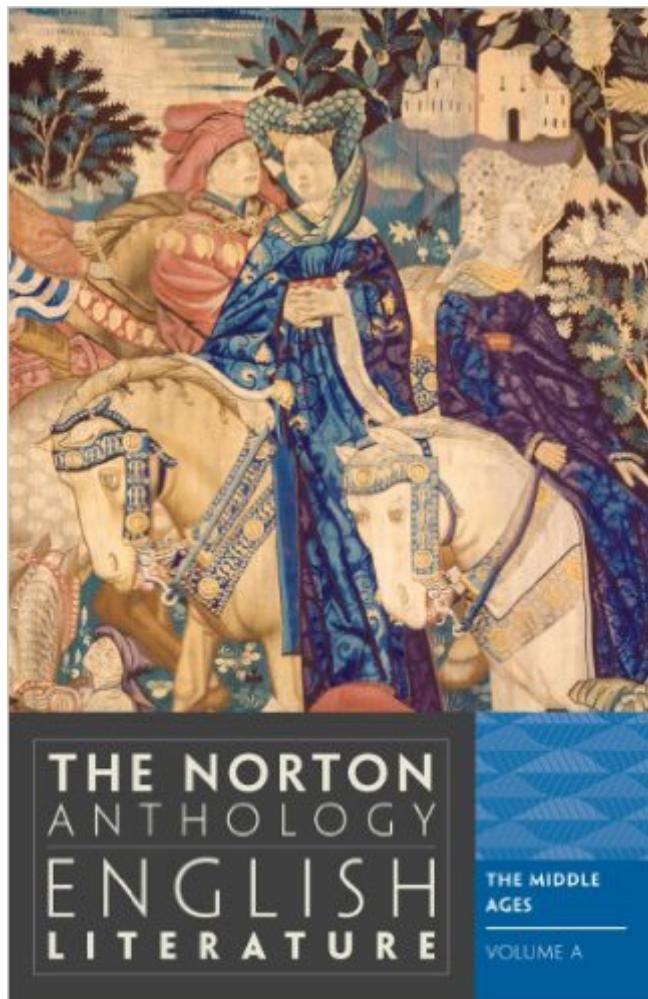


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Customer Reviews

If you're a book lover, how can you not love a book like this? It was my required reading for a literature class, and I was all too happy to have an excuse to buy it. Satisfyingly fat at 3000 pages, it exudes that delicious book smell when you flip through it, and its matte-sheen cover feels good in your hands and protects its sizable contents quite well. For me, this was worth getting just for Seamus Heaney's wonderful translation of Beowulf. You can smell the ocean and hear the armor clank as this readable version places you right there in the sixth century. Along with the usual excerpts from such works as the Canterbury Tales, you get complete versions of King Lear, Twelfth Night, Utopia, and Paradise Lost. After looking over the excerpts from Gulliver's Travels, it appears that sections 1,2, and 4 are presented complete, with only some material edited from section 3, so you get almost all of that, too. The footnotes for this, and all the other works, are enormously useful. I

have a few gripes about the book, however these don't merit the subtraction of a star in the rating. First - this book is SO heavy. Obviously there was no way around this in publishing, because to put this many pages on good-quality paper the laws of physics are working against you. But I have literally suffered backache from bringing it around with me in my book bag, and have had to sorrowfully leave it at home at times because of this. Second, I wish it included a clear list of which major works are presented complete, for those of us who want to make sure to read the whole thing. My final beef is with the editorial introduction to The Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale from the Canterbury Tales. Reading this rant about "antifeminist writings" was like stepping from the high halls of classic academia into the junior-college classroom of some washed-up 1970s holdover. I HATE agenda in my education, and in my opinion, applying 20th century (yes, 20th) sentiments to 14th century literature is anachronistic and inappropriate. But such is the state of education these days, and here is your evidence in a volume that should have known better. However, that has been the only thing I have come upon that irritated me. Buying this book is a great way to get a bunch of classics all at once, and there is so much to it that you can enjoy a long read or a short read anytime you want, once you find a way to work around its mass. I look forward to the years of reading pleasure I'll get from my copy.

While there have been changes made to the Norton Anthology of English Literature, Volume 1 (or A), there's no mistaking that in its genre, this is a masterpiece. It's easy to quibble with which selections make it in and which versions are used, etc. But this is an incredibly rich resource of early English literature. This is one of the books that helped foster my love of literature, and that of many others. It is a portal to any number of authors you wish to read in more detail. It's hard not to love a book that gives you introductions to the following authors and works - and many, many more! Bede and Beowulf The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle Sir Gawain and the Green Knight Chaucer's Canterbury Tales Julian of Norwich Thomas Mallory and the Arthurian Legends Sir Thomas More and Utopia William Tyndale, John Calvin, John Foxe The Book of Common Prayer Queen Elizabeth Spencer's The Fairie Queene Sir Walter Raleigh Many of Shakespeare's sonnets and 2 of his plays John Donne Francis Bacon George Herbert John Dryden Jonathan Swift Alexander Pope And John Bunyan The Norton Anthology series does exactly what it does: introduces its readers to a smorgasbord of the best of English literature. Don't let the size or price daunt you. The size is worth it for the breadth and depth of content. As for price, there are many inexpensive used editions around, going back to many earlier editions. This book should be on every bookshelf!

I bought this used as a homeschool school resource. Norton's books are great; I love them as they are packed full. The seller disclosed well that the book was a bit beat up. In hind sight, I would should have chosen a hard cover version. This book in paper back form is so thick that packing tape or duct tape is needed to keep the spine in tack with heavy use. This in not a reflection on the seller; it's just a really thick book for paperback binding.

This is only the first volume in the legendary Norton Anthology of English Literature, but I'm looking forward to reading through many more. I'm using it as an adjunct to my homeschooled daughter's English curriculum but I re-read it myself just to revisit the Canterbury Tales, Beowulf, and Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, among many others. English literature over time has been responsible for a number of true classics, but in my view the beginning is some of the best. I've used Norton Anthologies for my own high school and university classes and have always been impressed by the breadth of work available in them. I can't wait to pass them on to my daughter.

The Norton Anthology of English Language broken into two volumes offers the student a broader study and notation of each century's work compared to the Major Authors Editions. I own both and was surprised by some of the titles left out of the condensed version. The footnotes are especially helpful during the Anglo-Saxon & -Norman section as well as Middle English. I would avoid Norton Anthologies with highlighting. Norton publishes on extremely thin paper and often the highlighting shows through the page. My experience comes from my own use of highlighters while studying, however, as I am the one inflicting the damage to my text, I cannot complain.

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