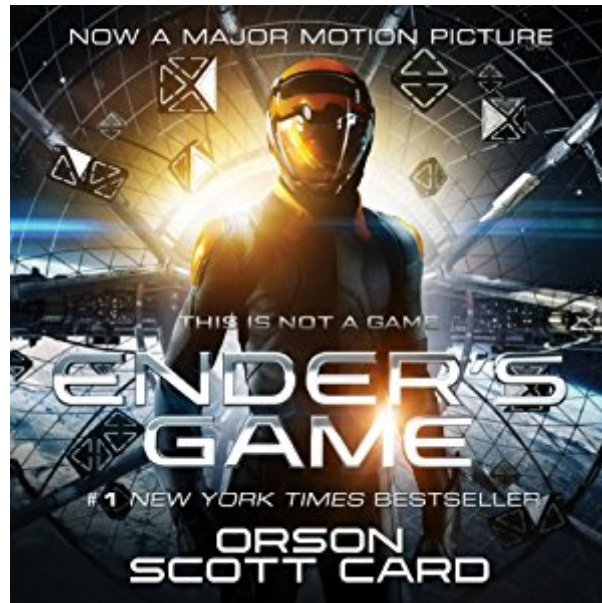


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Ender's Game: Special 20th Anniversary Edition



Synopsis

Winner of the Hugo and Nebula Awards In order to develop a secure defense against a hostile alien race's next attack, government agencies breed child geniuses and train them as soldiers. A brilliant young boy, Andrew "Ender" Wiggin lives with his kind but distant parents, his sadistic brother Peter, and the person he loves more than anyone else, his sister Valentine. Peter and Valentine were candidates for the soldier-training program but didn't make the cut • young Ender is the Wiggin drafted to the orbiting Battle School for rigorous military training. Ender's skills make him a leader in school and respected in the Battle Room, where children play at mock battles in zero gravity. Yet growing up in an artificial community of young soldiers Ender suffers greatly from isolation, rivalry from his peers, pressure from the adult teachers, and an unsettling fear of the alien invaders. His psychological battles include loneliness, fear that he is becoming like the cruel brother he remembers, and fanning the flames of devotion to his beloved sister. Is Ender the general Earth needs? But Ender is not the only result of the genetic experiments. The war with the Buggers has been raging for a hundred years, and the quest for the perfect general has been underway for almost as long. Ender's two older siblings are every bit as unusual as he is, but in very different ways. Between the three of them lie the abilities to remake a world. If, that is, the world survives. Ender's Game is the winner of the 1985 Nebula Award for Best Novel and the 1986 Hugo Award for Best Novel. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Whenever I talk about this book, it's hard not to make it sound like I am a science fiction junkie. I love and defend sci-fi, but I am not limited to the genre. Neither, I think, is this magnificent book. To label it simply a sci-fi classic would be like labeling "Moby Dick" a great book about boats. All great books, regardless of the genre, say something truly profound about the human condition. "Ender's Game" not only manages to have a strong message, but it is also a joy to read. The plot is enthralling, the characters are complex and realistic, and the descriptions of the battleroom fill your head with fantastic images that make you wish your school had been like this, without the burden of saving humanity. The subplot involving Valentine and Peter is superb and cannot fail to inflame every reader's megalomaniacal side. Though the book is about children, it never condescends and gives kids the credit for the intelligent creatures they are (a big plus for teenage readers). The characters are exceptionally bright, but they are still identified as five- to twelve-year olds, not as mini-adults. It's no wonder that so many gifted young readers have made the statement, "I am Ender." I hope "Ender's Game" is able to make the rare crossover from lowly sci-fi to recognized, so-called "legitimate" literature. Not only will you not be able to put the book down, you won't be able to read this book just once.

This was a book recommended to me by a friend who also happened to tell me the ending before I read it. Remind me to give him a nasty stare! Anyway, this book starts off with a rather long introduction which the author wrote himself about his influences and motivation for writing Ender's Game. The author has had the idea of a Battle Room since he was sixteen. Only much later did he piece together the story of Ender and his mission to save the earth. Ender Wiggin is a special boy. He is the youngest (6 yrs old when the story starts) of a family of child geniuses (Peter being the eldest, then Valentine). This story is set in the future where aliens (called Buggers because of their physical and mental traits) have tried to invade the earth twice. Twice the Earth defeated them, but at great cost. The government is scrambling to make sure this never happens again by training the next set of star fleet commanders from childhood. In this futuristic world, only the government could sanction the birth of a third child (for population control reasons). In a way, Ender was born for a purpose. Peter and Valentine were both tested for giftedness and they both possessed it; however, he was ruthless and evil, and she was too soft and kind. Ender was a perfect balance of decisiveness and innocence, and so chosen from the beginning to go through Battle School. It is in Battle School that Ender learns military strategy and the history of wars between the Earth and the Buggers. It is also in Battle School that Ender makes friends and molds the perfect platoon leaders. What's really unique about this story is that Ender is forced to grow up so quickly by the

"adults." The teachers of the school and high government officials all have one thought in their minds. And that is to eliminate the alien threat at all costs. Even if it means sacrificing the health and sanity of a child. Ender is subjected to so much isolation and abuse throughout the story, that I felt really bad for him. He has to learn to think like an adult through the eyes of a child. His biggest fear is becoming like his brother Peter (who, in Ender's eyes, is a cold blooded killer -- keep in mind that we're talking about the thoughts of a child who hasn't even reached puberty) is slowly becoming a self-fulfilling prophecy as he matures. The ending of this story is just amazing. I will not give it away!! I recommended this book to a 13 year old boy before having finished the book. Now I'm thinking twice about my recommendation. Although this book's main characters are children and centers around the premise that child geniuses will save the world, there are a lot of adult themes and references to ancient history that probably only an adult would appreciate. I believe references to the Warsaw Pact, the League of Nations, Locke and Demosthenes will confuse the younger readers. Also the themes of murder, deception, isolation, rules of engagement in battle might be viewed as inappropriate by parents for their kids. With this in mind, I urge the reader to consider the maturity of the intended audience before recommending this book even though this is a terrific story.

I'm sure when it happened. Maybe it started as far back as when Jules Verne and H.G. Wells first began reflecting our society through the mirror of alien worlds, but at some point in the last century a surprising trend became evident: The most brilliant minds in the literary universe were writing science fiction. No book emphasizes this point more than Orson Scott Card's "Ender's Game", one of the most chokingly powerful books I have ever read (and as a librarian, I've read quite a few). "Ender" is comparatively underread, though, because its story of one boy's redemption in the face of unspeakable crimes is disguised as a rollicking space-story. So if you are one of those people who as a rule stick to just one genre (or as a buddy of mine told me the other day: "I'll read anything but science fiction") please, PLEASE don't let that stop you from reading this incredible book. And if you do give it a chance, please don't read anything further about the plot; the full impact of Scott's genius is best felt with no prior preparation (that's why I haven't given a plot summary). When he finally pulls all the threads of the story together, you'll feel like you've just slammed into a brick wall. This is a novel that stays with you forever, warning you of the ease of losing your soul, and filling you with hope if you're looking to regain it. Absolutely not to be missed.

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