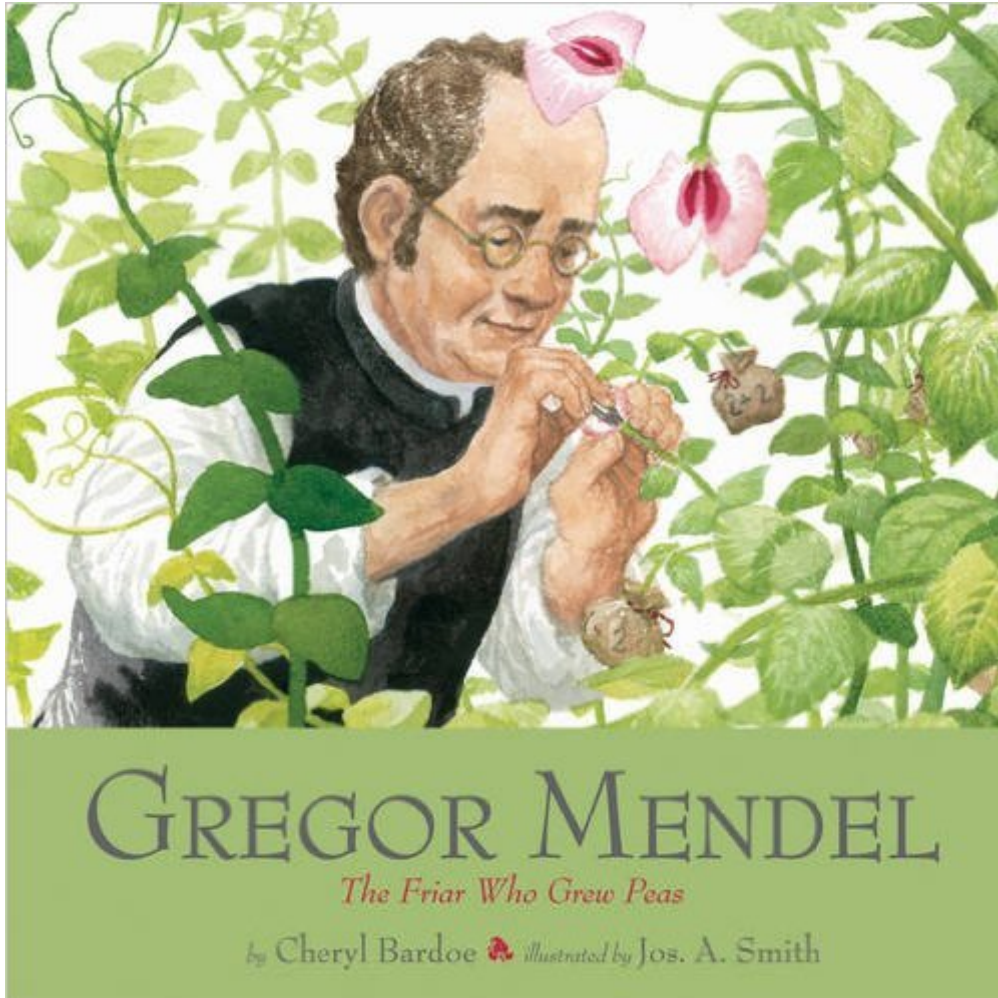


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# Gregor Mendel: The Friar Who Grew Peas



## Synopsis

Gregor Mendel explains to children the theory of heredity in simple-to-understand language and examples. Regarded as the world's first geneticist, Gregor Mendel discovered one of the fundamental aspects of genetic science: animals, plants, and people all inherit and pass down traits through the same process. Living the slow-paced, contemplative life of a friar, Gregor Mendel was able to conceive and put into practice his great experiment—observing yellow peas, green peas, smooth peas, and wrinkled peas to craft his theory—years before scientists had any notion of genes. Includes an author's note and bibliography.

Awards for Gregor Mendel Orbis Pictus Honor Book ALA-ALSC Notable Book IRA Notable Book AAAS/Subaru SB&F Excellence in Science Book Finalist

## Book Information

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Age Range: 5 - 9 years

Grade Level: Kindergarten - 4

## Customer Reviews

In this book, Bardoe develops a creative text that re-tells the story of the life of the great Gregor Mendel and his seminal studies on pea plants that led to the development of modern genetics understanding. The book contains beautiful illustrations by Jos. A. Smith that complement and expand upon the text. When I read this book for the first time, I was so excited, I purchased it immediately. I am a high school biology teacher and I could easily see how valuable this text would be for teaching about Mendel in my unit on genetics. For the past several years, I have read this text

aloud to my high school (10th grade) students in both my honors biology course as well as my general biology course. My students appreciate learning more about Gregor Mendel; more than they get from the text book coverage of the topic. I especially enjoy the description of Mendel's early life and how he basically worked his way out of poverty through his schooling and later association with the Abbey of St. Thomas in Brno. I really like the way that Bardoe speaks in language that is not condescending or patronizing. Actually, many of my biology students ask me upon completion of reading whether this book really is a "child's book?" The writing includes direct quotes from Mendel and detailed description of his experimental method with the pea plants. I love using this book so much in my biology classes and I hope that Bardoe will consider writing similar texts about some of the other great historic scientists like Charles Darwin or Linnaeus or maybe even a contemporary like Jane Goodall. I am sure whatever and however Bardoe writes, it will be fantastic and very useful for teachers like me who love to read aloud in the science classroom!

Everything in this picture book is wonderful: the illustrations, the tone of the text, the amount of biographical and scientific information. This will serve as a fabulous introduction to Mendel's innovative scientific work on genetics for a 5th or 6th grader's science curriculum, or for just general family's enjoyment!

I read this book to my high school students. They don't love the book, but they do love story time and it has just enough science that you can read it as the intro OR as a concluding activity when everyone's brains are fried over genetics.

How does genetics work? Gregor Mendel was fascinated by passed-along traits all his life, and overcame poverty to found the science of genetics. He lived the life of a friar and put together an experiment involving growing multiple generations of peas. Kids in grades 3-4 will delight in a true biography that reads with the excitement of fiction.

Both the illustrations and the text paint a clear but optimistic picture of the life of Gregor Mendel, the pioneer of genetic research. We learn that Mendel was always interested not only in how things grew the way they did but also general math and science. Most adults, I believe, hear the word "friar" and assume he was a religious office holder who fell into science. Through this biography, we learn that he was a scientist who fell into a religious career as a way of financing his scientific studies. The descriptions of his initial experiments and the results were clear and easy to

understand. My 6 year old sons, while a little on the young side for this book, were curious about the illustrations of the peas. My husband and I found it fascinating. Recommended for ages 7 and up as a primer for learning about both scientific history and genetics.

Written at an easy to read elementary level, this book presents the monumental scientific discoveries of Gregor Mendel in an accurate narrative that can be enjoyed and understood by children. We need more books like this to inspire the next generation of scientists to make the world a better place.

I bought this as background material for my middle school General Science class. My own children (10, 12 and 16) loved the book. The illustrations are lovely, and it really is a great story of Mendel's interests, perseverance and discoveries.

Excellent introduction to the Father of Genetics. The well-crafted text, which includes a few direct quotes from Mendel, is accented by watercolor illustrations. The perseverance and meticulous work of Mendel demands our admiration. A perfect book for grades 2-5 or 6.

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