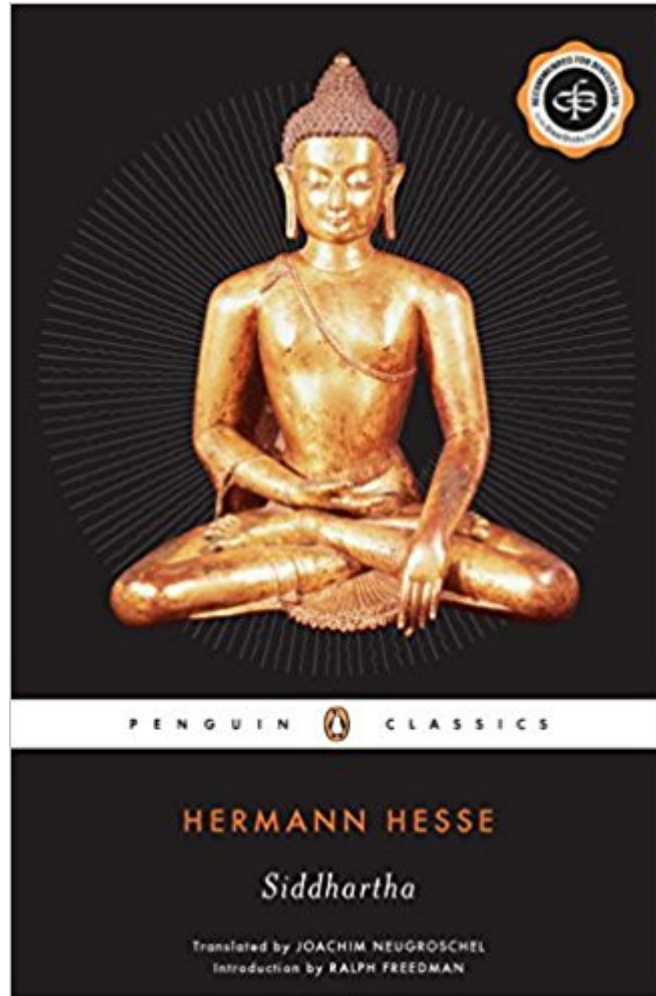


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# Siddhartha: An Indian Tale (Penguin Twentieth-Century Classics)



## Synopsis

A bold translation of Nobel Prize-winner Herman Hesse's most inspirational and beloved work Hesse's famous and influential novel, *Siddhartha*, is perhaps the most important and compelling moral allegory our troubled century has produced. Integrating Eastern and Western spiritual traditions with psychoanalysis and philosophy, this strangely simple tale, written with a deep and moving empathy for humanity, has touched the lives of millions since its original publication in 1922. Set in India, *Siddhartha* is the story of a young Brahmin's search for ultimate reality after meeting with the Buddha. His quest takes him from a life of decadence to asceticism, through the illusory joys of sensual love with a beautiful courtesan, and of wealth and fame, to the painful struggles with his son and the ultimate wisdom of renunciation. This new translation by award-winning translator Joachim Neugroschel includes an introduction by Hesse biographer Ralph Freedman. For more than seventy years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,700 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is a book that will appeal to anyone who wonders "what it's all about." Hesse has masterfully

captured the essence of a wandering soul in Siddhartha's character, someone who seeks meaning and understanding in all its forms. This book is even more applicable to modern day society than when it was written. We are confronted with millions of choices in our lives and it can often be difficult to discern the correct path; often with respect to the materialism and consumerism that permeates American society. So, take a few hours and peruse Siddhartha...forget about the rat race and imagine life as an ascetic. Truly a sublime book, highly recommended.

Did you ever feel sensational beauty about every word you read? This is the book that returned me the harmony of my inner world.

I am in the process of understanding the Eastern Tao. Hermman Heese takes a individual through three stages of his life and does a superb explaining the pain and release of each stage. Heese, as a child, spent time in India with his missionary parents. It helps to understand what Eastern philosophy is as it is different from the Western point of view. Despite this, Heese writes in a style regardless of age, religion, or political view assists the reader understand we all go through these stages of life. This is an excellent book for reference and metaphysical understanding. Paul G. Downey

The book Siddhartha was very interesting. It tells about a boy and his travels in search to find true peace, happiness and his "self". I really liked how the author gave Siddhartha three different parts; three different sections of his life. First the ascetic, the lover, then the ferryman. It showed how some people need to go through different stages in their lives to find where they are truly happy and peaceful. After reading Siddhartha, the reader understands how some other people feel about life, and how it is very important to them to live so simply.

This book is your road map to ultimate inner-peace and an understanding of what this whole existence is all about. It will make you realise that there's really little need for religions of any kind. No need for the latest Guru or Teacher. No need to be anything other than who you are, because as you are, you are already there. Get this, you get a life. Not everyone will "get it" but those who do will never need anything else. If you're really interested in finding out about it all, then get this book. It's the only one you'll ever need, providing you "get it".

Hesse's best-known and best-loved work introduces Hesse's own understanding of Eastern

philosophy and his own struggle to integrate his poetic soul with the world around him. Siddhartha is not the story of the similarly-named Gautama Buddha; rather, Siddhartha is a kind of mirror of the Buddha, who like him is born into a rich Indian Brahmin family and becomes dissatisfied with his privileged priestly life. Unlike Buddha, Siddhartha passes back and forth between the world of asceticism and aestheticism, eventually finding that there is no difference between the two - indeed, no difference between anything. Some of Siddhartha's final words sum up his own findings and Hesse's suggested position as well: "The world, my friend, Govinda, is not imperfect or developing slowly toward imperfection. No, the world is perfect at every moment, all sin already contains grace, all youngsters already contain oldsters, all babies contain death, all the dying contain eternal life." Hesse intentionally subtitled his work a "tale," or *Dichtung*, because of its poetic and lyrical nature. Reading this in translation can be a little tiring, so keep that in mind. Ralph Freedman's introduction, while a little rhapsodic at points, provides a helpful orientation toward the intersection of Siddhartha's story and Hesse's, including Hesse's psychological work with Jung during a year-long writer's block in the composition of this very novel. Once you're done with this one, go on to read *Steppenwolf*, *Demian*, *Narcissus and Goldmund*, and finish with *The Glass Bead Game*, and you'll have exposed yourself to the best of Hesse's writing and Romantic philosophy as well.

A very smart interlocutor I met suggested that I read this book. I found the story to be quite insightful, as one could expect from Herman Hesse. However, my favorite piece from the author remains *Steppenwolf*. Siddhartha is too much into spirituality and meditation for my taste. Still a very profound book worth reading.

I bought this book for an English class, was skeptical about this because I was just not interested in Buddhism (no offense), but this book is so craftily written, I've read this book three times for self-pleasure, I love it, definitely opened up some opinions in me and made me think and centralize myself, I recommend it to the extreme, buy it! Totally worth it!

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