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### Leonardo: Beautiful Dreamer

AnnMarie Hamar

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Byrd, Robert. *Leonardo: Beautiful Dreamer*. Illustrated by Robert Byrd. Dutton Children's Books, 2003. ISBN 0525470336. \$17.99. Unpaginated.

Reviewer: AnnMarie Hamar

Reading Level: Intermediate;

Rating: Outstanding;

Genre: Informational books;

Subject: Leonardo, da Vinci, 1452-1519--Juvenile literature; Renaissance--Juvenile literature; Artists--Italy--Biography--Juvenile literature; Books--Reviews;

This captivating picture book looks at the life of Leonardo da Vinci. Robert Byrd writes about Leonardo's curious nature, his restlessness, and his keen ability to observe life around him. He focuses not only on Leonardo's interest and talent in painting and sculpture, but also on his groundbreaking work in the fields of anatomy, mathematics, botany and optics. What makes Leonardo da Vinci so extraordinary, he writes, is that he received no formal education, yet had a thirst for knowledge that was never fully satisfied.

This is an oversize book with detailed and lively ink and watercolor illustrations done in a cartoon-like style. Each double-page spread includes side bars containing excerpts from Leonardo's journals and interesting trivia on art in general and on life during the Renaissance. The text itself combines fact and anecdote to hold the reader's attention. The author has also included a timeline and a bibliography.