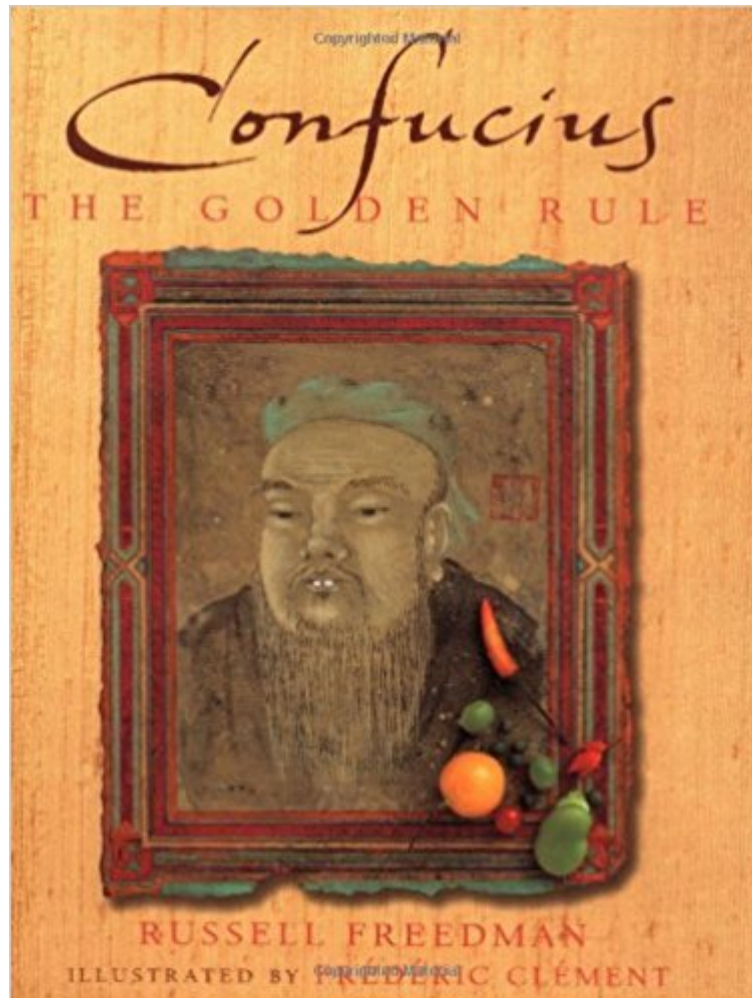




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# Confucius: The Golden Rule



## Synopsis

America's premier biographer for young people illuminates the remarkable life and far-reaching influence of the famous Chinese philosopher. Born in China in 551 B. C., Confucius rose from poverty to the heights of his country's ruling class. But then he quit his high post for the life of an itinerant philosopher. "The Analects" collects his teachings on education and government, the definition of nobility, the equality of man and the right way and purpose of living, ideas that eventually spread to the West and influenced the great thinkers of the Enlightenment. And five centuries before Christ, Confucius set forth his own Golden Rule: "Do not impose on others what you do not wish for yourself."

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Newbery Medal winner Freedman (Lincoln: A Photobiography) delves deep into Chinese history in his intelligent, comprehensive biography of the 5th-century B.C. philosopher Confucius, whose teachings have influenced the development of modern government and education in both China and the West. Freedman draws on stories, legends and collected dialogues from The Analects of Confucius, written by his students, to reveal a man of deep perceptions as well as great humor. The author reports that, when a disciple told the scholar that he did not know how to describe his teacher to a local governor, Confucius said, "Why didn't you tell him that I'm a man driven by such passion for learning that in my enthusiasm I often forget to eat, in my joy I forget to worry, and I don't even

notice the approach of old age." Skillfully and smoothly weaving Chinese history, culture and language into the narrative, Freedman also explains Confucian philosophy succinctly, without dumbing it down ("The first task of a true statesman, Confucius said, is to face the truth, to use words honestly"). Clement's moody, ethereal illustrations complement the thoughtful text yet play up the mystery of Confucius's life. Like worn pages ripped from an ancient tome, the rubbed, faded images strewn with photorealistic fruits, petals and berries plunge readers into otherworldly scenes. For today's students, this portrait is a comprehensible introduction to Eastern thought. Just as Confucius "prodded [his students] to think in new ways," it will open new doors for young readers. Ages 8-12.- to think in new ways," it will open new doors for young readers. Ages 8-12. Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Grade 4-8-In writing this biography, Freedman faced two obstacles: a distorted popular idea of Confucius, and a paucity of data about the real man. He directly addresses the first, and his engaging book beautifully compensates for the second. He sets his subject in the context of strife-torn China, since Confucius was a radical reformer whose ideas had political applications. Politics, education, spirituality: the philosopher has something to say in all these areas, and Freedman compellingly conveys the profundity of his thoughts. Frequent brief quotations from The Analects lend immediacy to the story and help obscure the biographical lacunae. In a final chapter, Freedman points to the impact of Confucius's ideas, seeing in them sources for Western democratic concepts, as well as Eastern respect for family and education. Parenthetical pronunciation guides make the pinyin names accessible, and a note on sources and suggestions for further reading aid those whose curiosity is sure to be whetted by this fine book. Clement's illustrations are superb. His "portrait" of Confucius is unidealized, based on written descriptions of him. Each full-page piece of art does homage to Chinese-style painting, simulating old pictures, some damaged, others bearing the seals of many owners. Crumbling frames add color and geometric design to these pale figural and landscape depictions, onto which photographed petals, fruits, buds, or leaves have been superimposed, creating timeless notes of natural color and local flavor. The world today could hardly do better than to ponder the wisdom of this sage. Patricia D. Lothrop, St. George's School, Newport, RI Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc.

A good book to read for the time we're living in, his words speak so true.

Interesting. I bought this book to read and learn about Confucius. This book is short and gives you a

good idea about Confucius but if you are very interested in the subject get a more detailed book. This one is very short.

gift

Good but small tear in front cover.

A great thinker we need him now to be in the White House but to know God as his guide.

A most remarkable work. I've read several book about Lincol, but none have given a better personal and in depth of his intimate life. Gove Vidal's historic novel, Lincoln, give the historical picture, but in Eosteins book, we get a very close and intimate details of life in the 1850's. thus far never available.I give great prise to Epstein for his remarkabel research. The "quote" and the everyday accounts of Lincols and Mary's life together and apart.Quite a remarkable undertaking indeed.

Confucius was a minor government official who desperately wanted to change the government of China. But because of his radical ideas, he was never given the opportunity. He became a scholar who taught his pupils to think. Many years after his death, his ideas were written down and have survived for thousands of years. Tidbits of Confucius's wisdom have even made their way into American fortune cookies. Because little is known of the fifth century B.C. scholar, Freedman makes an effort to establish what information is believed to be fact and what is more likely legend.The book's beautiful antiquated illustrations complement the text. They are as mysterious as the life of Confucius. I especially like the little details in this book: the quotes from the Analects on the endpapers, the author's note detailing his observations of the celebration in China held for Confucius each year, and the annotated bibliography.

"More than 2,500 years have passed since Confucius walked the dusty country roads of China, chatting with his disciples, yet his voice still rings clear and true down through the centuries. Those who knew him never forgot him. Those who came after handed down his sayings from one generation to the next, right up to our own time..." So begins Russell Freedman's brilliant and engaging biography of Confucius, a minor government official who desperately wanted to be a political force in ancient China. "Though he offered many bold ideas for reform, his advice was ignored by the rulers of the day. For this reason, he spent much of his time teaching and discussing

his ideas with his students." His simple, yet profound thoughts about government, education, and religion were shared with his followers through conversations and dialogues, and finally written down, many years after his death, in a book that has come to be known as the Analects. "This slim volume is the one source where we can most clearly hear the unique voice of the real, living Confucius." Mr Freedman's well researched story is written in an easy to read, conversational style and filled with history, mystery, intriguing biographical details, quotes from the Analect, and fascinating fun facts. Frederic Clement's elegant and evocative Chinese-style illustrations look ancient and authentic, and are rich in emotion, color, and detail. Together word and art bring the great philosopher and his times to life on the page. With an enlightening Author's Note, and informative sources and suggestions for further reading included at the end, Confucius: The Golden Rule is an entertaining and inspiring introductory biography that is sure to whet the appetite of kids 10 and older, and send them out looking for more. "And so, after twenty-five centuries, the pros and cons of what Confucius said or didn't say are still being debated. The reason isn't hard to find. He trusted people to think for themselves. He was always ready to offer suggestions, but he insisted that each of us must find answers for ourselves. And he admitted that he himself did not know the truth, only a way to look for it..."

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