



Thomas the Tank Engine: The Complete Collection

Wilbert Awdry

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Since the publication of the original *Thomas the Tank Engine* in 1946, millions of children and their parents all over the world have loved this series of bedtime stories about Thomas and his friends. All 26 of the Reverend W. Awdry's classic stories are here in one beautiful gift volume, with an introduction by the author himself. Illustrated in full color.

Thomas the Tank Engine: The Complete Collection Details

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Author : Wilbert Awdry

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From Reader Review Thomas the Tank Engine: The Complete Collection for online ebook

Julian Carvajal Guerrero says

Me encante la verdad

Joseph Leskey says

This is a right wonderful book, to put in layman's terms. A wealth of stories in a nicely dimensioned tome, is this. I would consider this collection to be one of my favorites from metaphorically countless years past.

Emmanuel Nevers says

Finishing this book has kind of been a goal since I was 8. Back in the early 2000's I used to see this book at Barnes and nobles and could never afford it. Fast forward to 2013 and I remembered how much I wanted to own this book so I tracked it down and finally today I finished reading it!! This book did not disappoint. I loved all these original stories by Rev W Awdry and enjoyed experiencing the differences between them and the episodes of the TV series when I was little. It blows my mind how little changes were made and how timeless these stories are. I felt like I was five years old again. And they are very well written and do not at all dumb down railroad operations but explain them accurately.

librarian4Him02 says

Thomas and his friends are trains on the island of Sodor. Each day they carry out their work, have adventures, and learn how to be Really Useful Engines. They are kept in line by their drivers and the Fat Controller, who are firm but gentle with these mischievous engines.

My dad is a train buff, so it surprised me that I didn't own any of these books as a child, but I guess they hadn't yet made it across the pond when I was little. Since they appear to the 1001 Children's Books You Must Read Before you Die list, I knew this was my chance to read them. I wasn't disappointed. It was a fun time reading about a classic set of characters. If you've never visited the Island of Sodor, I highly recommend this book. Thomas and his friends are waiting to welcome you to their railway.

Manny says

The author of the Thomas books was a clergyman, and I'm torn between two thoughts. On the one hand, it's very tempting to believe that they are intended as Christian allegory. On the other, an interpretation along those lines almost inevitably ends with the conclusion that the Fat Controller is God. I'm not a Christian, but even I find this a little blasphemous. Or perhaps it just shows that I will never be a Really Useful Engine.

Surely someone has done a detailed exegesis? I'll confess that I am, indeed, very curious about the details. For example, the episode my kids liked most when they were at the appropriate age. They unwisely fill Thomas up with water from the river. He comes over feeling all funny, so they look in his storage tank.

"Inspector, can you see fish?"

My kids just loved that line, and they used to imitate Ringo Starr's pronunciation endlessly. But what does it mean? Christianity... fish... there has to be something there! Why can't I see it?

Janelle says

A gem of a book for my Thomas obsessed son. I wish we still owned it, but we had to leave it behind when we moved home from overseas.

Esther Jones says

I love these stories so much! My favourite part is the Scottish trains.

Michel Ntemgwa says

I think the book will be awesome.

B. Reese says

The art in this book gets better and better. Hands down, none of the modern Thomas books do quite as good.

I never grew up with Thomas, so this was a new thing for me and I quite enjoyed the stories. Some reviewers question whether or not these stories are Christian allegory. As a Christian, I don't really see where that would be the case seeing as how the Bible is all about the free gift of salvation to humanity at God's expense. The only real Biblical lessons in the Thomas series seem to be about not being prideful. Again and again, the engines start out a story with a boastful claim only to eat their own words later on.

As far as the stories themselves, they are all enjoyable. While I never watched the show growing up, I have seen a few episodes here and there. This collection features a number of stories that as far as I know were never adapted for TV. The Skarloey railway and mountain rail storing are exclusive to Awdry's canon. Even better, the Skarloey railway is based upon a railway in Wales that is still in operation for tourists. One day I shall visit it because of this book.

If you have kids, and they like trains, or you do, this is the book to get.

Alistair says

A timeless classic that has influenced many, ever since the first book, 'The Three Railway Engines', was published in 1945, with the second book in 1946 entitled 'Thomas The Tank Engine', the 'Railway Series', or the 'Thomas the Tank Engine stories', as they are now called, has had an impact on the lives of many a child or adult, culminating in the Reverend's son, Christopher, continuing the range with sixteen more books, the beginning of the hit series in 1984, and a devoted fanbase. On a study of the text, the characters are simple, and easy for the reader to relate to, while representative of the many personalities of a human, such as cheeky Thomas, boastful Gordon, wise old Edward, and Devious Diesel, while the society is reflective of the period of publication, 1945 to 1972, through the patriarchal figure embodied in Sir Topham Hatt, the Fat Controller. In addition, the series intertwines several times with the real world, with real engines City of Truro, and Flying Scotsman, both famous record-breaking engines, making appearances. This is accompanied by one of Awdry's characters, Skarloey, revealing that he is the twin brother of Talyllyn, of the Talyllyn Railway in Wales, and how the series deals with the theme of retirement and death, through narratives based on existing issues, such as steam-powered traction being replaced by diesel traction. What is interesting is the manner in which these issues are covered. The issue of being replaced by diesels is often merely hinted at in rivalries in stories such as 'Thomas and Bertie' and 'Percy and Harold'. The theme of death by being scrapped becomes a minor, but key theme in books such as 'Enterprising Engines', in which, while Henry is jealous of having one tender in comparison to Flying Scotsman, who visited the island, because Gordon was mourning the death of engines of his build, and who needs two tenders due to a lack of coal and water on his railway, Douglas rescues a tank engine, Oliver, from being scrapped, and one of the visiting engines, Stepney the Bluebell Engine, of the Bluebell Railway, visits, famed, because he was one of the first engines who escaped being scrapped, by being preserved. As a long-standing, and ever-willing reader of these stories, I recommend them to any parent whose child loves trains, or whose child likes the 'Thomas and Friends' TV series.

Heather says

I have 4 boys so of course we had to read Thomas the Tank Engine. We'd previously read all the little modern paperback books with the pictures from the TV show. Blah. I didn't much care for them but they asked for them again and again so we read them.

Then I found this book at Goodwill for \$.49. Practically brand new. It went home with me. It no longer looks brand new.

We spent a month or two reading through this book. It has the original illustrations which I like much better and it is so well-written. The boys really liked these as well and have asked for me to read through the book several times since then. They spend hours looking through it. And they haven't once picked up the paperback ones we have.

If you have Thomas fans, start and end here.

Cindi says

We've been through this one with two boys and now number three is enthralled with the pictures and stories in this book. The stories teach about consequences, working together, friendship, obedience and more!

Megan says

It might seem strange adding this one to my list of 'read' books, but this book was literally my entire childhood. I was an absolute Thomas - and train - fanatic, and these stories were my favourite thing ever. The drawings that are included in with the stories are just an added bonus too, and I spent hours pouring over them as a three- and four-year-old kid.

This will forever be one of my favourites, and I simply can't rate this any lower than five stars for the level of nostalgia that this series will always have for me.

Martin says

A vast improvement over the line of Thomas-themed Dr. Seuss for Beginners books like "Go, Train, Go!" or "Blue Train, Green Train". These are the real deal, written by the Reverend Awdry and containing the original illustrations. For children fascinated by the recent origin story TV movie, "The Adventure Begins", several of the stories here are alluded to in the movie, so they might really enjoy hearing how all the gang was brought together. We get to read about the arrivals of Thomas, Toby/Henrietta, Scarloey, Donald & Douglas, and many more, plus their various paint jobs. (I love when they are a different color than the one they're known for.)

The only reason I knock off one star from my rating is that the book is not particularly user-friendly. I would give anything for an index so that I could quickly find a character's first appearance, or a defining event of a story, when being instructed by a 3-year-old which story he wants to hear. Also, the pictures are not very large because so many books are being crammed into this one volume. Sometimes that can be good, as your child may fall asleep faster when there is not much to look at, but sometimes they may start engaging with a picture on the opposite page which you haven't gotten to yet. And the pictures are so endearing, I would love to see bigger versions of them.

These stories are so charming, I could read them again and again. And have!

Akash says

This book is the most important book that I have ever read in my entire life. It is also one of the most important things to me that I own. This was the first book I got in relation to *Thomas the Tank Engine*. I could go on and on about my backstory with Thomas, but I'm afraid that it would be far too much to write. For a while, I seem to have had a strange idea that the TV series was adapted into the books. But I am proud to own this book containing the first twenty-six volumes of *The Railway Series*.

To be clear, the title "The Complete Collection" refers to the fact that these are all of the Reverend Wilbert Awdry's *Railway Series* books. His son, Christopher, has written several more afterwards. Though the book

says "Thomas the Tank Engine" on it, these stories are not only about him, but also the rest of the Really Useful Engines on the Island of Sodor, with No. 1 sometimes not appearing for a full book.

It annoys me to see some of the reasons that people have given to dislike this book, some along the lines of "the stories are too dark". To be fair, the concept of scrapping *is* mentioned from time to time, but that is just how the stories were. These are books written by a Christian priest who told the first three stories to his son who had measles. These are the stories that began the massive, beautiful, and Really Useful phenomenon that we now know as *Thomas the Tank Engine & Friends*. For those who think the ten-minute episodes are better because they are longer - I'll have you know that the quality of the writing, illustrations, and the lessons of the "5-minute" stories in this collection are astronomically superior some of the episodes we see today. This is *not* to say that *all* of the TV stories are not good as there have been some very worthy adaptations from of the books and original stories in the TV series. Even the humor in Awdry's stories, which I find similar to A. A. Milne's in *Winnie the Pooh*, is something that not only children would have a laugh about. Here is an example from *Duck and the Diesel Engine*, featuring Duck and the Fat Controller having a chat about the rather stuck-up big engines.

TFC: "Duck, did you come up with these [rude] names?"

D: "I only wish, sir. If the dome fits -"

TFC: "Ahem!" (tries not to laugh)

Another thing is that people should stop harping about the name "The Fat Controller". Yes, it is referring to a man's rotund stature, but all the same it's a children's book, referring to a fictional controller. If you prefer, while reading this, just say "Sir Topham Hatt" (his actual name) in your mind or out loud, if you are reading it.

There is nobody whom I would not hesitate to recommend this to. This is the sort of book that parents could read to their children, and still have a great time reading it. These are the types of stories that those children will read and praise when they are older. These are the stories that those children will tell their children. And even if the books stop being published, the legacy will never end.
