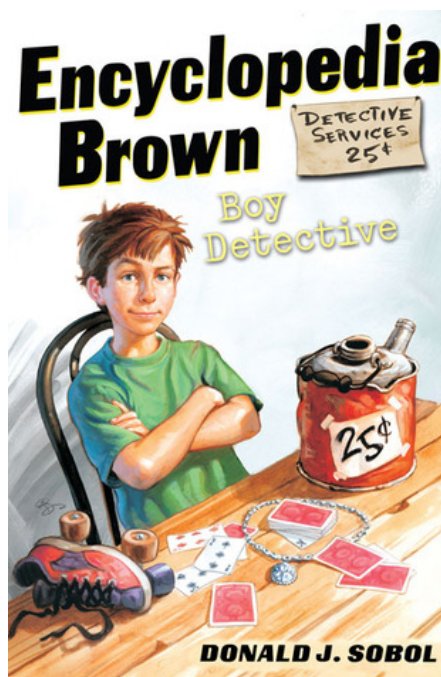




Encyclopedia Brown, Boy Detective

Donald J. Sobol

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Leroy Brown, aka Encyclopedia Brown, is Idaville neighborhood's ten-year-old star detective. With an uncanny knack for trivia, he solves mysteries for the neighborhood kids through his own detective agency. But his dad also happens to be the chief of the Idaville police department, and every night around the dinner table, Encyclopedia helps him solve his most baffling crimes. And with ten confounding mysteries in each book, not only does Encyclopedia have a chance to solve them, but the reader is given all the clues as well. Interactive and chock full of interesting bits of information—it's classic Encyclopedia Brown!

"I loved Encyclopedia Brown as a kid."—Junot Diaz, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*

Encyclopedia Brown, Boy Detective Details

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From Reader Review Encyclopedia Brown, Boy Detective for online ebook

Alex Ristea says

Things I have learned today:

- I probably shouldn't become a detective
- I am no better at Encyclopedia Brown than when I was little

These books are such a throwback to childhood. I remember being so happy when a new one that I hadn't read would appear in my local library.

Each case is pretty short (5-10 pages) and ends with a "how did Encyclopedia know he was the thief?" You have to turn to the end to get the answer, which I'll say is a pretty entertaining way of reading, especially for kids. It gets them involved in the process, which I think is valuable.

Here's the thing. There were 10 cases in this book, and I only solved 5. Sigh. I'm getting better at spotting telling details and clues, so let's see if I can do better with the next.

Bill says

I could say that I loved the Encyclopedia Brown series as a kid, but that wouldn't be entirely accurate. I wanted to *be* Encyclopedia Brown. When you're the nerdy kid on your block, and you discover a character who is the smartest kid in school, kind of popular despite that fact, can not only stand up to but often humiliate the local bully, and gets to hang out with the prettiest girl in the school? Yeah, you're gonna wish life imitated art in that case. And in my mind, it actually seemed kind of possible. I was determined to seek out neighborhood wrongdoings, solve some petty crimes, and maybe even win a few friends in the process. I went so far as to paint my own detective agency sign and everything... which my mom proceeded to laugh at. When your mom laughs at you, you know right then and there it ain't gonna work.

The books were still pretty fun, though, even if my all-too-honest mom made it clear I was never going to get to actually live them out in real life. But like so many kids' books that have been continually reprinted through the ages, the older covers were a lot better than what I'm seeing up there. This kid here is way too hip to be the Leroy "Encyclopedia" Brown I grew up with!

Scott Rhee says

"Encyclopedia Brown, Boy Detective" by Donald J. Sobol was a great series, and I think I read all of them. More than once. I thank (or blame) this series for starting me on my love of the mystery genre. These are gateway books. Finishing this series will lead one to read the Hardy Boys and Nancy Drew series, then to Agatha Christie and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Robert Parker and Sue Grafton, until one day you find yourself strung out on Lee Child or Robert Crais. Be forewarned...

Teri-K says

Evidently even modern kids can enjoy these classic stories of the brilliant young detective. I checked this one out of the library for my reluctant-reader eight year old grandson and he dove right in. He's read it twice and asked me to get more next time I'm there.

Part of the attraction is that each story is only a couple of pages long. Then the reader is asked to identify what clues Encyclopedia used to solve the case, and given the page they can turn to and see if they got it right. This interaction keeps the reader going happily through the book. I remember devouring these when I was little. I'm glad they're still around for my grandkids. :)

Seth says

Give this to the nearest 6-10 year-old (or adult who wants to be 6-10 years old again). It isn't the "can you solve it, too" mystery aspect, although that's fun enough, it's the attitude: Brown loves--and doesn't fear--a good problem, he wants to help people, he has a good relationship with his family, his friends trust and accept one another while recognizing their individuality, and the underlying sense of justice, both moral and civil, is a valuable lesson to every kid and a valuable refresher course for everyone else's adulthood certification.

The Hardy Boys solve mysteries as adventure. Nancy Drew solves mysteries as an obsession. Jupiter Jones solves mysteries as ego. Danny Dunn solves mysteries as education. All of these are good and fun and laudable and worthwhile for kids to learn from.

If you only have one message to teach a young friend, Encyclopedia Brown solves mysteries because a) he has skill to keep exercised, b) he cares about the kids who come to him, and c) he has his father's sense of justice and service. That's the one I'd pick.

...But make sure your young friend knows about Jupiter Jones and Danny Dunn as well.

Lauren says

I would go to the library and check out 10 of these at a time. I *loved* Encyclopedia Brown :)

Kristine Hansen says

As I've gotten older, I think I've gotten cleverer, because I remember reading this book as a child and NEVER being able to guess the solutions. I got about 2/3 this time around. Whee!

My daughter struggled with it the same as I did, which led to a certain amount of frustration as we read this book for school. I helped her through some of the puzzles, but I think it helped her when I honestly couldn't come up with the solution either. It takes a certain kind of mindset to solve the cases - an attention to detail for example. And the fact that the book is as dated as it is doesn't help a whole lot.

Yet it was fun to read and I wouldn't mind trying some other ones in the series alone just to see if I can hone my own skills (despite a bad case of fibro fog). But seriously, if you can't solve every case, don't feel bad. They're meant to be puzzling, and aren't always easy.

Alex says

A sudden fit of nostalgia prompted me to buy and read this. It took like half an hour. It was pretty fun! I love the old-school vision of America, sorta Tom Sawyer-y, where boys spun eggs for fun and 25 cents was a treasure.

Most of the mysteries are not as mysterious as I remember them. You know how each story ends with "How did Encyclopedia Brown solve the case? Flip to page 80 to find out!" and you gotta figure out what his big clue was? Well, it's generally pretty obvious. One of them got me but it was totally cheap. And the last one, where (view spoiler) Yeah, I didn't know that. Although I figured it out anyway from context and because I'm a fucking genius.

Anyway, it was a fun way to kill half an hour. Sure, it's worth buying for your ten-year-old.

John of Canada says

I never read these books when I was a child, but now that I'm going through my second childhood I thought I would give it a go. It's nice to spend time in gentler times. I managed to solve a few of the crimes and considered becoming a detective, but I don't think I could survive on 25 cents a day plus expense. Do kids still read these books. I'd like to think so.

Brynn says

I loved this series as a kid...and may have read it when last week in the closet. :)
Though when you think of it, a lot of his evidence isn't very sound. Like this kid destroyed a tent because he was wearing short sleeves.....

Kwoomac says

So fun rereading this book from my childhood. In case you're not familiar with Encyclopedia Brown, here's what happens. He is a boy detective (10 years old) who gets paid, mostly by neighborhood kids, to solve mysteries. So each chapter is a different case. The client lays out the details, Encyclopedia (geez, that's mouthful. What do his friends call him?) thinks about it for a while, sometimes doing a little investigating, and then he announces he has the solution. The reader has the opportunity to try and figure it out before turning to the back pages of the book, where the solutions and reasoning is revealed.

I am proud to report that I was able to solve nine out of ten mysteries! Of course, having read them all before did give me an advantage. Plus, one of the suspects was named Bugs Meaney. Obviously, he was up to no good! I guess I should be embarrassed that I didn't get them all, but I read it aloud to my husband and he

didn't guess it either.

I'm not sure if this book will appeal to middle-grade kids today. The book was written in 1963 so it's pretty dated. There is mention of gangs, but mostly these gangs of older kids play card and softball, and set up contests to see who the cleverest kid in the neighborhood is. I'm not telling. Wouldn't want to to spoil it for you.

Angelina says

Oh Leroy "Encyclopedia" Brown. If only every town's criminal activity involved puns and word problems! Criminals in Idaville are bad at two things: telling lies and getting away with crime. Thanks to a ten year old nerd and his friend Sally.

It's bizarre that despite being the CHIEF OF POLICE, the kid's father brings home work every night and has poor Leroy solve all the town's crime over dinner. I always found that kind of sad (even as a child). Of course my parents are high flying medical professionals which I suppose is a little more complicated then solving crime.

I'll be honest I had been legally drinking for a good decade before I was able to solve one of these things without looking at the solution featured in the back.

Despite being really interesting mysteries the writing is TERRIBLE!

Steven R. McEvoy says

I picked up this book because Barry Lyga made mention of it on his blog. I recall knowing the name but had never read an Encyclopedia Brown book until recently. Growing up with a dual form of dyslexia I did not read a lot of books when I was younger. In fact it was high school before I really became a reader. And maybe that is why I read across so many genres and love reading a good children's, middle grade or young adult book. I am very glad I added these books to me to be read list. It is always interesting starting a series of books that is finished and has a number of books. There are 28 books in the Encyclopedia Brown Books, a few have had title changes but 28 books is a long series no matter how you look at it. If they are all as good as this one I have a lot of reading ahead of me.

Encyclopedia Brown, born Leroy Brown is a ten year old detective from Idaville. He has a great gift for seeing through the straw and finding the needle. It all started one night when his father the Chief of Police shared details of a case over dinner and Encyclopedia pieced it together quickly. That summer he decided to open his own business the sign reads:

Brown Detective Agency
13 Rover Avenue
Leroy Brown, president
No case too small
25Cents per day
plus expenses

And with that the adventure begins. The cases in this volume are:

The Case of Natty Nat
The Case of the Scattered Cards
The Case of the Civil War Sword
The Case of Merko's Grandson
The Case of the Bank Robber
The Case of the Happy Nephew
The Case of the Diamond Necklace
The Case of the Knife in the Watermelon
The Case of the Missing Roller Skates
The Case of the Champion Egg Spinner

I had to read the solution for a few but after that I slowed down paid closer attention and figured them out. I am really looking forward to reading these with my son and oldest daughter. They are fin light easy to read mysteries.

My criteria for enjoying a book intended for young reads are 1. did I enjoy it as an adult, 2. do I want to share it with my children or children I know, 3. can I say yeah this was a good read regardless of intended audience? This book hits all three. And as such it was a great read. I have already gone on and read book two in this series and know I will read some more soon.

Read the review on my blog [Book Reviews and More](#).

Aimee says

I used to like this series when I was little. Much more so than I liked Nancy Drew; in fact, I think Nancy Drew may be one of the most overrated children's-book characters out there.

I liked Encyclopedia Brown's books because they were short, and I could often figure out the solution to the mystery on my own. Granted, the evidence Encyclopedia cites is often very weak, and would never stand up in court, but still, not bad for a ten-year-old.

I do think his police-chief father needs to retire. He lives in a small, safe beach town but he needs this kid to solve such petty cases? Please. Here's a little ditty I composed, with apologies to Jim Croce:

Smart, smart Leroy Brown,
Dumbest Dad in the whole damn town.
