



I Wish I Knew That: U.S. Presidents: Cool Stuff You Need To Know

Patricia A. Halbert (Editor)

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Here is a look at the fascinating profiles of each of the 43 presidents, including the names of their pets! Sidebars are filled with fun and unusual information about our leaders-such as who appears on stamps and money-and "At a Glance" boxes provide birth date, political party, and other vital information, including that:

Thomas Jefferson, our third president, spoke six languages, invented many things (the swivel chair and the pedometer, to name two), and designed and built not only Monticello (his rural home) but also the University of Virginia.

Theodore Roosevelt, was one of the nation's great hunters, and the Smithsonian is filled with hundreds of specimens from his safari in Africa. He was also our first environmentalist president, setting aside nearly 200 million acres for national parks and wildlife refuges.

You'll also find a section on "The First Ladies"-short takes on all the presidents' wives. The book ends with a special feature that's just in time for the 2012 election: how a president gets elected. From the first presidential election to recent recounts, this chapter clearly explains to a young audience how we choose the next leader of our country.

I Wish I Knew That: U.S. Presidents: Cool Stuff You Need To Know Details

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Kirsten says

Although this book is written for a young adult it's an interesting read for an adult as well. When you don't have a lot of time or are just too tired for a L-O-N-G chapter this book fits the bill. I'm not a history person by any means but I found this book to be a page turner. Essentially this entire book, cover to cover, is filled with fun facts and interesting information

Amanda says

Sometimes factual, sometimes bias opinion

The shorts on each president (& some first ladies) are exceptionally brief and to-the-point. Good for some trivia and learning a little bit about each president, instead of overly focusing on a few. Since I got the book for free, I'm satisfied, however, the authors certainly make many claims about what is "good" or "bad" for policy, issues, actions, etc made by certain presidents - and many times I disagree with their assessment. If they had stuck with the facts instead of adding that commentary I wouldn't have an issue with that. Given the policy calls and that there are sometimes errors in the text, I don't recommend paying for this, which is really a shame as otherwise it's a nifty little book with some interesting tidbits.

Michael says

This was offered for free during a Kindle promotion and I almost passed on it: I'm glad I didn't, because there is a heck of a lot of trivia about each of the US Presidents - some of it you have heard before, but a lot of it I had not. I also enjoyed the section / tidbits about the various first ladies, as many times they are often overlooked but obviously play a vital role in their husbands' careers and shaping policy. The writing style is engaging and the facts / trivia cover a lot of spectrums.

If you enjoy trivia, especially presidential trivia, I'd recommend this one!

Chris says

I think this might be good for our children, but going through it myself first to check the reading level.

A little over-simplified, maybe, even for a children's book but at least that means they should get through it. Some of the "Fun Facts" were comically inappropriate, along the lines of "Fun Fact: He was the first president to be assassinated!"

Rebecca says

Everyone knows that George Washington was the first president and that Nixon was impeached. But did you know that George Washington had a hound named Sweet Lips? Or that James Monroe was the third president to die on Independence Day? There are a ton of new fact to uncover about all of our presidents!

I would recommend this book to third graders and up who are studying U.S. history.

Halbert, P. A. (2012). I wish I knew that: U.S. presidents: cool stuff you need to know. New York: Reader's Digest.

Charlotte says

I didn't realize that this book was for "young readers" when I had it loaded onto my Kindle. However, once I began reading it, I noticed the word choice and content was definitely for children. Still, I haven't read a Reader's Digest publication yet that wasn't worth reading.

The drawings/photos of the presidents and their wives added appeal, and I appreciated the trivia included. There were many facts mentioned that I did not know or did not remember from history class or from news reports.

This is the first time I can recall finding typos and subject/verb disagreement in a Reader's Digest book.

Another disappointment was the Index at the end of the book; it was only a listing of names. No doubt the transfer of the hard copy version of the book to the Kindle version caused this omission. No page numbers apply to the Kindle because of the owner's choice of font. However, hyperlinks could have been provided to take the Kindle reader to the proper location or at least to the proper chapter.

Mandy Helfer (Dubiansky) says

Very interesting and informative!

I have read many books about the presidents but this had facts I've never read elsewhere before. Lighthearted and informative.

Martin says

I bought this for my son, but I went and accidentally read it cover-to-cover, because I don't want to wish I knew that. I want to know that. I'm that much closer to knowing the category cold for Jeopardy, and now I'm ready to tackle the behemoth president book my mother-in-law got me, after which I'll know the category ice.

R.H. Krämer says

A nice starting point for research

Quick read with interesting facts about previous presidents and First Ladies. Biases are present though not appropriate. Played down major events and failed to reference important historical moments in the evolution of the United States of America.

Tanya Ehrler says

I think this must have been a freebie, because I certainly don't remember purchasing it. I discovered it in my library when I recently purchased a paperwhite Kindle.

It gives a basic overall summary for each President, what they did while in office, and other notable achievements. Written in a way that will engage younger readers.

Trudy says

Written for Young Adult readers, *I Wish I Knew That: U.S. Presidents: Cool Stuff You Need to Know* is full of interesting facts and trivia that anyone can enjoy! It was a free Kindle download at Amazon.

Needs improvement: the index is worthless in the Kindle format, as it does not hotlink to the material or even provide location numbers so you can navigate to the referred spot yourself. The Table of Contents should list each president, but does not.

Emily says

Great call out boxes. Tons of fun facts.

This book is a great introduction to the US presidents. It has well done call out boxes with information about First Ladies, the political process, and general government information.

I particularly like how each page starts with the same template with consistent information about the president and his family and pets. I hope the author chooses to update it with future presidents.

This book is appropriate for children.

My only reason for not giving it 5 stars is the awkward page breaks on the Kindle.

Cassy says

This book is good for what it is. It goes through every US President and gives you a brief overview of what

they did as presidents, their lives and a lot of the things that they were known for.

There were a lot of things in there that you may not know (I know that I didn't.) For example, Andrew Johnson was the only Southern Senator not to side with the south. Lyndon Johnson was the only president sworn in by a woman.

The book was well written and easy to read. If you want to know a little bit more about your presidents, I definitely suggest picking it up.

Terri Anderson says

This is written for 9-12 year-olds. I got it because I play trivia and we have a lot of questions about presidents. This book does a good job of covering the presidents' birthplace, political party, wife and children's names, pets, and significant events during the term(s) he was in office. Just what you need for winning at trivia.

Suzie Quint says

2.5 stars

This is good if you're looking for quick sketches of US presidents, but I wouldn't give it too much credibility. Using the profiles of the more recent presidents as a yard stick, the profiles are incomplete to the point of misleading.
