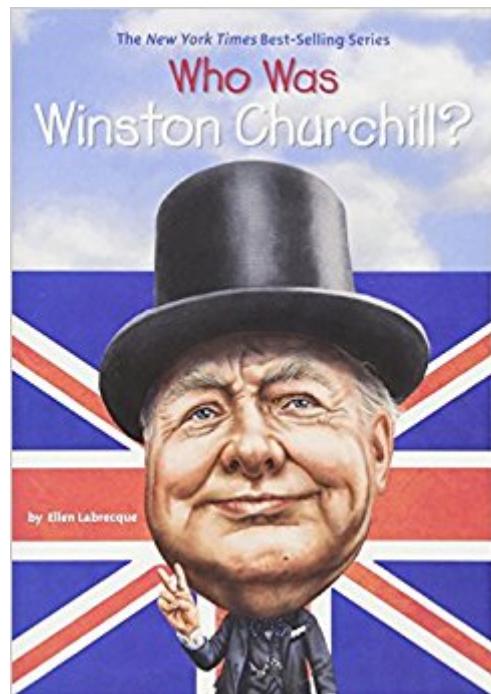


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# Who Was Winston Churchill?



## **Synopsis**

Born into aristocracy, Churchill cut his teeth as a young army officer in British India, the Sudan, and the Second Boer War. He rose in the ranks to First Lord of the Admiralty and was a staunch opponent of the encroaching German Nazis. Churchill served as Prime Minister of the United Kingdom from 1940 to 1945 and again from 1951 to 1955. Widely regarded as one of the greatest wartime leaders of the 20th century, Churchill was also a historian, a writer, and an artist. He is the only British Prime Minister to have won the Nobel Prize in Literature, and was the first person to be made an honorary citizen of the United States.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Ellen Labrecque is a former Senior Editor for Sports Illustrated for Kids and the author of over twenty nonfiction books for young readers, including biographies of Jim Thorpe and Magic Johnson.

Who Was Winston Churchill? When Winston Churchill walked into the House of Commons to make his first speech as prime minister of England, he was sixty-five years old. He wore a dark suit and a serious face. It was May 13, 1940, and the beginning of World War II, the deadliest war in history. When Winston entered the giant hall, the six hundred Members of

Parliament did not applaud. They sat silently. Many of them doubted that England could survive the war. Many wanted to make peace with Adolf Hitler of Germany. "You ask, what is our aim?" Winston boomed into the microphone. "I can answer in one word. It is victory. Victory at all costs. Victory in spite of all terror. Victory however long and hard the road may be. For without victory there is no survival." The speech was short, but electrifying. When he finished, thunderous applause rose from the crowd. Winston's powerful words made his audience feel hopeful. Winston Churchill was a master public speaker and writer. As World War II raged on, Winston made many speeches that rallied his people. His voice was broadcast on the radio around the world. He gave people courage during the dark days of the war. Winston lived for ninety years as a soldier, politician, writer, and painter. He endured many failures and setbacks during his long life. But, when he was needed the most, he rose to the challenge. Winston Churchill was the right man, at the right time.

Chapter 1: A Royal Childhood

Winston Churchill was born two months before his due date on November 30, 1874. Perhaps he was in a hurry to begin his remarkable life! After all, he was the firstborn child to one of the most rich and famous families in England. Winston's family home was called Blenheim Palace in Woodstock, England. It had 187 rooms and sat on two thousand acres! Queen Victoria ruled England when Winston was born. During her reign, from 1837 to 1901, Great Britain was the most powerful country in the world. The Churchill family was part of the British aristocracy, or the country's wealthy ruling class. Winston was a member of one of a few hundred British families who held most of the land, money, and power. Winston's father, Lord Randolph Churchill, came from a long line of British nobility. Lord Randolph's father, Winston's grandfather, John Spencer-Churchill, was the seventh Duke of Marlborough. From the day he was born, Winston was taught that Great Britain was the greatest country on earth. "I was a child of the Victorian era," Winston wrote. "When the realization of the greatness of our empire and of our duty to preserve it was ever growing stronger."

Winston's mother, Jeanette (Jennie) Jerome, was a beautiful and wealthy American. Jennie's family was in England on vacation when she met Lord Randolph. They became engaged just days after they met. Winston's mother and father loved their son. But, like most wealthy English parents at the time, they did not spend much time with him. Instead, Randolph spent his days working for the British government. Jennie spent her days going to parties. As an adult, Winston wrote that his mother "shone for me like the evening star. I loved her dearly, but at a distance."

Winston was raised and adored by his nanny, Mrs. Elizabeth Everest. He called her "Woomany."

Woomany looked after Winston for his entire childhood. She cared for him all day and tucked him into bed at night. When Winston was two, the Churchills moved to Dublin, Ireland.

Winston's grandfather became an official for the British government there.

Winston's father went to work for him as his personal secretary. Winston was a lonely child and had few playmates. But he loved playing with his toy soldiers in his family's garden. He fought pretend battles and made forts for the soldiers in the dirt.

Winston's only sibling, his brother, John (Jack) Stranger Spencer-Churchill, was born when Winston was five years old. He and Jack were good friends their entire lives. Soon after Jack was born, Lord Randolph started a new job in the British government. The Churchills moved back to London.

Like many wealthy English boys, Winston was sent to boarding school when he was seven. He attended St. George's School in Ascot, England. The headmaster at St. George's was a strict man who beat the boys if they misbehaved. "How I hated this school," Winston said. "I counted the days and hours to the end of every term." Winston missed his brother, Jack. He also hated most of his subjects, especially math. He loved to escape by reading books. One of his favorites was Treasure Island by Robert Louis Stevenson, a story about pirates searching for gold. Winston dreamed of having his own adventures someday. When Winston was twelve, he was enrolled at the Harrow School. It was one of the most well-known boys schools in England. Before Winston arrived, six graduates of the school had already gone on to become prime minister—the political leader of England. Winston spent four years at Harrow. He was a poor student in science and math, but he was a gifted writer. He could also memorize long poems. His favorite poem was Lays of Ancient Rome by Lord Macaulay. The poem was 1,200 lines about heroes and death in battle. He recited the poem with emotion, like a great actor. Winston also became the fencing champion at Harrow. He loved waging "battles," fighting with swords against his fencing opponents. Winston wrote many letters to his parents while at boarding school. They wrote to him as well, but rarely visited. Instead, Winston's former nanny, Mrs. Everest, visited him at Harrow. She also visited Jack, who was at a different boarding school at the time. After Harrow, Winston joined the military. He loved the idea of becoming a soldier. Winston took the entrance exam for the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst, a training center for future British officers. He failed twice. But Winston never gave up. He finally passed on his third try. It was September 1893, and Winston was nineteen years old. He couldn't wait to fight for his beloved Great Britain.

Love these books. My son, who is 9 has been reading them for a little over a year now and this

book is wonderful. I must say that this one is not one of his favorites. He is a history junkie, lol. He so far seems to love the Jackie Robinson, Teddy Roosevelt, Abraham Lincoln, Robert E Lee, What is the world series the best as a 8 and 9 year old.I also read these to him in the evenings and I really enjoy them as a 40 year old father. I have learned so much from them as well. Sometimes I read them before or after my son in order to have an educated discussion with him about the subject of the book. I really also get a lot out of them as well.

These books are great for kids but ALSO VERY GREAT for adults n I have loved every one of them n this one is really great cuz he was a fantastic guy handling WW2 things in England n was a great n caring man!!

Daughter loves the book, nice addition to the "Who Was" series

My 9 years has re-read this book multiple times and absolutely loves it.

My son loved it!

I love the "Who was?is" collection. This book, just like the others, is pretty detailed for our kids. We really enjoyed reading and learning together.

Our 9 year-old grandson, for whom I bought the book, told me to give it 5 stars!

Great summary of Churchill's life. Easy to read.

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