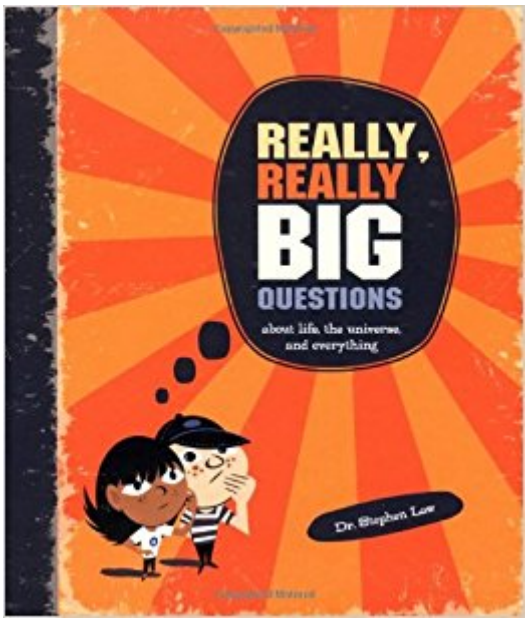
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Really, Really Big Questions



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Synopsis

Really, Really Big Questions by Stephen LawHave you ever looked at your dog and wondered what it is really thinking? Or asked yourself if your entire life has been a dream? Prepare to exercise your mind as you investigate these big ideas and more on the roller-coaster ride of reason and ridiculous that is philosophy. Cool illustrations, brainteasers, and quirky quotations add to the simple and fun question-and-answer format, introducing readers to life’s important questions.

Book Information

Series: Really Really Big Questions

Hardcover: 64 pages

Publisher: Kingfisher (October 13, 2009)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0753463091

ISBN-13: 978-0753463093

Product Dimensions: 9.3 x 12.8 x 265.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.9 out of 5 stars 9 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #988,912 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #78 inÃ Â Books > Children’s Books > Education & Reference > Philosophy #449 inÃ Â Books > Children’s Books > Science, Nature & How It Works > Mystery & Wonders

Age Range: 9 - 12 years

Grade Level: 4 and up

Customer Reviews

Grade 3Ã¢â ¬â œ7Ã¢â ¬â •In an effort to tap into children’s inquisitive nature, Law has produced an attention-grabbing work concerned with many of the "really, really big questions" youngsters ask. Inquiries about science, philosophy, and morality are presented in an engaging style that avoids leading readers to any preconceived answers, instead encouraging them to either arrive at their own conclusions or imagine a variety of possibilities. Everything from "What is the meaning of life?" to "What is it like to be a bat?" is addressed. The dichotomy between those questions science attempts to answer ("What is stuff made of?") and those of morality ("What makes stealing wrong?") leads readers into a noteworthy exercise of reason. Many of Law’s selections emerge from today’s scientific headlines, an example of which is the question "Is it wrong to design a baby?," which certainly evokes much-heated debate. Through a combination of vibrant colors; hip, retro

illustrations; and interesting quotes, Law has produced a stimulating work for young minds that is sure to spark conversation and, of course, more questions.Ã¢â ¬â •Brian Odom, Pelham Public Library, AL Copyright Ã Â© Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Kids, prepare to have your minds blown. This collection of philosophical, moral, and scientific quandaries will have readers grasping after the biggies, including the origins of the universe and the meaning of life. Heavy stuff for sure, but Law is a playful and instructive host, using clear analogies to elucidate the headiest of concepts. ItÃ¢â ¬â„¢s enjoyably thorny: Ã¢â ¬Å“Where did everything come from?Ã¢â ¬Â• leads to Ã¢â ¬Å“What is nothing?Ã¢â ¬Â• which leads to Ã¢â ¬Å“Can I think about nothing?Ã¢â ¬Â• Along the way, Law takes levelheaded looks at hot buttons like evolution, vegetarianism, and designer babies. Although he is always fair, Law prizes logic above all else, and he has gentle doubts about such as ideas that we exist to love and please God: Ã¢â ¬Å“It seems that fulfilling a purpose and having a meaningful existence arenÃ¢â ¬â„¢t always the same thing.Ã¢â ¬Â• ChoksiÃ¢â ¬â„¢s wry, 1950s-style illustrations do much to lighten the load. Boxed questions (Ã¢â ¬Å“If you switched off a thinking robot, would that be murder?Ã¢â ¬Â•) are accurately dubbed Ã¢â ¬Å“Brain Burns. Not a bad way to describe the entire book. Grades 5-8. --Daniel Kraus

Great resource for kids! Lots of good info inside.

Amazing book. My 8 year old girl loves it. Gets your children thinking. It’s honest with children. Raise a rational thinker!

The answers to the BIG questions are so clear and concise, that even an adult can understand them!My favorite example is the analogy of a puddle in a pothole.

Kid enjoyed reading and discussing. Very nice presentation.

This is a great book! It poses challenging questions and mysteries, and encourages original thought. I haven’t gotten through the whole book yet, but the first section has been wonderful. It immediately tackles the subject of existence, matter, how the world came to be, natural selection, and what we’re made of. The concepts are great for kids of all ages, but the language may need to

be simplified for children younger than 9 or so. I usually adapt my reading for my 4 year old anyway.The view of the book is scientific, creative, and open-minded. I can imagine fundamentalist religious finding this book threatening as it is scientific and clearly not biblical. However, even modern and contemporary believers will enjoy this book as it encourages original thinking and doesn’t condemn any ideas.Children are encouraged to think about life and the world around them, developing their own ideas and identity as they ponder really big questions. We are using each mini chapter as a bed time story, giving their minds and curiosity something constructive to muse about while they drift off to sleep.

I purchased this book for my 10-year old daughter after seeing it listed as a recommended book by our Bishop. The book covers a very wide-range of topics in a few pages each and asks open-ended questions to the reader. My daughter is enjoying the book, and I was impressed at how well these very weighty topics, ranging from philosophy to science, were presented.

Picked this up for the kids without much thought - first glance I thought it was a simple "why is the sky blue’ pablum that permeates the shelves for science books these days. Upon reading it back home for my children I was pleasantly surprised to find real content.The book covers the whole gamut of questions from "Why is there something rather than nothing?" to "Are there really fairies?". The first chapter covers the Big Bang to the meaning of life. The second chapter focuses on the mind (from robots to psychic powers). Chapter 3 deals with ethics, and Chapter 4 the nature of how we can know what we know.What made this book excellent was that it wasn’t content to simply ask the questions, but also give the background information needed to even understand the questions. What do we normally mean by nothing? The nothing before the Big Bang was a nothing of time and space, rather than the nothing of absence, it’s the nothing of even the space for nothing to be in! Most similar books I have encountered have been content to simply stop at asking the question, without giving the necessary context and background information to start thinking critically, as well as providing some of the structures and habits needed to think open-mindedly without being gullible. Another review here said they didn’t like the book because it answered the questions; that’s exactly what makes it very good. It’s not a navel-gazing book, but one that will familiarize the reader with a brief outline of the current knowledge of philosophy and science, without sounding like a textbook. My only regret is that I didn’t find it sooner.The text itself is easy to read, but doesn’t feel over-simplified or condescending. I currently read it to my six-year-old and the examples and analogies are enough that she’s able to grasp the overall concept even if she doesn’t understand

every word. While geared probably towards a bit of an older audience, it’s written well enough that it can be read by nearly everyone. I’m even enjoying it. I would caution about reading it to someone as young as six though; the page on nothing (for example) she found a little scary as she hadn’t ever given that much thought to the concept before. Her mum and I argue as to whether this is a good thing :)In short, if you want something interesting to spark some good conversations, written in an entertaining and thoughtful way, I’d order this book.

I had really high hopes for this book when I picked it up at our local library. However, even my kids pointed out that the author basically answers the questions in the book rather than allow the reader to work through the questions and answer them for themselves.It’s not a philosophy book in that it gets kids to think critically and explore the big questions on their own.If you are looking for a book that brings up the "big questions" without leading kids into a set of assumptions, try Big Questions by DK Publishing.http://www..com/Big-Questions-DK-Publishing/dp/0756675790/ref=sr_1_4?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1371435302&sr=1-4&keywords=big+questions

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