



A Little History of Literature

John Sutherland

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This “little history” takes on a very big subject: the glorious span of literature from Greek myth to graphic novels, from *The Epic of Gilgamesh* to *Harry Potter*. John Sutherland is perfectly suited to the task. He has researched, taught, and written on virtually every area of literature, and his infectious passion for books and reading has defined his own life. Now he guides young readers and the grown-ups in their lives on an entertaining journey “through the wardrobe” to a greater awareness of how literature from across the world can transport us and help us to make sense of what it means to be human.

Sutherland introduces great classics in his own irresistible way, enlivening his offerings with humor as well as learning: *Beowulf*, Shakespeare, *Don Quixote*, the Romantics, Dickens, *Moby Dick*, *The Waste Land*, Woolf, *1984*, and dozens of others. He adds to these a less-expected, personal selection of authors and works, including literature usually considered well below “serious attention”—from the rude jests of Anglo-Saxon runes to *The Da Vinci Code*. With masterful digressions into various themes—censorship, narrative tricks, self-publishing, taste, creativity, and madness—Sutherland demonstrates the full depth and intrigue of reading. For younger readers, he offers a proper introduction to literature, promising to interest as much as instruct. For more experienced readers, he promises just the same.

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