonstrating how learning is shaped by the environments surrounding the child; at home, school, with peers, and in wider society, Goswami emphasizes the importance of childhood friendships and siblings for psychological development. Introducing the key theories in child psychology, Goswami explains why children develop as they do and how society can further optimize their development through the adolescent years. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Universities and Colleges

Critical theory emerged in the 1920s from the work of the Frankfurt School, the circle of German-Jewish academics who sought to diagnose -- and, if at all possible, cure -- the ills of society, particularly fascism and capitalism. In this book, Stephen Eric Bronner provides sketches of leading representatives of the critical tradition (such as George Lukács and Ernst Bloch, Theodor Adorno and Walter Benjamin, Herbert Marcuse and Jurgen Habermas) as well as many of its seminal texts and empirical investigations. This Very Short Introduction sheds light on the cluster of concepts and themes that set critical

theory apart from its more traditional philosophical competitors. Bronner explains and discusses concepts such as method and agency, alienation and reification, the culture industry and repressive tolerance, non-identity and utopia. He argues for the introduction of new categories and perspectives for illuminating the obstacles to progressive change and focusing upon hidden transformative possibilities. In this newly updated second edition, Bronner targets new academic interests, broadens his argument, and adapts it to a global society amid the resurgence of right-wing politics and neo-fascist movements.

The Future

From the mysterious depths of Lake Vostok, Antarctica, to tropical floodplain lakes, inland seas, hydro-reservoirs and the variety of waterbodies in our local environment, lakes encompass a huge diversity of shapes, sizes, depths, colours, and even salinities. Often very large and very deep, they sustain important and unique ecosystems which can be hotspots of biodiversity, and are used by humans as sources of drinking water and food, in particular, fish. What is the origin of differences among lakes, and how does that affect the life within them? What are the seasons of a lake, and how do human actions alter lake ecosystems locally, and at a global scale? In this Very Short Introduction, Warwick Vincent outlines the essential features of lake environments and their biology, offering an up-to-date view of lake ecosystems. Vincent traces the origins of lake science (limnology) from the seminal work of François Forel on Lake Geneva at the edge of the Swiss Alps, to modern approaches such as environmental sensors, satellite observations, stable isotope analysis, and DNA-based technologies which are used to probe the microbial life support systems that lead from sunlight to fish. Drawing on varied case studies he considers the intimate relationship between humans and lakes, the value of lakes as indicators of environmental change, the impact of pollution, and our urgent need to improve the protection and management of these vitally important living resources via an integrated understanding of their ecology. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Human Rights

What do we mean by development? How can citizens, governments, and the international community foster development? The process by which nations escape poverty and achieve economic and social progress has been the subject of extensive examination for hundreds of years. The notion of development itself has evolved from an original preoccupation with incomes and economic growth to a much broader understanding of development. In this Very Short Introduction Ian Goldin considers the contributions that education, health, gender, equity, and other dimensions of human well-being make to development, and discusses why it is also necessary to include the role of institutions and the rule of law as well as

sustainability and environmental concerns. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Human Rights: A Very Short Introduction

Robotics is a key technology in the modern world. Robots are a well-established part of manufacturing and warehouse automation, assembling cars or washing machines, and, for example, moving goods to and from storage racks for Internet mail order. More recently robots have taken their first steps into homes and hospitals, and seen spectacular success in planetary exploration. Yet, despite these successes, robots have failed to live up to the predictions of the 1950s and 60s, when it was widely thought - by scientists and engineers as well as the public - that by turn of the 21st century we would have intelligent robots as butlers, companions, or co-workers. This Very Short Introduction explains how it is that robotics can be both a success story and a disappointment, how robots can be both ordinary and remarkable, and looks at their important developments in science and their applications to everyday life. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Critical Theory: A Very Short Introduction

From the beginning of time, humans have been driven by both a fear of the unknown and a curiosity to know. We have always yearned to know what lies ahead, whether threat or safety, scarcity or abundance. Throughout human history, our forebears tried to create certainty in the unknown, by seeking to influence outcomes with sacrifices to gods, preparing for the unexpected with advice from oracles, and by reading the stars through astrology. As scientific methods improve and computer technology develops we become ever more confident of our capacity to predict and quantify the future by accumulating and interpreting patterns from the past, yet the truth is there is still no certainty to be had. In this Very Short Introduction Jennifer Gidley considers some of our most burning questions: What is -the future?- Is the future a time yet to come? Or is it a utopian place? Does the future have a history? Is there only one future or are there many possible futures? She asks if the future can ever be truly predicted or if we create our own futures -both hoped for and feared - by our thoughts, feelings, and actions, and concludes by analyzing how we can learn to study the future. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis,

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Economics: A Very Short Introduction

One of the most profound thinkers of modern history, Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-78) was a central figure of the European Enlightenment. He was also its most formidable critic, condemning the political, economic, theological, and sexual trappings of civilization along lines that would excite the enthusiasm of romantic individualists and radical revolutionaries alike. In this study of Rousseau's life and works Robert Wokler shows how his philosophy of history, his theories of music and politics, his fiction, educational and religious writings, and even his botany, were all inspired by visionary ideals of mankind's self-realization in a condition of unfettered freedom. He explains how, in regressing to classical republicanism, ancient mythology, direct communion with God, and solitude, Rousseau anticipated some post-modernist rejections of the Enlightenment as well. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Marine Biology: A Very Short Introduction

Adolescence is a turbulent period to live through, and a time of importance and concern to parents, teachers, and social workers. Marking the transition from the world of childhood to adult life, the adolescent faces many challenges and opportunities, including forming their own identity, relating to often conflicting demands from parents and peers, and negotiating first romantic relationships. In this Very Short Introduction, Peter K. Smith provides an engaging and informative overview of what we know and what we are learning about adolescence. Including both a guide to the classical research that has informed our knowledge, as well as the results of the modern research into the contemporary adolescent experience, Smith examines a number of aspects of adolescence, including the cultural and historical context, the biological changes to the adolescent brain, and the controversies that adolescence brings. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

The Book of Common Prayer: A Very Short Introduction

The Book of Common Prayer is one of the most influential books in history. First published in the reign of Edward VI, in

1549, it was a product of the English Reformation following the break with Rome. For nearly five centuries, it has formed the order of worship for established Christianity in England. More listeners have heard these prayers, it is said, than the soliloquies of Shakespeare. As British imperial ambitions spread, the Book of Common Prayer became the primary instrument (at least as much as the King James Bible) of English culture, firstly in Ireland in 1551. When the Puritans fled to America in 1620 it was to escape the discipline imposed by of the Book of Common Prayer, yet the book came to embody official religion in America before and after Independence, and is still in use. Today it is a global book: it was the first book printed in many languages, from north America to southern Africa, to the Indian sub-continent. In this Very Short Introduction Brian Cummings tells the fascinating history of the Book of Common Prayer, and explains why it is easily misunderstood. Designed in the 1540s as a radical Protestant answer to Catholic "superstition", within a century (during the English Civil Wars) radical Christians regarded the Book of Common Prayer as itself "superstitious" and even (paradoxically) "Papist". Changing in meaning and context over time, the Book of Common Prayer has acted as a cultural symbol, affecting the everyday conduct of life as much as the spiritual, and dividing conformity from non-conformity, in social terms as well as religious, from birth to marriage to death. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Reading: A Very Short Introduction

Have you ever wondered how it's possible to build a skyscraper, a big bridge, a jumbo jet, or a cruise liner? Everything has structure. Structure is the difference between a random pile of components and a fully functional object. Through structure the parts connect to make the whole. Natural structures vary from the very smallest part of an atom to the entire cosmology of the universe. Man-made structures include buildings, bridges, dams, ships, aeroplanes, rockets, trains, cars and fair-ground rides and all forms of artefacts, even large artistic sculptures. The wide range of different industries in which structural engineers work includes construction, transport, manufacturing, and aerospace. In this Very Short Introduction, David Blockley explores, in non-technical language, what structural engineering is all about, including examples ranging from the Shard in London and the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco to jumbo jets like the A380 and the Queen Elizabeth cruise liner. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

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The Quakers: A Very Short Introduction

India is widely recognised as a new global powerhouse. It has become one of the world's emerging powers, rivalling China in terms of global influence. Yet people still know relatively little about the economic, social, political, and cultural changes unfolding in India today. To what extent are people benefiting from the economic boom? Does caste still exist in India? How is India's culture industry responding to technological change? And what of India's rapidly changing role internationally? This Very Short Introduction looks at the exciting world of change in contemporary India. Craig Jeffrey provides a compelling account of the recent history of the nation, investigating the contradictions that are plaguing modern India and the manner in which people, especially young people, are actively remaking the country in the twenty first century. One thing is clear: India is a country that is going to become increasingly important for the world over the next decades. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Engineering: A Very Short Introduction

What is a project? How are projects organized to deal with a complex, rapidly changing, and uncertain world? Why are projects the organization of the future? A project is a temporary organization and one-time process established to achieve a desired outcome. Projects range in size from small teams to large international joint-ventures and temporary coalitions of public and private organizations. What distinguishes projects from all other organizational activities - such as mass produced products and services - is that a project is finite in duration, lasting from hours, days, or weeks to years, and in

some cases decades. Each project is disposable. It brings together people and resources to accomplish a goal and when the goal is accomplished, the organization disappears. When projects are complex, unpredictable, and changing, their plans have to be flexible and able to adjust to situations that cannot be foreseen at the outset. In this Very Short Introduction Andrew Davies looks at how projects have developed since the industrial revolution to create the human-built world in which we live, work, and play. Considering some of our greatest endeavours such as the Erie Canal, Apollo Moon landing, Japanese product development, and Chinese ecocity projects, Davies identifies how projects are organized and managed to design and produce large and complex systems, cope with fast changing conditions, and deal with the immense uncertainties required to create breakthrough innovations in products and services. He concludes by considering how projects could be organized to address the challenges facing the post-industrial society of the 21st century. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Lakes: A Very Short Introduction

The Sikh religion has a following of over 20 million people worldwide, and is ranked as the world's fifth largest religion. However, events such as the verbal and physical attacks on Sikhs just after September 11, where Sikhs were being mistaken for Muslims, suggest that the Sikh faith still remains mysterious to many. This Very Short Introduction introduces newcomers to the meaning of the Sikh religious tradition, its teachings, practices, rituals and festivals. Eleanor Nesbitt highlights and contextualizes the key threads in the history of Sikhism, from the first Gurus to martyrdom, militarization, and the increasingly significant diaspora. Examining gender, caste, and the changes that are currently underway in the faith, Nesbitt considers contemporary Sikh identities and their role in our world. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Education: A Very Short Introduction

Discusses the discovery of viruses, analyzes the threat of viral infections, and considers ways to prevent the emergence of new and devastating viruses.

Rhetoric: A Very Short Introduction

The oceans are our planet's most distinctive and imposing natural habitat. They cover 71 per cent of its surface; support a remarkably diverse and exquisitely adapted array of life forms, from microscopic viruses, bacteria, and plankton to the largest existing animals; and possess many of Earth's most significant, intriguing, and inaccessible ecosystems. In an era in which humans are significantly altering the global environment, the oceans are undergoing rapid and profound changes. The study of marine biology is thus taking on added importance and urgency as people struggle to understand and manage these changes to protect our marine ecosystems. Healthy oceans produce half of the oxygen we breathe; stabilize our climate; create ecosystems that protect our coasts from storms; provide us with abundant food; and host diverse organisms that provide us with natural products for medicine and biotechnology. In this Very Short Introduction, marine biologist Philip Mladenov provides an accessible and up-to-date overview of marine biology, offering a tour of marine life and marine processes that ranges from the unimaginably abundant microscopic organisms that drive the oceans' food web to the apex predators that we exploit for food; from polar ocean ecosystems to tropical coral reefs; and from the luxurious kelp beds of the coastal ocean to deep-ocean hydrothermal vents where life exists without the energy of the sun. Throughout the book he considers the human impacts on marine life including overfishing, plastic and nutrient pollution, the spread of exotic species, and ocean warming and acidification. He discusses the threats these pose to our welfare, and the actions required to put us on a path to a more sustainable relationship with our oceans so that they can be restored and protected for future generations. Mladenov concludes with a new chapter offering an inspiring vision for the future of our oceans in 2050 that can be realised if we are wise enough to accelerate actions already underway and be bold with implementing new approaches. The next decade will decide the state of the oceans that we leave behind for future generations. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Projects: A Very Short Introduction

From the schools of ancient times to the present day, Gary Thomas looks at how and why education evolved as it has. By exploring some of the big questions, he examines the ways in which schools work, considers the differences around the world, and concludes by considering the future of education worldwide.

Branding: a Very Short Introduction

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