Cleopatra: Queen of Egypt

Aylea Stephens

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Many stories are told about Cleopatra and the exciting life she led, but sometimes it is hard to tell fact from fiction. This book is a mix of fictional and nonfictional things about her life. The double spread pages focus on an aspect or event in her life, detailing her birth, childhood, path to becoming a paragraph, falling in love, war, and her final death. Each page also has flaps to include extra details about life in Rome and Egypt at the time of Cleopatra. Each page is covered in illustrations, small paragraphs of text, and usually has a fictional journal entry like what Cleopatra might have written.

In the style of the popular “Ology” series, this is part of a series called Historical Notebooks to give an interesting approach to discussing a particular historical figure. For the most part, it is a good introduction to Cleopatra, Egypt, and Rome. The book is well-organized and makes it easy to follow the known events of her life. It would have been improved, however, with leaving the fictional accounts off or making them a bigger part of the book. As they are, it is confusing for just a small part of the page to be fictional and then have the rest of it be nonfiction because it makes the fiction either seem true or the nonfiction less valid. Some of the flaps are interesting and useful, such as discussions of mummification or Egyptian hairstyles, but others are unnecessary. Either one side is just a pattern, or there are illustrations that could be placed elsewhere or left off, making the time it takes to flip over the flag unnecessary. Although it is a good resource to learn about Cleopatra, some of the execution could have been better.