John Hale, "Entry on: Euclid: the Man Who Invented Geometry by Shoo Rayner ", peer-reviewed by Elizabeth Hale and Daniel A. Nkemleke. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2020). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/996. Entry version as of October 31, 2026.

Shoo Rayner

Euclid: the Man Who Invented Geometry

United Kingdom (2017)

TAGS: Euclid Greek Philosophy





We are still trying to obtain permission for posting the original cover.

General information	
Title of the work	Euclid: the Man Who Invented Geometry
Country of the First Edition	United Kingdom
Country/countries of popularity	worldwide
Original Language	English
First Edition Date	2017
First Edition Details	Shoo Rayner, *Euclid: the Man Who Invented Geometry*. Shoo Rayner, Mega Minds, 2017, 54 pp.
ISBN	9781908944368
Genre	Graphic novels
Target Audience	Children (6–12 years)
Author of the Entry	John Hale, University of Otago, johnhalenz@gmail.com
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Creators



Shoo Rayner , b. 1956
(Author, Illustrator)

Shoo (Hugh) Rayner is an author, illustrator, and teacher of drawing. He was born in Kingston-upon-Thames, the child of a member of the British Army who moved around the world. He spent his childhood in Germany, Pakistan, Yemen, and the United Kingdom. He is a graduate of Anglia Ruskin University (formerly Cambridge College of Art and Technology). He lives in Gloucestershire, near the Forest of Dean.He has illustrated over 250 books, and has two successful Youtube sites teaching drawing (Shoo Rayner Drawing, and Draw Stuff Real Easy).

Rayner creates picture books and middle-grade fiction for children. He admits that after failing his English O level he developed a visual approach to writing and telling stories. He refers to himself as a "storyteller illustrator" (see here, accessed: December 4, 2019). His published output is prolific: he has published a large number of series of Early Readers for children, including the *Lydia* series, the *Victor* series, the *Little Horror*s series, the *Ginger Ninja* series, the *Monster Boy* series, and the *Olympia* series.

Rayner's work in these series involves simple, easy-to-read stories, aimed at readers "at the most important stage of reading development where they can be put off, or enthused for life." (*Something about the Author*, 169)

Sources:

Official website (accessed: December 4, 2019)

Official channel on You Tube (accessed: December 4, 2019)

DrawStuffRealEasy, channel on You Tube (accessed: December 4, 2019)

Profile at en.wikipedia.org (accessed: April 6, 2019)

'Hugh (Shoo) Rayner,' *Something About the Author,* Ed. Lisa Kumar.

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Vol. 151. Detroit, MI: Gale, 2004, p. 168-171.

Bio prepared by Elizabeth Hale, University of New England, ehale@une.edu.au and Ayelet Peer, Bar-Ilan University, ayelet.peer@gmail.com

Questionnaire

Response to author's questionnaire on Author's Vimeo channel (accessed: April 4, 2019).

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Additional information

Summary

Euclid: The Man Who Invented Geometry is an illustrated chapter book that explains the life of the Greek mathematician Euclid, who lived around 300 BC. The focus is on his discoveries in geometry. In ten chapters he is shown explaining his concepts and system to a group of friends. He talks them through his definitions and method, step by step, from "point" to "polygon." The chapters advance from point and axiom (ch. 1) to angle and parallel (ch. 2). Then kinds of angle and so to the circle (3). Then how to measure angles (4). Triangles get classified and named (5). We move from three- sided to four-sided figures (6), and so to the joys and purposes of bisection (7), with use of geometrical tools like compasses. In the next two chapters the story diversifies, because polygons are many, as are their relationships. And so to the final chapter, on the behaviour of angles in polygons, and how to measure them, and why does a pentagon have 540 degrees. The book ends with a page of gruesome geometry jokes, then tells you how to take the subject further on Rayner's website (accessed: April 1, 2020).

Analysis

"Geometry is all about relationships," p. 5, and Rayner introduces human relationships to support that point through his illustrations of Euclid and his friends. They are not silent, in fact they chirp and chatter, with endearing jokes and puns. After step one, defining line as what joins two points, they say "We get the point." Later we meet a running gag on isosceles / sausages. The graphics, further, make the exegesis entertaining. The goofy faces and Greek dress of the friends go beautifully with the austerity of the geometric diagrams. The text weaving its way around both makes it all like a story.

So entertainment balances information. As with many children's textbooks, Rayner is using jokes and cartoons to ease education. The subject is severe and quite exceptionally interconnected: the interpersonal and amusing treatment brings Euclid's thought-world close to us.

Euclid himself is a brilliant choice. His kind of geometry was taught for the next 2000+ years. Its terminology still surrounds us, and the Greek words too, both familiarly (axiom, triangle) and more technically (trapezium, scalene). This whole topic has so many ways of

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connecting his thought-world with ours!

Rigour is necessary for it, and we are not only told about logic but the proceeding from axioms is demonstrated. And there is good jam on the pill. The puns all make you groan, and the story-line and graphics enhance the exegesis: we groan, remember, and understand. Any child reading Euclid who has never met geometry before, will now know these basics for ever. Rayner doesn't thrash the relevance of Euclid, maths, or the Greek language. His touch is light, the thing is fun. Yet here a young reader could fall in love with triangles, as shapes, as a word, an ingredient, or anything else about the world.

Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Euclid Greek Philosophy
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Friendship Knowledge Past Science

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