

Microeconomics A Very Short Introduction Very Short Introductions

Economics has the capacity to offer us deep insights into some of the most formidable problems of life, and offer solutions to them too. Combining a global approach with examples from everyday life, Partha Dasgupta describes the lives of two children who live very different lives in different parts of the world: in the Mid-West USA and in Ethiopia. He compares the obstacles facing them, and the processes that shape their lives, their families, and their futures. He shows how economics uncovers these processes, finds explanations for them, and how it forms policies and solutions. Along the way, Dasgupta provides an intelligent and accessible introduction to key economic factors and concepts such as individual choices, national policies, efficiency, equity, development, sustainability, dynamic equilibrium, property rights, markets, and public goods. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable. Traditionally economists have based their economic predictions on the assumption that humans are super-rational creatures, using the information we are given efficiently and generally making selfish decisions that work well for us as individuals. Economists also assume that we're doing thevery best we can possibly do - not only for today, but over our whole lifetimes too. But increasingly the study of behavioural economics is revealing that our lives are not that simple. Instead, our decisions are complicated by our own psychology. Each of us makes mistakes every day. We don't alwaysknow what's best for us and, even if we do, we might not have the self-control to deliver on our best intentions. We struggle to stay on diets, to get enough exercise and to manage our money. We misjudge risky situations. We are prone to herding: sometimes peer pressure leads us blindly to copyothers around us; other times copying others helps us to learn quickly about new, unfamiliar situations. This Very Short Introduction explores the reasons why we make irrational decisions; how we decide quickly; why we make mistakes in risky situations; our tendency to procrastinate; and how we are affected by social influences, personality, mood and emotions. The implications of understanding therationale for our own financial behaviour are huge. Behavioural economics could help policy-makers to understand the people behind their policies, enabling them to design more effective policies, while at the same time we could find ourselves assaulted by increasingly savvy marketing. MichelleBaddeley concludes by looking forward, to see what the future of behavioural economics holds for us.ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, andenthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable. Provides an introduction to the principles of both microeconomics and macroeconomics that features graphic representations of key concepts.

Of undoubtable relevance today, in a post-9-11 world of growing political tension and unease, this Very Short Introduction covers the topics essential to an understanding of modern international relations. Paul Wilkinson explains the theories and the practice that underlie the subject, and investigates issues ranging from foreign policy, arms control, and terrorism, to the environment and world poverty. He examines the role of organizations such as the United Nations and the European Union, as well as the influence of ethnic and religious movements and terrorist groups which also play a role in shaping the way states and governments interact. This up-to-date book is required reading for those seeking a new perspective to help untangle and decipher international events. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Thought: A Very Short Introduction

Microeconomics

Malthus: A Very Short Introduction

Organizations: A Very Short Introduction

Modern Brazil: a Very Short Introduction

When Europeans first arrived in North America, between five and eight million indigenous people were already living there. But how did they come to be here? What were their agricultural, spiritual, and hunting practices? How did their societies evolve and what challenges do they face today?

Eminent historians Theda Perdue and Michael Green begin by describing how nomadic bands of hunter-gatherers followed the bison and woolly mammoth over the Bering land mass between Asia and what is now Alaska between 25,000 and 15,000 years ago, settling throughout North America. They describe

hunting practices among different tribes, how some made the gradual transition to more settled, agricultural ways of life, the role of kinship and cooperation in Native societies, their varied burial rites and spiritual practices, and many other features of Native American life. Throughout the book, Perdue and Green stress the great diversity of indigenous peoples in America, who spoke more than 400 different languages before the arrival of Europeans and whose ways of life varied according to the environments they settled in and adapted to so successfully. Most importantly, the authors stress how Native Americans have struggled to maintain their sovereignty--first with European powers and then with the United States--in order to retain their lands, govern themselves, support their people, and pursue practices that have made their lives meaningful. Going beyond the stereotypes that so often distort our views of Native Americans, this Very Short Introduction offers a historically accurate, deeply engaging, and often inspiring account of the wide array of Native peoples in America. About the Series: Combining authority with wit, accessibility, and style,

Very Short Introductions offer an introduction to some of life's most interesting topics. Written by experts for the newcomer, they demonstrate the finest contemporary thinking about the central problems and issues in hundreds of key topics, from philosophy to Freud, quantum theory to Islam.

Thomas Robert Malthus (1766-1834) was an English cleric whose ideas, as expounded in his most famous work the Essay on the Principle of Population, caused a storm of controversy. In this Very Short Introduction, Donald Winch explains and clarifies Malthus's ideas, assessing the profound influence he has had on modern economic thought. Concentrating on his writings, Winch sheds light on the context in which he wrote and why his work has remained controversial. Looking at Malthus's early life as well as the evolution of his theories from population to political economy, Winch considers why and how Malthus's writings have been so influential in the thought of later figures such as Darwin and Keynes. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Following the increasing cost of fossil fuels and concerns about the security of their future supply. However, the term 'nuclear power' causes anxiety in many people and there is confusion concerning the nature and extent of the associated risks.

There is no denying that thinking comes naturally to human beings. But what are thoughts? How is thought realized in the brain? Does thinking occur in public or is it a purely private affair? Do young children and non-human animals think? Is human thought the same everywhere, or are there culturally specific modes of thought? What is the relationship between thought and language? What kind of responsibility do we have for our thoughts? In this compelling Very Short Introduction, Tim Bayne looks at the nature of thought. Beginning with questions about what thought is and what distinguishes it from other kinds of mental states, he goes on to examine various interpretations of thought from philosophy, psychology, neuroscience, and anthropology. By exploring the logical structures of thought and the relationship between thought and other mental phenomena, as well as the mechanisms that make thought possible and the cultural variations that may exist in our thought processes, Bayne looks at what we know - and don't know - about our great capacity for thought. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Behavioural Economics

Modernism: A Very Short Introduction

Governance: A Very Short Introduction

Risk: A Very Short Introduction

Global Economic History: A Very Short Introduction

Games are everywhere: Drivers maneuvering in heavy traffic are playing a driving game. Bargain hunters bidding on eBay are playing an auctioning game. The supermarket's price for corn flakes is decided by playing an economic game. This Very Short Introduction offers a succinct tour of the fascinating world of game theory, a ground-breaking field that analyzes how to play games in a rational way. Ken Binmore, a renowned game theorist, explains the theory in a way that is both entertaining and non-mathematical yet also deeply insightful, revealing how game theory can shed light on everything from social gatherings, to ethical decision-making, to successful card-playing strategies, to calculating the sex ratio among bees. With mini-biographies of many fascinating, and occasionally eccentric, founders of the subject--including John Nash, subject of the movie A Beautiful Mind--this book offers a concise overview of a cutting-edge field that has seen spectacular successes in evolutionary biology and economics, and is beginning to revolutionize other disciplines from psychology to political science. About the Series: Oxford's Very Short Introductions offers concise and original introductions to a wide range of subjects--from Islam to Sociology, Politics to Classics, and Literary Theory to History. Not simply a textbook of definitions, each volume provides trenchant and provocative--yet always balanced and complete--discussions of the central issues in a given topic. Every Very Short Introduction gives a readable evolution of the subject in question, demonstrating how it has developed and influenced society.

Whatever the area of study, whatever the topic that fascinates the reader, the series has a handy and affordable guide that will likely prove indispensable.

"In this Very Short Introduction Andrew Davies looks at how projects have developed since the industrial revolution to create the human-built world in which we live, work, and play. Considering some of our greatest endeavours such as the Erie Canal, Apollo Moon landing, Japanese product development, and Chinese ecocity projects, Davies identifies how projects are organized and managed to design and produce large and complex systems, cope with fast changing conditions, and deal with the immense uncertainties required to create breakthrough innovations in products and services. He concludes by considering how projects could be organized to address the challenges facing the post-industrial society of the 21st century"--Amazon.com.

Microeconomics - individuals' choices of where to live and work, how much to save, what to buy, and firms' decisions about location, hiring, firing, and investment - involves issues that concern us on a daily basis. But when people think about economics, they tend to place importance on the bigger picture - macroeconomics - including issues such as unemployment, inflation, and the competitiveness of nations. In this Very Short Introduction, Avinash Dixit argues that the microeconomy has a large impact on the economic world, arguably as much as the issues of macroeconomics. Dixit steers a clear path through the huge number of issues related to microeconomics, explaining what happens when things go well, as well as showing how they fail, why that happens, and what can be done about it. Using real-life examples from around the world, using the minimum of mathematics and including simple graphs, he provides insights into economics from psychology and sociology to explain economic behaviour and rational choice. An ideal introduction for anyone interested in business and economics. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Together these countries pioneered new technologies that have made them ever richer.

A Very Short Introduction

North American Indians: A Very Short Introduction

Volume One: Microeconomics

Relativity: A Very Short Introduction

Biography: A Very Short Introduction

The Mexican Revolution was a 'great' revolution, decisive for Mexico, important within Latin America, and comparable to the other major revolutions of modern history. Alan Knight offers a succinct account of the period, from the initial uprising against Porfirio D í az and the ensuing decade of civil war, to the enduring legacy of the Revolution.

We live today in an interconnected world in which ordinary people can become instant online celebrities to fans thousands of miles away, in which religious leaders can influence millions globally, in which humans are altering the climate and environment, and in which complex social forces intersect across continents. This is globalization. In the fifth edition of his bestselling Very Short Introduction Manfred B. Steger considers the major dimensions of globalization: economic, political, cultural, ideological, and ecological. He looks at its causes and effects, and engages with the hotly contested question of whether globalization is, ultimately, a good or a bad thing. From climate change to the Ebola virus, Donald Trump to Twitter, trade wars to China's growing global profile, Steger explores today's unprecedented levels of planetary integration as well as the recent challenges posed by resurgent national populism. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

What do we mean by development? How can citizens, governments, and the international community foster development? The process by which nations escape poverty and achieve economic and social progress has been the subject of extensive examination for hundreds of years. The notion of development itself has evolved from an original preoccupation with incomes and economic growth to a much broader understanding of development. In this Very Short Introduction Ian Goldin considers the contributions that education, health, gender, equity, and other dimensions of human well-being make to development, and discusses why it is also necessary to include the role of institutions and the rule of law as well as sustainability and environmental concerns. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

For the last century, the tastes and preferences of readers of fiction have been reflected in the American and British bestseller lists, and this Very Short Introduction takes an engaging look through the lists to reveal what we have been reading - and why.

Lakes

Nuclear Power: A Very Short Introduction

International Relations: A Very Short Introduction

Big Data: a Very Short Introduction

Innovation: A Very Short Introduction

In the debris of the financial crash of 2008, the principles of John Maynard Keynes--that economic storms are a normal part of the market system, that governments need to step in and use fiscal ammunition to prevent these storms from becoming depressions, and that societies that value the pursuit of money should reprioritize--are more pertinent and applicable than ever. In Keynes: The Return of the Master, Robert Skidelsky brilliantly synthesizes Keynes career and life, and offers nervous capitalists a positive answer to the question we now face: When unbridled capitalism falters, is there an alternative?

Chaos exists in systems all around us. Even the simplest system of cause and effect can be subject to chaos, denying us accurate predictions of its behaviour, and sometimes giving rise to astonishing structures of large-scale order. Our growing understanding of Chaos Theory is having fascinating applications in the real world - from technology to global warming, politics, human behaviour, and even gambling on the stock market. Leonard Smith shows that we all have an intuitive understanding of chaotic systems. He uses accessible maths and physics (replacing complex equations with simple examples like pendulums, railway lines, and tossing coins) to explain the theory, and points to numerous examples in philosophy and literature (Edgar Allen Poe, Chang-Tzu, Arthur Conan Doyle) that illuminate the problems. The beauty of fractal patterns and their relation to chaos, as well as the history of chaos, and its uses in the real world and implications for the philosophy of science are all discussed in this Very Short Introduction. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

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If environmental protection is costly, how much should we spend on pollution control? Is it worth reducing pollution to zero, or should we accept some level of pollution because of the economic benefits associated with it? How can we assess the benefits that people get from a less-polluted atmosphere? In broad terms, environmental economics looks at how economic activity and policy affect the environment in which we live. Some production generates pollution, such as power station emissions causing acid rain and contributing to global warming, but household consumption decisions also affect the environment, where more consumption can mean more waste sent to polluting incinerators. However, pollution is not an inevitable consequence of economic activity - environmental policies can require polluting firms to clean up their emissions, and can encourage people to change their behaviour, through environmental taxes on polluting goods, for example. Generally, though, these measures will involve some costs, such as installing pollution control equipment. So there's a trade-off: a cleaner environment, but economic costs. In recent years, many economists have argued for greater use of incentive in the form of pollution charges and emissions trading rather than more traditional direct regulation of polluters. In this Very Short Introduction, Stephen Smith discusses environmental issues including pollution control, reducing environmental damage, and global climate change policies, answering questions about how we should balance environmental and economic considerations, and what form government policies should take. Including many illustrative case studies and examples he shows that this is an exciting field of economics, and one that is at the heart of many public debates and controversies. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Environmental Economics: A Very Short Introduction

Keynes

Globalization: A Very Short Introduction

The Return of the Master

The Mexican Revolution

Anthony Pereira introduces the country and idea of Brazil, from its depiction in the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio, to Brazil's colonial past, and the country's transformation from a poor agricultural outpost to an integral part of the 21st century global order. Throughout he considers the economic, political, and social challenges the country faces.

Risk is everywhere - from genetically modified crops, dams, and stem-cell therapy to heartbreak, online predators, inflation, and robbery. This Very Short Introduction examines what science has learned about how people deal with risks, what we can learn through decision theory, and how we can evaluate risk in our own lives.

Russia today is as prominent in international affairs as it was at the height of the Cold War. Yet the role that the economy plays in supporting Russia's position as a 'great power' on the international stage is poorly understood. For many, Russia's political influence far exceeds its weight in the global economy. However, Russia is one of the largest economies in the world; it is not only one of the world's most important exporters of oil and gas, but also of other natural resources, such as diamonds and gold. Its status as one of the largest wheat and grain exporters shapes commodity prices across the globe, while Russia's enormous arms industry, second only to the United States, provides it with the means to pursue an increasingly assertive foreign policy. All this means that Russia's economy is crucial in serving the country's political objectives, both within Russia and across the world. Russia today has a distinctly political type of economy that is neither the planned economy of the Soviet era, nor a market-based economy of the Euro-Atlantic variety. Instead, its economic system is characterised by a unique blend of state and market; control and freedom; and natural resources alongside human ingenuity. The Russian Economy: A Very Short Introduction introduces readers to the dimensions of the Russian economy that are often ignored by the media and public figures, or exaggerated and misunderstood. In doing so, it shows how Russia's economy is one of global significance, and helps explain why many of Russia's enduring features, such as the heavy hand of the state and the emphasis on military-industrial production, have persisted despite the immense changes that took place after the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

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The Russian Economy: a Very Short Introduction

Projects

Bestsellers: A Very Short Introduction

Mathematical Finance

Adam Smith

Biographies are one of the most popular and best-selling of the literary genres. Why do people like them? What does a biography do and how does it work? This Very Short Introduction examines different types of biographies, why certain people and historical events arouse so much interest, and how they are compared with history and fiction.

Most of us recognize that organizations are everywhere. You meet them on every street corner in the form of families and shops, study in them, work for them, buy from them, pay taxes to them. But have you given much thought to where they came from, what they are today, and what they might become in the future? How and why do they have so much influence over us, and what influences them? How do they contribute to and detract from the meaningfulness of lives, and how might we improve them so they better serve our needs and desires? This Very Short Introduction addresses all of these questions and considers many more. Mary Jo Hatch introduces the concept of organizations by presenting definitions and ideas drawn from the a variety of subject areas including the physical sciences, economics, sociology, psychology, anthropology, literature, and the visual and performing arts. Drawing on examples from prehistory and everyday life, from the animal kingdom as well as from business, government, and other formal organizations, Hatch provides a lively and thought provoking introduction to the process of organization. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

A compact introduction to modernism—why it began, what it is, and how it hasshaped virtually all aspects of 20th and 21st century life

In the 1800s mathematicians introduced a formal theory of symmetry: group theory. Now a branch of abstract algebra, this subject first arose in the theory of equations. Symmetry is an immensely important concept in mathematics and throughout the sciences, and its applications range across the entire subject. Symmetry governs the structure of crystals, innumerable types of pattern formation, how systems change their state as parameters vary, and fundamental physics is governed by symmetries in the laws of nature. It is highly visual, with applications that include animal markings, locomotion, evolutionary biology, elastic buckling, waves, the shape of the Earth, and the form of galaxies. In this Very Short Introduction, Ian Stewart demonstrates its deep implications, and shows how it plays a major role in the current search to unify relativity and quantum theory. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Plants: A Very Short Introduction

The Welfare State: A Very Short Introduction

Critical Concepts in Finance. Banks and the macroeconomy. ...

Economics: A Very Short Introduction

Banking

100 years ago, Einstein's theory of relativity shattered the world of physics. Our comforting Newtonian ideas of space and time were replaced by bizarre and counterintuitive conclusions: if you move at high speed, time slows down, space squashes up and you get heavier; travel fast enough and you could weigh as much as a jumbo jet, be squashed thinner than a CD without feeling a thing - and live for ever. And that was just the Special Theory. With the General Theory came even stranger ideas of curved space-time, and changed our understanding of gravity and the cosmos. This authoritative and entertaining Very Short Introduction makes the theory of relativity accessible and understandable. Using very little mathematics, Russell Stannard explains the important concepts of relativity, from E=mc2 to black holes, and explores the theory's impact on science and on our understanding of the universe.

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Organic chemistry is the chemistry of compounds of carbon. The ability of carbon to link together to form long chain molecules and ring compounds as well as bonding with many other elements has led to a vast array of organic compounds. These compounds are central to life, forming the basis for organic molecules such as nucleic acids, proteins, carbohydrates, and lipids. In this Very Short Introduction Graham Patrick covers the whole range of organic compounds and their roles. Beginning with the structures and properties of the basic groups of organic compounds, he goes on to consider organic compounds in the areas of pharmaceuticals, polymers, food and drink, petrochemicals, and nanotechnology. He looks at how new materials, in particular the single layer form of carbon called graphene, are opening up exciting new possibilities for applications, and discusses the particular challenges of working with carbon compounds, many of which are colourless. Patrick also discusses techniques used in the field. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Generally referring to all forms of social coordination and patterns of rule, the term 'governance' is used in many different contexts. In this Very Short Introduction, Mark Bevir explores the main theories of governance and considers their impact on ideas of governance in the corporate, public, and global arenas.

Now a vital part of modern economies, the rapid growth of the finance industry in recent decades is largely due to the development of mathematical methods such as the theory of arbitrage. Asset valuation, credit trading, and fund management, now depend on these mathematical tools. Mark Davis explains the theories and their applications.

The Cartoon Introduction to Economics

Game Theory: A Very Short Introduction

Chaos: A Very Short Introduction

Microeconomics: A Very Short Introduction

Symmetry: A Very Short Introduction

Plants form a fundamental element of the biosphere, and the evolution of plants has directly affected the evolution of animal life and the evolution of the Earth's climate. Plants have also become essential to humans not only in the form of cereal crops, fruit, and vegetables, but in their many other uses in wood and paper, and in providing medicines. Their aesthetic importance too in our parks and gardens as well as in wildflower meadows and great forests should not be underestimated. In this Very Short Introduction Timothy Walker, Director of the Botanical Gardens in Oxford, provides a concise account of the nature of plants, their variety, their evolution, and their importance and uses, stressing the need and efforts for their conservation for future generations. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

The programmes that make up the welfare state vary from nation to nation and from time to time, and the balance between markets and government, and free enterprise and social protection is perennially in question. In contemporary political debate the welfare state seems to be mostly viewed asa problem rather than a solution, and welfare programmes appear constantly on the defensive. ThisVery Short Introduction describes the modern welfare state, explaining its historical and contemporary significance and arguing that far from being 'a failure' or 'a problem', welfare states are an essential element of contemporary capitalism, and a vital concomitant of democratic government.In this accessible and entertaining account, David Garland cuts through the fog of misunderstandings to explain in clear and simple terms, what the welfare state is, how it works, and why it matters.ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, andenthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Since long before computers were even thought of, data has been collected and organized by diverse cultures across the world. Once access to the Internet became a reality for large swathes of the world's population, the amount of data generated each day became huge, and continues to grow exponentially. It includes all our uploaded documents, video, and photos, all our social media traffic, our online shopping, even the GPS data from our cars. "Big Data" represents a qualitative change, not simply a quantitative one. The term refers both to the new technologies involved, and to the way it can be used by business and government. Dawn E. Holmes uses a variety of case studies to explain how data is stored, analyzed, and exploited by a variety of bodies from big companies to organizations concerned with disease control. Big data is transforming the way businesses operate, and the way medical research can be carried out. At the same time, it raises important ethical issues; Holmes discusses cases such as the Snowden affair, data security, and domestic smart devices which can be hijacked by hackers. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

From the mysterious depths of Lake Vostok, Antarctica, to tropical floodplain lakes, inland seas, hydro-reservoirs and the variety of waterbodies in our local environment, lakes encompass a huge diversity of shapes, sizes, depths, colours, and even salinities. Often very large and very deep,they sustain important and unique ecosystems which can be hotspots of biodiversity, and are used by humans as sources of drinking water and food, in particular, fish. What is the origin of differences among lakes, and how does that affect the life within them? What are the seasons of a lake, and howdo human actions alter lake ecosystems locally, and at a global scale? In this Very Short Introductions, Warwick Vincent outlines the essential features of lake environments and their biology, offering an up-to-date view of lake ecosystems. Vincent traces the origins of lake science (limnology) from the seminal work of Francois Forel on Lake Geneva at the edge of theSwiss Alps, to modern approaches such as environmental sensors, satellite observations, stable isotope analysis, and DNA-based technologies which are used to probe the microbial life support systems that lead from sunlight to fish. Drawing on varied case studies he considers the intimaterelationship between humans and lakes, the value of lakes as indicators of environmental change, the impact of pollution,and our urgent need to improve the protection and management of these vitally important living resources via an integrated understanding of their ecology. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, andenthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Organic Chemistry: A Very Short Introduction

Development

What is innovation? How is innovation used in business? How can we use it to succeed? Innovation - the ways ideas are made valuable - makes an important contribution to economic and social development, and is an increasingly topical issue. Not so long ago, there were no information technologies, commercial airlines, or television companies. Our parents were born into a world very different to today's, where television had yet to be invented, and there was no penicillin or frozen food. When our grandparents were born there were no internal combustion engines, aeroplanes, cinemas, or radios. In the last 150 years our world has been transformed - largely in part due to innovation. This Very Short Introduction looks at what innovation is and why it affects us so profoundly. It examines how it occurs, who stimulates it, how it is pursued, and what its outcomes are, both positive and negative. Innovation is hugely challenging and failure is common, yet it is essential to our social and economic progress. Mark Dodgson and David Gann consider the extent to which our understanding of innovation developed over the past century and how it might be used to interpret the global economy we all face in the future. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

In 1776 Adam Smith (1723-90) wrote The Wealth of Nations, a book so foundational that it has led to him being called the "father of economics." Today he is associated with the promotion of self-interest, a defense of greed and a criticism of any governmental 'interference' in market transactions which, if left to the 'invisible hand', will produce prosperity and liberty. Yet if Smith is actually read these associations are more a caricature than a faithful portrait. In this Very Short Introduction, Christopher Berry offers a balanced and nuanced view of this seminal thinker, embedding his fierce defense of free trade, competition, and assault on special interests in contemporary European history, politics, and philosophy. As Berry explores, Smith was more than an economist. His book The Theory of Moral Sentiment, offered a complex account of ethics in the context of human social behavior. His scope as a professor at the University of Glasgow, a major center of the Scottish Enlightenment, was extensive. Beyond courses in philosophy and jurisprudence he also gave classes covering history, literature, and language. In addition to his two major works he also wrote a pioneering study of the history of astronomy as an illustration of the motivations that drive humans to seek answers to questions. He produced, again derived from his Glasgow classroom, an analysis of the development of grammar and language. As Christopher Berry shows, Adam Smith was no narrow thinker, but rather one who produced not only one of the greatest books in the history of social science, but also a wide-ranging body of work that remains significant today. ABOUT THE SERIES The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.