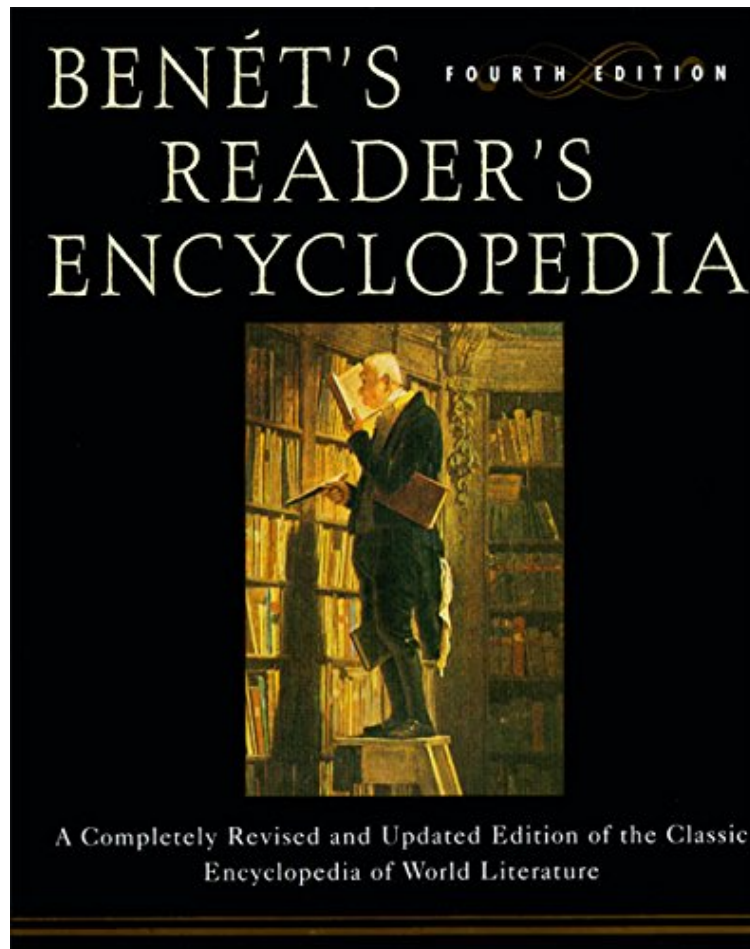


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Benet's Reader's Encyclopedia: Fourth Edition

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Long recognized as the outstanding reference on world literature, Benet's Reader's Encyclopedia is the one against which all others are measured, and is the single-most complete one-volume encyclopedia available for those with a serious interest in the subject. The entries explore all aspects of literature from around the world: biographies of poets and playwrights, novelists and belle trists; plot synopses and character sketches from important works; historical data on literary schools, movements, terms and awards; myths and legends; and more. Completely revised and updated, this fourth edition captures the diversity of today's canon, with greater attention to African-American, Eastern, Middle Eastern, African, South American, Eastern European and women's literature. For nearly 50 years, this unique single-volume encyclopedia of world literature has been hailed as the best available. Here are over 10,000 informative entries, covering everything a reader could wish to know: Biographies of poets, playwrights, novelists, essayists and belle trists from around the world and through the ages, from Aristophanes to Toni Morrison, from Chuang Tzu to Juan Rulfo. Plot summaries of important literary works, ranging from Beowulf to Wuthering Heights to Things Fall Apart. Sketches of principal characters from literature, from Salome to Leopold Bloom. Myth, legend and folklore, covering everything from Isis to the Midgard Serpento to the paladins. Biographies of artists, musicians, philosophers and other historical personages ranging from Roman emperors to U.S. presidents who figure prominently in literature. Accounts of significant schools and movements in literature, such as the Bloomsbury Group and the Beat writers. Original titles, as well as the most familiar English titles, for works in languages other than English. Recipients of major literary awards, including Pulitzer and Nobel prize winners. And more... For nearly 50 years, William Rose Benet and the editors who succeeded him have upheld the level of quality that distinguished the original Benet's Reader's Encyclopedia. Like its predecessors, this new edition will teach and delight, illuminate and expound, and enrich the pleasure of reading in countless ways.

.com What does it mean to have the voice of a stentor? Where is John o'Groat's House? Ever heard of a beast epic, or the Jindyworobak Movement? And what is the origin of the word "abracadabra"? The answers lie in this delicious reference that anyone interested in humility should have; just glimpsing it on the shelf reminds one of how very much there is that one does not know. The thousands of entries in Benet's Reader's Encyclopedia cover anything and nearly everything having to do with literature. The book includes biographies of authors, summaries of books and plays, depictions of characters and mythological figures, explications of literary terms and movements, and, well, a whole bunch of other irresistible stuff that is somewhat quirky and utterly engrossing. (For the curious: a stentor's voice is a very loud voice; John o'Groat's House is considered to be the most northerly point in Great Britain; in a beast epic, "the central characters are animals and the tone is often satirical"; the Jindyworobak Movement is "a school of Australian poets demanding fidelity to Australian environment and the employment of aboriginal themes"; and abracadabra is a cabalistic charm.) From Booklist First published in 1948, this book has been a standard literary reference work for nearly 50 years. "The entries explore all aspects of literature from around the world: biographies of poets and playwrights, novelists and belletrists; plot synopses and character sketches from important works; historical data on literary schools, movements, terms and awards; myths and legends; and more." This edition contains hundreds of new entries and has broadened its scope for today's reader, with greater attention to African American, Eastern, Middle Eastern, African, South American, Eastern European, and women's literature. New entries since the last edition (1987) include The Satanic Verses and Kingsolver, Barbara. Existing material has been brought up to date, incorporating new scholarship and interpretations. Updating of individual entries appears to be current through the end of 1995. Editor Murphy is a poet who reminds us that Benet compiled a very entertaining reference work, meant to be "read, browsed through, and savored." No library patron should be denied this pleasure. For high-school, academic, and public libraries. An edifying staple...it steps outside literary boundaries to embrace influential political and cultural figures and organizations. Highly recommended. (Library Journal)