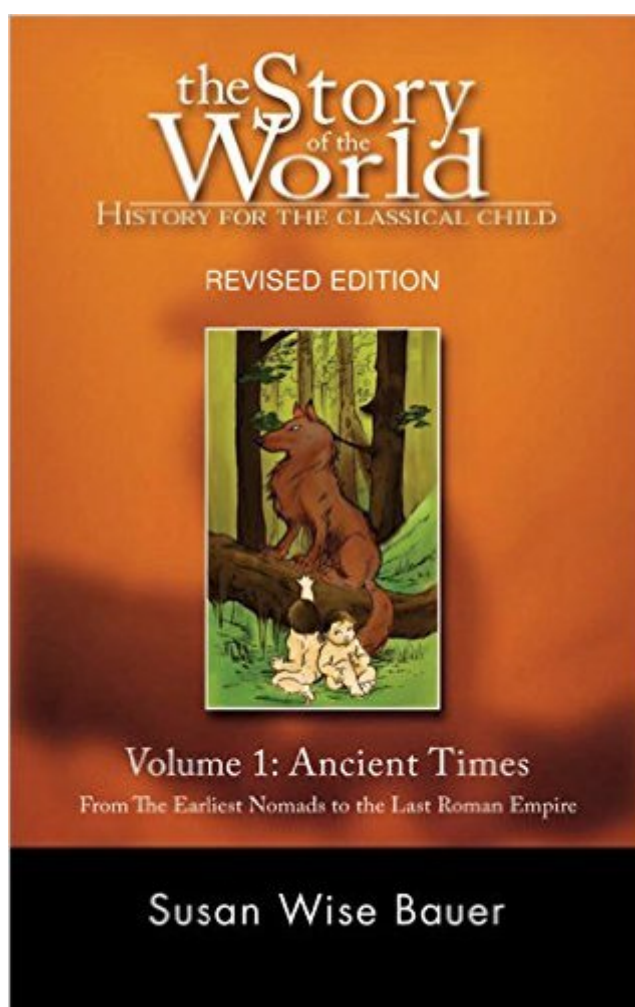


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# The Story Of The World: History For The Classical Child: Volume 1: Ancient Times: From The Earliest Nomads To The Last Roman Emperor, Revised Edition



## Synopsis

This first book in the four-volume narrative history series for elementary students will transform your study of history. The Story of the World has won awards from numerous homeschooling magazines and readers' polls—over 150,000 copies of the series in print! What terrible secret was buried in Shi Huangdi's tomb? Did nomads like lizard stew? What happened to Anansi the Spider in the Village of the Plantains? And how did a six-year-old become the last emperor of Rome? Told in a straightforward, engaging style that has become Susan Wise Bauer's trademark, The Story of the World series covers the sweep of human history from ancient times until the present. Africa, China, Europe, the Americas—find out what happened all around the world in long-ago times. This first revised volume begins with the earliest nomads and ends with the last Roman emperor. Newly revised and updated, The Story of the World, Volume 1 includes maps, a new timeline, more illustrations, and additional parental aids. This read-aloud series is designed for parents to share with elementary-school children. Enjoy it together and introduce your child to the marvelous story of the world's civilizations. Each Story of the World volume provides a full year of history study when combined with the Activity Book, Audiobook, and Tests—each available separately to accompany each volume of The Story of the World Text Book. Volume 1 Grade Recommendation: Grades 1-5. Illustrated throughout with black-and-white drawings and maps

## Book Information

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Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 1 - 6

## Customer Reviews

We used this book last year and are now half way through the second volume. I think both books do a phenomenal job of meeting their stated purpose: to INTRODUCE world history in an engaging fashion to early elementary aged students. I think it's very important to purchase the activity book along with the book, as the activity book not only has tons of really fun and reasonably simple activities that help bring history alive, but also contains stellar recommendations for further reading. The fact that many of those recommendations flat out contradict the viewpoints presented by the author in this book is an indication of Bauer's academic integrity, in my opinion. Many of the critiques of this series hinge on the fact that the book is loaded with inaccuracies and mythology. It is. But even stick-to-the-facts-and-only-the-facts history text books (which are BORING) are full of inaccuracies. At least this is interesting. Also, an understanding of the intended purpose of the book is important. It's designed as a read-aloud, NOT to be read independently by the child. It's also designed to serve as an INTRODUCTION to historical topics and parents are encouraged to supplement the stories by doing further investigation. I'd like to see the book that could adequately present all of the complexities and varying historical arguments about a topic in two pages in a child-friendly format. I think there is a Christian bias throughout the book, but as a non-Christian I haven't found that to be particularly problematic. For example, the story of the Exodus is presented in a much more factual format than many of the other mythologies in the book. There are plenty of people who believe in the absolute historical accuracy of that story, so for them that's just fine. If you don't, it's not like it's exactly difficult to point out to your child how extremely similar that story is to so many other religious mythologies of the time period (which are also included in the book). Again, that's why it's designed as a read-aloud, rather than a story to be read independently, so that the stories can inspire a discussion between the parent and the child. In areas that don't touch on sensitive topics for Christians, I've found the stories to be fairly balanced and there's plenty of places where Bauer points out the limitations of historical "knowledge." For us, the books have served their purpose exactly. My 7 year old son thinks history is interesting and fun. He's also able to ask some pretty interesting questions and draw connections. The viewpoints he's acquiring through studying history in this format are thoughtful and he's not inclined to take everything he reads as verbatim truth. A few of his historical observations: 1- reacting to a story on the news about suicide bombers "That's not such a good idea. The Egyptians would have thought that the devourer would eat your heart if you carry around so much hatred in it." 2- reacting to another story about the conflict between modern day Iran and the US. "Why doesn't the Iranian government read their own history? If they'd treat people the way Cyrus the Great did they wouldn't have so many problems." 3-

reaction to the story of David and Goliath- "Why was David so sure God would be on his side? Didn't the Jews teach that God created all people? So doesn't that mean that God created Goliath too? Then why is David so sure God will choose him?"4- after reading about Confucious- "Oh, his teachings were a whole lot like the Buddha's teachings. Maybe they learned from the same place."5- after reading about the Chinese invasion of Korea and the Frankish King Clovis' forced conversion to Christianity of his people- "These kings didn't pay very much attention to their own religions. How can the Chinese kings claim to be Buddhists and then attack Korea? And I don't know if the French people would really be Christians if they were forced to be but obviously Clovis wasn't a very good Christian. Christ never said you could cut somebody's head off if they didn't believe in Christ!"Now, I contrast that to my own historical perspectives when I was his age and learning history (which was naturally confined to American history) in a 2nd grade public classroom: The pilgrims and the Indians were great friends, as indicated by the story of Thanksgiving. President Lincoln was always completely honest and he loved black people so he freed the slaves. Talk about bias. All in all, I'm not in the least concerned about the inaccuracies in Story of the World.

I read a lot of the reviews on this book - especially the negative reviews - and had to write my own because I think there are many ways to approach this book series. This is our first year homeschooling our 4th grade daughter and we met and grilled many of the homeschool mothers in our area on their system of teaching. One of them recommended the Wise/Bauer book "The Well-Trained Mind" which seemed to be a very good fit for both my teaching style and our daughter's learning style. "The Well-Trained Mind" recommends, of course, this series of books for teaching history. But what a lot of people are missing, I think, is that Volume 1 is meant for 1st grade, Volume 2 for 2nd grade, etc. These 4 volumes are also meant to be the first of 3 levels of teaching history as the child goes through his/her 12 years of education. In other words, these four volumes are laying the groundwork for what's to come. It's not a be-all end-all history course. The reason my approach is different is because I'm using this series of books to catch my daughter up to where a well-educated child should be by the 4th grade. Up through to the end of 3rd grade in the public school system, the only exposure she'd had to history is to the timespan just before and just after the American revolutionary war. So we had a lot of ground to cover. But I didn't want it to turn into a grind for her, so I took the authors' intentions to heart and I'm using this series to form a groundwork for a basic understanding of history. So what I'm doing is covering all four volumes in 1 year. That works out to a little over 2 months per volume or 4 chapters (for Volume 1) per week. I skipped the activity book but did buy the workbook with the quizzes. We've read to our daughter

since she was a baby and she still loves to be read to, so for the 1-hour class (which I hold twice a week) I read 2 chapters to her, discussing what we're reading as I go along. She loves it and the book is easy to read from. Before class starts, I give her 2 quizzes from the 2 chapters read in the previous class. She gets about as many questions right as I would and it's just to help reinforce what I've read to her. So all the complaints about inaccuracies in the book and the author's religious slant (which I didn't find and I was looking for), they don't matter. What really matters is that my daughter enjoys learning about history (it's her favorite class) and she's building a foundation that can be built on in later years. In addition to this series and its workbooks, I also picked up "The Kingfisher History Encyclopedia." Once a week I give her homework to read assigned pages from this book to reinforce or, perhaps, to give a different point of view on what she's just learned. All history books will turn up people who will disagree with the content, will find inaccuracies in the material, or won't agree with the author's point of view. But, guess what? It doesn't matter. Your child is still young and you are filling in a background in history that his/her public school peers will never have.

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