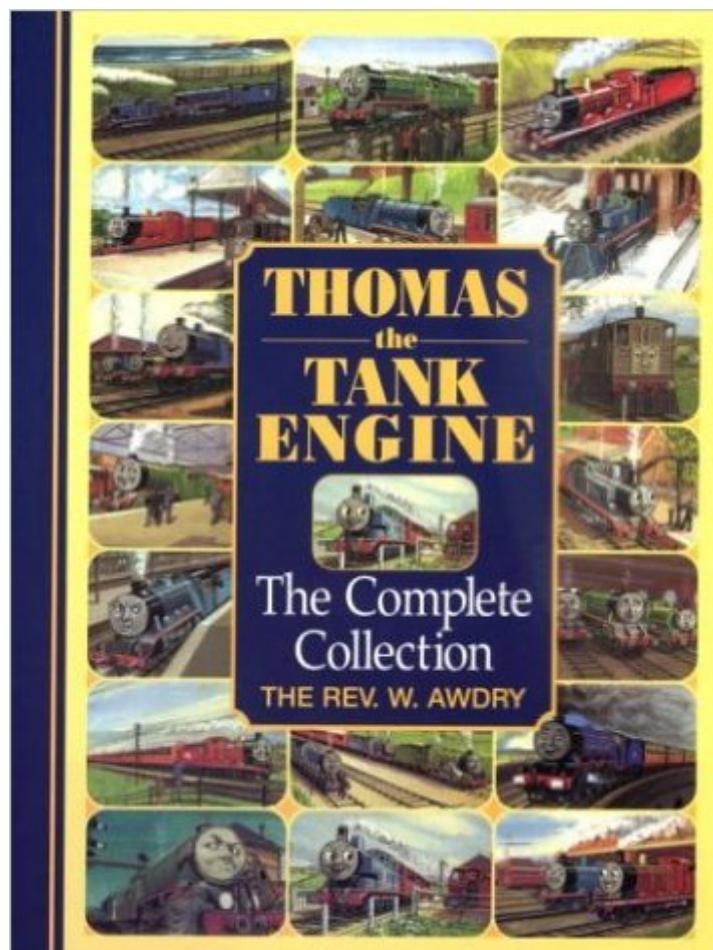


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# Thomas The Tank Engine: The Complete Collection (Railway Series)



## Synopsis

Since the publication of the original Thomas the Tank Engine in 1946, millions of children and their parents all over the world have loved this series of bedtime stories about Thomas and his friends. All 26 of the Reverend W. Awdry's classic stories are here in one beautiful gift volume, with an introduction by the author himself. Illustrated in full color.

## Book Information

Age Range: 4 and up

Series: Railway Series

Hardcover: 416 pages

Publisher: Random House Value Publishing, Inc.; Reprint edition (September 2, 1996)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0517187868

ISBN-13: 978-0517187869

Product Dimensions: 8.8 x 1.2 x 11.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 3.4 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars See all reviews (124 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #51,967 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #81 in Books > Children's Books > Cars, Trains & Things That Go > Trains #453 in Books > Literature & Fiction > Short Stories & Anthologies > Anthologies

## Customer Reviews

This book contains some great stories about Thomas the Tank Engine, and all of his friends including Percy, Henry, Gordon, Anabel, Clara, James, Bertie, and many more. Prior to buying this, we have purchased many Thomas books for our son, most of which wear out or get destroyed very quickly as small paperback books do. This book is the perfect solution, it has ALL of the Thomas stories in it, it has a good strong cover, and it will last for a while. My 3 year old son loves this book, it is one of his favorite bedtime books. The stories are a good length to read 1 or 2 of them at bedtime.

My son is a huge Thomas fan, and had been reading him "Thomas the Tank Engine's Big Blue Treasury" every night for weeks. Hoping to get some variety, I got this giant book of all the Thomas stories written by W. Awdry (the Big Blue Treasury has 3 stories written by his son, Christopher Awdry). Compared to the son's stories, these are often violent and not really appropriate for some small children. The theme of at least half the stories is that a train is either rude or vain and then gets his

punishment (either from an event, or from the teasing or revenge of the other characters). My wife won't read the stories, and I find myself doing some verbal editing of the stories whenever I see the very common story element of the other trains/trucks/coaches deciding to "pay him out" (i.e. paybacks, revenge - a phrase which seems to pop up in about a third of the stories). A couple of stories have rude trucks, which are then destroyed. If your kids watch a lot of the videos, however, you should be familiar with many of the stories, as they are the basis for a lot of the videos. The book has good value in that there is a LOT of stories (I got that variety I was looking for), however to make them fit they have reduced the illustrations to a VERY small size that I find too small to do the stories justice. Also, the stories cover several decades, and I felt there was a decline in the quality of the stories as the book comes to an end. I would rather have this one than trying to collect all the individual books, however. In short, I don't think this is as good as either the Big Blue Treasury or the Big Yellow Treasury, both of which have stories better suited to small children and much bigger and brighter illustrations, and my son likes both of those books better also. This is still a good book for a Thomas fan, however, and a nice change after you have read those books a hundred times (and even if you decide to skip a few of the darker stories, it is still a good value) and it tracks many of the stories in the videos.

We bought this book a year ago, and my son still enjoys listening to the stories. He has heard each at least three times, some of them many more times besides. As his mother, who has read through the book with him twice myself, \*I\* love the stories, too! They teach good lessons and are very entertaining at the same time. It actually is not true that all Thomas stories are in this book. All the original stories by the original author are, but more stories have been made up by less skilled story writers, in my opinion. The BEST Thomas stories are the ones in this book. The shorter story books have been Americanized, and I think that makes them lose some of their appeal. For instance, the Fat Controller in this book has been renamed in the shorter books and videos to his proper name, "Sir Topham Hatt." Political correctness meets Thomas the Tank Engine. In my opinion, they were better unchanged, and that is what you have in this book. If you have a toddler, I highly recommend this book. One word of warning, though. Then come the Thomas train sets, and the videos . . . you will never be through with Thomas once you start!

Having been exposed to the contemporary "commercial" version of Thomas the Tank Engine in various forms I had low expectations for The Complete Collection. After reading all the stories over the past two months at bedtime I whole heartedly give this collection 5 stars. These are the

original stories by Rev. W. Awdry--not just Thomas stories, but other trains that have been forgotten by the marketplace. The language is the Queen's English and the terminology harks back to a different place and time. Fortunately the stories are robust enough to hold up without translation for my 3-year old. While there are rude engines, naughty engines, and ample portions of just deserts as noted by another reviewer; I find the stories to be well balanced and if the young listener isn't careful some life lessons may be learned--really useful engines are happy engines. One aspect of these stories that broadens their appeal is "Each story is based on some odd incident which has happened to some engine, somewhere, some time." (quoting the author in the foreword) Many times I found myself laughing, or shaking my head and nodding in agreement with the outcome of the story. There were several stories whose full meaning was lost on my 3-year old, but never-the-less hit a tender spot with daddy. The most requested stories are those that involve Thomas and his familiar cast of friends. In October 2005 Random house published a selection of these Thomas stories that might suit an audience not interested in small steam engines or narrow gage railroads (the additional stories in the collection). For those that have an interest in trains beyond simple children's stories this book will be a pleasure to share with your young railroad enthusiast. The edition I am basing my review on is a 1999 Random House Printing. Unfortunately this title is out of print at the time of this review, but you may still be able to find new or like-new copies through resellers. Should this book be republished, and in my estimation it is well deserving of another print run, I would encourage the publisher to include an index at the end with references to the particular engine and what happened to him. A frequent request is "Let's read the story about James getting pushed down the hill by the trucks", or some other engine and circumstance--it would be useful to have an index.

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