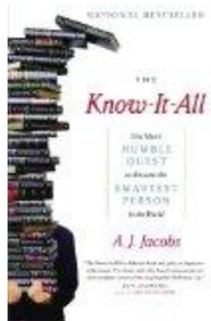


The Know-It-All: One Mans Humble Quest to Become the Smartest Person in the World by A. J. Jacobs



[Trivia, Trivia, Trivia Wrapped Up In A Great Humerous Story!](#)

33,000 PAGES 44 MILLION WORDS 10 BILLION YEARS OF HISTORY 1 OBSESSED MAN Part memoir and part education (or lack thereof), *The Know-It-All* chronicles NPR contributor A.J. Jacobs's hilarious, enlightening, and seemingly impossible quest to read the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* from A to Z. To fill the ever-widening gaps in his Ivy League education, A.J. Jacobs sets for himself the daunting task of reading all thirty-two volumes of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. His wife, Julie, tells him it's a waste of time, his friends believe he is losing his mind, and his father, a brilliant attorney who had once attempted the same feat and quit somewhere around Borneo, is encouraging but unconvinced. With self-deprecating wit and a disarming frankness, *The Know-It-All* recounts the unexpected and comically disruptive effects Operation Encyclopedia has on every part of Jacobs's life -- from his newly minted marriage to his complicated relationship with his father and the rest of his charmingly eccentric New York family to his day job as an editor at *Esquire*. Jacobs's project tests the outer limits of his stamina and forces him to explore the real meaning of intelligence as he endeavors to join Mensa, win a spot on *Jeopardy!*, and absorb 33,000 pages of learning. On his journey he stumbles upon some of the strangest, funniest, and most profound facts about every topic under the sun, all while battling fatigue, ridicule, and the paralyzing fear that attends his first real-life responsibility -- the impending birth of his first child. *The Know-It-All* is an ingenious, mightily entertaining memoir of one man's intellect, neuroses, and obsessions, and a struggle between the all-consuming quest for factual knowledge and the undeniable gift of hard-won wisdom.

A very clever story. A man sets out to read the *Encyclopedia Britannica*. The author can be very proud of himself. He wrote an witty and amusing book, including tidbits of his daily life, cocktails parties, Mensa meetings, family get-togethers and his attempt to get his wife pregnant interspersed

with obscure facts from the Encyclopedia Britannica, This is one book where I strongly recommend the audio version. The reader does an excellent job with the voices and accents, the Britannica comments are read in a stodgy upper crust British accent, versus the authors, Woody Allen type self deprecating remarks with polished comedian type deliveries. I found myself actually LOL.

As a veteran of an unsuccessful attack on the Encyclopedia Americana, advancing to the letter D, I have to envy a guy who 1) has the time to read an encyclopedia, 2) can make the process interesting to read about 3) and I suppose make it profitable, a win -win -win.

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