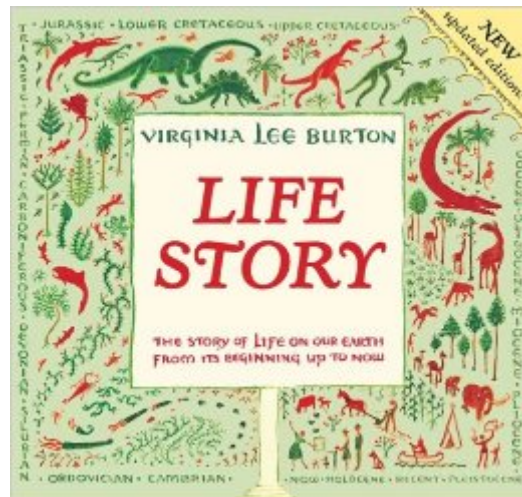


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# Life Story



## Synopsis

Earth takes center stage in this updated version of Virginia Lee Burton's 1962 classic *Life Story*. Told through five acts, Burton's art and text tell the history of earth from beginning to present day. Readers will gain an in-depth understanding of the planet's history and their leading roles in it today. The book has been updated with cutting-edge science, including up-to-the-minute information on fossil records and the geologic principles.

## Book Information

Paperback: 80 pages

Publisher: HMH Books for Young Readers; Updated ed. edition (November 16, 2009)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0547203594

ISBN-13: 978-0547203591

Product Dimensions: 9.6 x 0.3 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 11.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars See all reviews (48 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #110,418 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #15 in Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > Prehistory #1125 in Books > Children's Books > Classics

Age Range: 7 - 10 years

Grade Level: 2 - 5

## Customer Reviews

I was searching for a really good book about dinosaurs for my almost 4 year old daughter who has just developed an interest in prehistoric creatures, when I stumbled onto this book. We own other titles by Burton, *The Little House*, *Katy and the Big Snow*, and *Calico the Wonder Horse*, and love them all. But I think this book is the best. Why? Because, for my daughter, who demands daily readings, it has cracked the world of science wide open, spurring question after question about everything from meteors to the different types of rock, volcanoes, weather, the solar system, and on and on. Using the format of an engaging story, Burton has managed to touch on each of these subjects, and more, and pack so much information into a mere 80-pages. But it's not just rote information, it is a story, it is a play, and it is presented in such an entertaining way that it paves the path for a young child begin a journey of discovery that is integral to a life-long love and understanding of natural history and of the composition of the world around them. Burton's story

begins 'eons and eons ago' when 'our sun was born.' Each page is laid out with the left side containing a one-paragraph description of the period of time being sampled. This is paired with a tri-color visual narrative of what is happening, be it a 5-sketch demonstration of lava erupting from the Earth's core or the evolutionary progression of invertebrate organisms, plants, or animals. The drawings create almost a (slow) motion picture to accompany the words. The left page is dedicated to a full-color scene, set behind a stage, complete with drawn-aside red velvet curtain, and a curious little man examining the different goings-on. He, too, becomes more modern as the story progresses.

A wonderful, wonderful book, indescribable, sui generis. We bought one to read to our son, he loved it, later we gave it away, bought another to read to our daughter, she loved it, later we gave it away, and now we have a grandchild who'll be ready for it in a few years so we bought another copy. Ages 4 to 8? No, ages 4 to adult. I'm always teary-eyed by the time I read to the last page. The book is so sweet, so beautifully equipoised between art and science, between literal and stylized. This is not a book about earth sciences or evolution, it is about life itself and our place in time or space. It glides gracefully and effortlessly from astronomy to geology to biology to sociology to biography, from the story of life to the story of a life. It has such a feeling of being an intergenerational gift. The marvelous illustrations have a genuine warmth and an impish humor. They don't have the overbearing solidity that the Disney animators gave to the "Rites of Spring" sequence in "Fantasia." They are approachable, unintimidating. It is true art to conceal art. They look like something a parent or a teacher or a child herself might draw--if those drawings actually came out the way the parent or teacher or child wanted them to. When we asked about it at Porter Square Books in Cambridge we were thrilled when they said they had two copies in stock. Then everyone had trouble finding it. Because nobody knew what section it should be in, and my wife and I missed it because we were looking for a yellow cover and this edition is a light green. (By the way, I'm not that big a fan of "Mike Mulligan and His Steamshovel;" the ending always seems creepy to me).

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