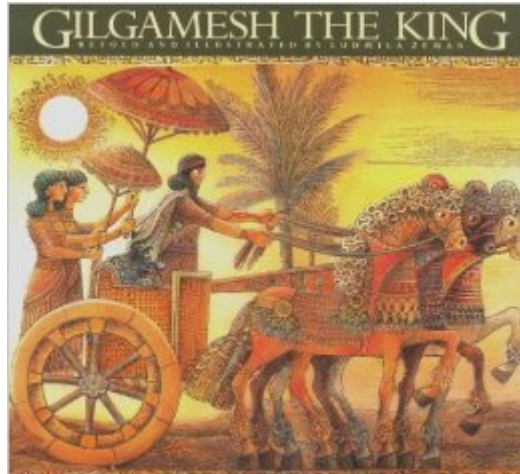


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# Gilgamesh The King (The Gilgamesh Trilogy)



## Synopsis

Gilgamesh, half-god and half-man, in his loneliness and isolation becomes a cruel tyrant over the citizens of Uruk. To impress them forever he orders a great wall to be built, driving his people to exhaustion and despair so that they cry to the Sun God for help. In answer, another kind of man, Enkidu, is sent to earth to live among the animals and learn kindness from them. He falls in love with Shamhat, a singer from the temple, and he follows her back to Uruk. There, Enkidu, the "uncivilized" • beast from the forest, shows the evil Gilgamesh through friendship what it means to be human.

## Book Information

Series: The Gilgamesh Trilogy (Book 1)

Paperback: 24 pages

Publisher: Tundra Books; Revised edition (April 25, 1998)

Language: English

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Product Dimensions: 11.4 x 0.1 x 10.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 7 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars • See all reviews (30 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #28,790 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #21 in Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > Ancient Civilizations #31 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Historical > Middle East #612 in Books > Children's Books > Fairy Tales, Folk Tales & Myths

Age Range: 7 - 9 years

Grade Level: 2 - 4

## Customer Reviews

We really appreciate the beauty of this series of books as it covers "The Epic of Gilgamesh" in an appropriate and accessible way for our children. We love to use actual historic documents in our study if possible, but the actual epic is too uncomfortably graphic even for our older children, so we use these for everyone as we study Mesopotamia, Sumer and Babylon. There are not many books that cover these Near East cultures, which makes this set especially valuable. Along with "Our Young Folks' Josephus" as our history spine, "Science in Ancient Mesopotamia" and "Ancient Egyptians and their Neighbors: An Activity Guide (covering Hittites, Nubians, Mesopotamians and

Egyptians) this series helps considerably to round out our ancient history studies and to teach our children about one of the most ancient tales in the world in a beautifully engaging way.

This is a fantastic version of the Epic of Gilgamesh -- for children, ages 4 - 12. The illustrations are colorful and very similar to the Sumerian/Babylonian style of art. The recounting is easy for children to follow. I bought it for my 7 year old but my four year old was riveted. There are other more thorough versions around but this is a great one for a beginner. Make sure you buy all 3 books in the series to get the whole epic, the other two being The Revenge of Ishtar and The Last Quest of Gilgamesh.

My children and I are beginning a study of ancient civilizations and I bought the three Gilgamesh books to expand our coverage of ancient Sumer. These books are just amazing! The story itself is powerful but I wondered how the author was going to tone down some of the violence; not to mention the fact that Shammat was a prostitute in other versions. Ludmilla Zeman has brought this story to children with intensity and grace that comes as a complete surprise. I especially liked her painting of the chaste kiss between Shammat and Enkidu with the explanation that Shammat taught Enkidu to speak and together they explored the ways of love. Very tender. In her illustrations, Ludmilla Zeman has made an attempt to incorporate actual historical artifacts. These are all high-quality books in every sense and I cannot recommend them highly enough.

The beautiful drawings tell the long forgotten tales of Gilgamesh with glory and a sense of humor. The pictures resemble ancient Babylonian art and my 9 and 12 year old children asked to see this series of books again and again. The human and animal characters show love, devotion, and fear in this well told epic story. Very worth while.

While this version is certainly accessible to children, I don't agree with many of the liberties the author took with any of these stories in the series. The many translations out there for adults at least attempt to stay true to the story. I regret that I cannot share these more accurate versions with my younger kids because of the description of at least one particular excerpt; I've had to settle for these. I believe if a person is going to adapt a classic to suit children that one should keep true to the story as best as possible, not adding and creating their own useless elements to the story. The Epic itself is wonderful, but I am still looking for an appropriate version that retains most of the original elements. I do appreciate the efforts of the author to share this amazing story with children.

The three books in this series, *Gilgamesh the King*, *The Revenge of Ishtar*, and *The Last Quest of Gilgamesh*, are easily the most beautifully illustrated version of the Gilgamesh story available. (To get the entire story, you must have all three.) I was disappointed that these books were ignored by my library patrons. Apparently the story of Gilgamesh is not well-enough known to generate popular demand. However, anyone who knows and loves the story of Gilgamesh should see (and own) these books. Parents looking for a way to raise serious questions about death with their children, but who are put off by such syrupy books as *The Tenth Good Thing About Barney*, might consider these books as an alternative.

*Gilgamesh the King*, *The Return of Ishtar*, and *The Last Quest of Gilgamesh* are exceedingly well-written and show many different themes and life lessons. The themes of friendship, revenge, good vs. evil, ambition, and immortality. But I think the most essential, underlying message is about love. Enkidu shows love to Shamhat and Gilgamesh, Gilgamesh shows love to Enkidu and his city, Shamhat shows love to Enkidu, and the city shows love to Gilgamesh, Enkidu and Shamhat! Love is woven into the theme of eternal life. I think these stories would be fabulous for anybody but recommended for 5-12. I am in middle school and we are reading these stories in class. I enjoyed these stories tremendously. So if you want to teach your children about death or love or friendship, these would be the ultimate choice.

I bought this book in hardcover, thinking I would "educate" my 6 yo daughter with it and then donate it to the library. What a surprise! My daughter loves this book and we have read it again and again. There are many aspects that combine to make this a book worth having. The text tells of a famous legend, with fear, love and friendship all woven together. The illustrations are lyrical--emphasizing story aspects rather than true life / art perspective. My daughter likes that the hidden hero is a woman, Shamhat. Although "recommended" for older children, I would recommend this for 6 to 8 yo's.

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