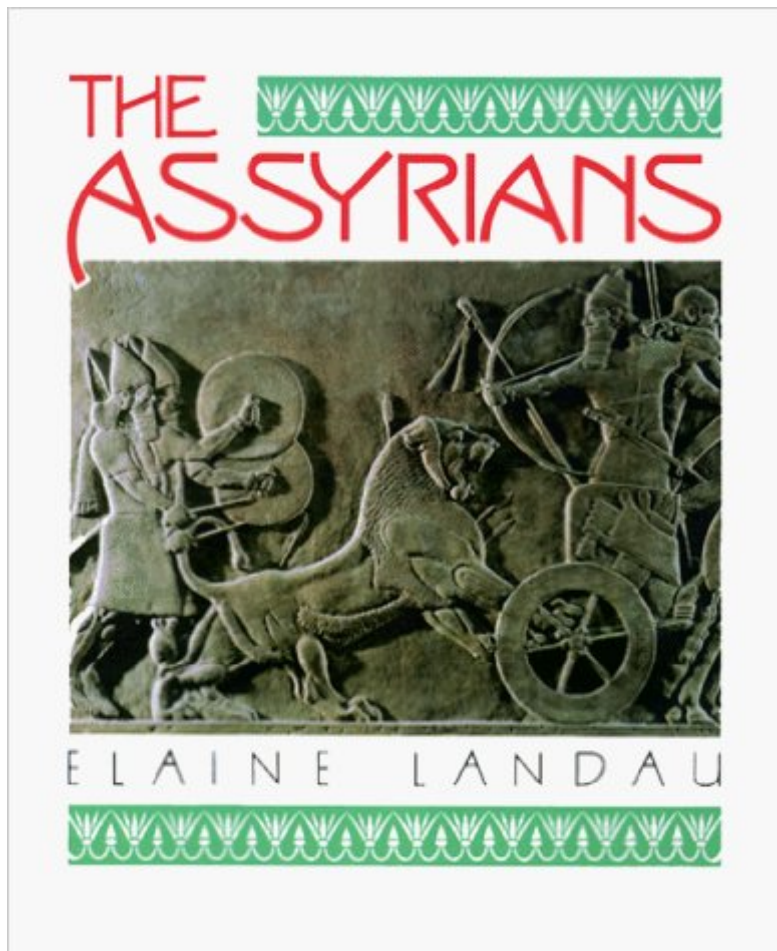


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# The Assyrians (The Cradle Of Civilization)



## Synopsis

Examines Assyria's growth from warlike city-state to huge empire, through its conquest of all of Mesopotamia and Egypt, and aspects of its culture.

## Book Information

Age Range: 9 and up

Lexile Measure: 1170L (What's this?)

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Average Customer Review: 2.8 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (4 customer reviews)

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## Customer Reviews

The only books I have been able to find on this subject are books like this that seem oriented towards children and young adults. But this book is pretty good. It is brief, but so is the sum of what we know about the Assyrians. The author says that some historians claim that the Assyrians were not as cruel toward conquered peoples as their own chronicles make them out to be; I would like to know if this revisionism is based on any evidence or merely on liberal humanist wishful thinking. It has always seemed remarkable to me that such a civilized people could also be so vicious and nasty, but maybe I should take a page from the liberal humanists and assume that the Assyrians were really misunderstood nice guys. Sennacherib's speech in Isaiah, however, gives a pretty good picture of what kind of people they were; it is a pity that God did not defend the other nations of the region as vigorously as He defended Judah. I would like to know more, and I hope there is more to be discovered.

Not a bad intro to the Assyrians -- I'm not a historian so I guess I can't judge it too severely. A kid

will likely find this adequate to write a report. What I wanted to mention was a minor case of what looks like plagiarism: On page 12 she writes: "Rains, floods, shifting sands, and other natural occurrences had completely erased its narrow, winding streets and its courtyards, religious towers, and magnificent palaces." After reading Landau's book, I started on "The Assyrian Empire" by Don Nardo. On page 10 one finds, "The Near East's hot sun, periodic rains, annual floods, and shifting sands slowly leveled and buried the palaces and cities." At first I thought Nardo copied Landau, as the ostensible copyrights are 1998 and 1997 respectively. But then it seems that Nardo wrote an earlier edition; besides Nardo's book is very in-depth and well-researched compared to Landau's -- it would be unlikely for him to copy her much simpler book. So it appears she got lazy and sloppy. Not a huge deal, but I only started Nardo's book and maybe I'll find more. Other than that it's an OK book, which is why I gave it three stars.

While there are not many books on Assyria for this age group, I found this one lacking. There are two other books by Elaine Landau in this series called *The Sumerians* and *The Babylonians*. There are 17 illustrations including one map, photos of artifacts, photos of present day sites related to the Assyrians, and two colored drawings. Considering the age group this is written for, there are not many illustrations. There is other information about their way of life that is interesting. Assyrian life, law and religion are discussed along with their military prowess. The type is slightly larger with large space between lines and wide margins. It is easy on the eyes for children to read. The text on the first five pages in the three Landau books is virtually the same. The only major difference is the map is changed for whichever topic--Sumerians, Assyrians, or Babylonians--is being covered. The map is well done, however, not all locations are shown. While Assyria conquered Babylon, and Babylon is mentioned in the text, it is not shown on the map in the Assyrians book. Paging starts on page 9, text through page 54, timeline text of Important Dates pp. 55-56 (not facing pages), Notes p. 57 (bibliography?), Glossary pp. 59-60 (no pronunciation information though), Further Reading pp. 61-62, and Index pp. 63-64 (nice touch). So for a 64-page book there is only 45 pp. of text, and the format is smaller than usual, too. This means there is not a lot of detail in any of the information. The history necessarily skips a lot. I find it strange that Ashurbanipal and his library would be skipped. How did we learn about these cultures? This is not discussed in any detail. Because these cultures do interact with each other, I think it might have been better to publish a combined text. My children (ages 4-13) did listen to me read this to them, but it was not written in a very interesting style. Because of the lack of detail covered, I think this book would be better if read to the 6-9 age group. Or read by them, if they can read well enough!

This interesting little book is part of Millbrook Press's The Cradle of Civilization series, and covers the Assyrians. It covers the history of the Assyrians, and delves into such subjects as Assyrian law and religion. Now, this book is written as an introduction for young students, and it is quite short, so if you are looking for in-depth information then this is not the book for you. However, what this book aims to be, it succeeds at admirably. Even as an adult armchair historian, I found things about the Assyrians that I never knew before. So, if you are looking for a short introduction to the Assyrians for a young student, then this is the book for you.

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