

Eragon

Christopher Paolini

Reviewed by: Aahnix Bathurst, 23

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Eragon is a wonderful high-fantasy adventure involving intelligent dragons, revenge, magic, mad kings, adventure, and family. The book begins with an evil Shade attempting to ambush a group of elves with a valuable package, but the real story begins in the next chapter with Eragon: an independent sixteen-year-old boy who seems to never stop asking questions. On an ordinary hunting trip in a mountain range where superstitions abound, Eragon comes across a strangely smooth stone. This discovery quickly leads to Eragon racing across the continent with an unexpectedly talented village story-teller by his side, both pursued by (and sometimes pursuing) the forces of the deranged despot.

Paolini's first book does have some issues with the writing quality, but the story is fantastic. While many readers complain that it is a retelling of a popular hero's journey story that shall remain unnamed in this review, I think Paolini took the best elements and makes this story his own.

This is a rather thick book, and the three sequels are no thinner. However, every page is worth reading. Paolini spends many of these words world-building, a craft sadly neglected in many shorter volumes. This world-building makes it a delight to read, and I easily found myself slipping into its pages time and time and time again. Having first read this book near its release, I re-read it many times, losing count after thirty, until the final book came out.

This book and the rest of the series is a perfect gift for anyone who can read at or above a middle school level (usually around 11 years old). I own *Eragon* in English and in French and can attest to its usefulness when practicing another language. Paolini begins an epic story while keeping the reading level accessible to young and very young adults.

Recommended Titles:

Dragon Keeper by Carole Wilkinson

Dragonriders of Pern by Anne McCaffery

Heroes of Olympus by Rick Riordan

Septimus Heap by Angie Sage