Who Was Charles Schulz? (Who Was?)
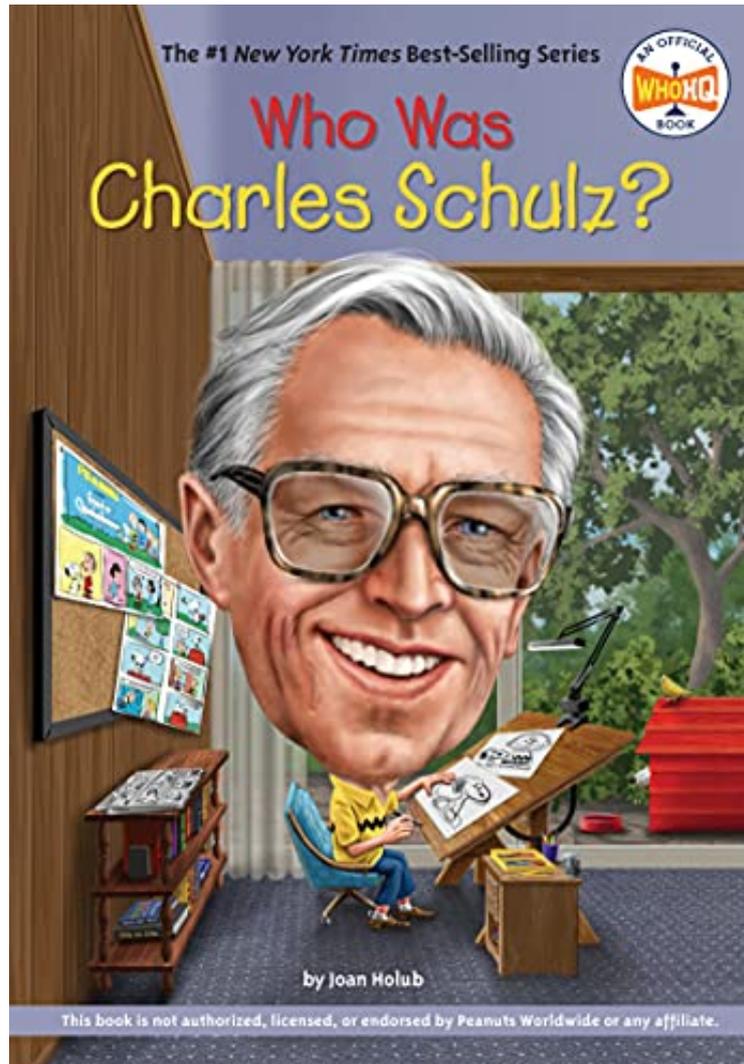
by

Joan Holub

Synopsis

Learn more about the cartoonist who created Charlie Brown, Snoopy, and the rest of the lovable Peanuts gang in this new addition to the #1 New York Times bestselling series!Charles (otherwise known as Sparky) Schulz always loved drawing from the time he was a young child, and as he grew older, he turned this passion into a phenomenally successful career. His early doodles of his mischievous dog and of a shy boy inspired two of his most familiar and beloved characters, Charlie Brown and Snoopy. Here's the story about Peanuts gang and Charles's life that's sure to excite all readers but especially those who love the classic cartoon series.

Sort review

About the AuthorJoan Holub is the author of several Who HQ books, including What Was the First Thanksgiving?, What Was the Gold Rush?, Who Was Marco Polo?, and Who Was Babe Ruth? --This text refers to the hardcover edition.Excerpt. © Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved.Who Was Charles Schulz? In his first week of kindergarten, Charles Schulz already proved what a good artist he was. When the teacher gave the kids in the class paper and crayons, they all lay on the floor to draw. Charles drew a picture of a man shoveling snow, with a palm tree in the background. It was a funny idea. But he wasn't satisfied with his picture. The shovel didn't look right, but he didn't know how to fix it. Still, when his teacher saw his drawing, she told him, "Someday, Charles, you're going to be an artist." By age six, Charles had decided he wanted to be a cartoonist. He would grow up to create one of the most popular comic strips ever—-Peanuts! Its cast of beloved characters includes Charlie Brown, Snoopy, Lucy, Linus, Schroeder, Pigpen, Sally, Woodstock, Peppermint Patty, and more. Of all his characters, Charlie Brown was most like Charles. Both were ordinary kids who didn't stand out in a crowd. Like Charlie Brown, Charles could be quiet and shy. Charles Schulz seemed like a relaxed and happy guy. Inside, however, he was often anxious and worried, even after he became rich and famous. But when he was drawing comics, he felt confident and in charge. He loved his job. Millions of people grew up reading Peanuts. Surprisingly, Charles had wanted to name his comic strip something else!Chapter 1:A Boy Called Sparky Charles M. Schulz was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota, on November 26, 1922. His uncle soon nicknamed him Sparky after Spark Plug. Spark Plug was the horse in the popular Barney Google comic strip. The name stuck. All his life, Charles's friends and family would call him Sparky. Sparky was an only child. He grew up in Saint Paul, a city right next to Minneapolis, with his mom, Dena, and his dad, Carl. Carl owned the Family Barbershop, and they lived nearby. Sparky was proud of his dad and liked to hang out at the barbershop. When Sparky's hair grew long, Carl would cut it. But if a customer came into the shop, Sparky had to move aside. He'd wait around with half a haircut till the customer left. That was kind of embarrassing! TVs weren't around then. Like most families, the Schulzes listened to radio programs. They had to imagine what all the characters in a series looked like

and in their minds "see" the action happening. Comics were super popular. Both grown-ups and kids loved them. People spent hours reading the funny papers. That was what the comic strip pages in newspapers were called. Sparky and his dad would read comics together and discuss them. What will happen in next week's strips? they'd wonder. In elementary school, Sparky was a good student. He was so smart that he got to skip half of the third and fifth grades. He always carried a pencil in his pocket and was great at copying comic characters like Popeye and Mickey Mouse. Other kids asked him to make pictures in their notebooks. At home, he sometimes drew on the cardboard that came inside his dad's shirts from the laundry because paper was expensive. For his eleventh birthday, Sparky bought himself a book called How to Draw Cartoons by Clare Briggs. He kept practicing and learning. Sparky often felt lonely without brothers or sisters. He'd go visit his friend Shermy, who lived around the corner. Sparky liked to listen to Shermy's mom play classical music on her piano. On Saturday afternoons, the boys would go to movie theaters to see short films called serials. On Sundays, the Schulzes sometimes visited Sparky's mom's family at their farm. His cousins were noisy, played rough, and sometimes teased him. He was a shy city boy. Cows and other farm animals seemed scary. He didn't enjoy the trips. Minnesota had long snowy winters. Kids in Saint Paul would skate on ponds or on patches of ice that formed on sidewalks or streets. Sometimes Sparky's dad hosed down their yard. The water would freeze into a skating rink perfect for ice hockey. Kids in the neighborhood liked to come over to skate at the Schulzes'. One of Sparky's favorite books was Hans Brinker; or, The Silver Skates by Mary Mapes Dodge. It was about a boy and his sister who try to win a pair of skates in an ice-skating race. Sparky enjoyed sports and often forgot his shyness in his desire to win. In spring and summer, he played baseball. These were just pickup games. There was no organized Little League back then. (It began in 1939.) One summer, something exciting happened. A playground supervisor noticed how much Sparky and his friends enjoyed baseball. He started a league for them with four teams, playing two days a week. Not only was Sparky chosen as a team manager, he switched off playing catcher and pitcher. Even though the games didn't start until 9:00 a.m., he would arrive at 8:30 with the equipment. His dedication paid off. His team won the season championship! --This text refers to the hardcover edition.

What people say about this book

Kevin J. Dockendorf, "Charles 'Sparky" Schulz book:). For a major brain aneurysm survivor I had to work on pretty much everything again (talking, writing, eating, speech/OT/PT, etc. When I saw this WhoHQ book I didn't know if I could read again but I bought one anyway (also listening to audiobooks too/both). Surprisingly I could understand what the words meant. Sure probably a kid will understand with these type of books, but truthfully I think anyone might like this book for any person :)"

karen connell, "Exactly as described. It was exactly as described. Also, it arrived in a timely manner."

adam kyle, "It's great book!. Thank you for my little book at Charles Schulz of newspaper Comics!!!"

christine prior, "Charlie Brown I love he's always getting things wrong. A very good author and very good in value"