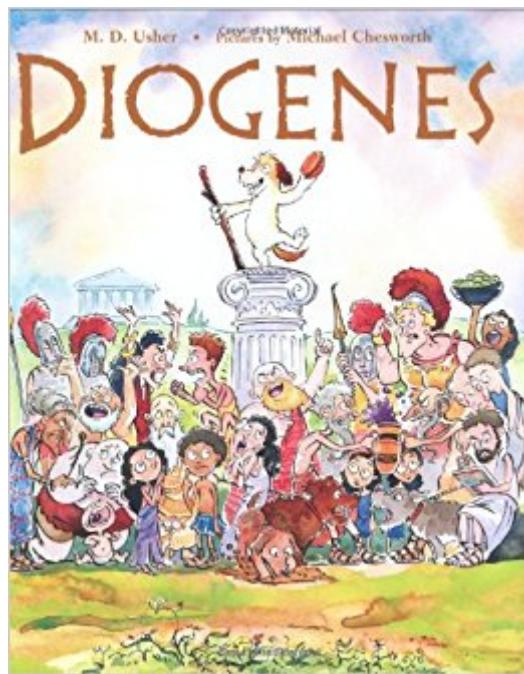


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# Diogenes



## Synopsis

Most dogs in this world are content with their doggy lives, playing dead and burying bones, but Diogenes was a dog of a different sort — he wanted to become his own master. So he buried his collar and leash, left his cozy doghouse, and ran off to the great city of Athens, Greece. There he took upon himself the role of “watchdog” to those around him, warning of life’s moral pitfalls and showing by his own surprising example the path to an enlightened way of being. Rounding out this colorful picture book biography about a revolutionary thinker, a two-page author’s note about Diogenes elucidates the connection between the book’s doggy hero and the historical figure, who became a pauper in order to live like a king.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 650L (What’s this?)

Hardcover: 32 pages

Publisher: Farrar, Straus and Giroux (BYR); First Edition edition (May 26, 2009)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0374317852

ISBN-13: 978-0374317850

Product Dimensions: 8.4 x 0.4 x 10.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 12 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 5 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,005,415 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #87 in Books > Children’s Books > Biographies > European #300 in Books > Children’s Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > Ancient Civilizations #3586 in Books > Children’s Books > Animals > Dogs

Age Range: 5 - 10 years

Grade Level: Kindergarten and up

## Customer Reviews

“An accurate and witty take on a philosophy of self-sufficiency that clearly separates wants and needs.” —The Chicago Tribune Chesworth’s comical cartoons underline the dog’s carefree spirit and the book might spark a discussion about humans’ desire for prestige and material goods and how to overcome them.

“Chesworth’s pen-and-wash artwork is playful and evocative, while the author keeps the text as simple and easy as Diogenes would have

wanted. • Kirkus Reviews "A touch of education, some light humor, and mildly affirming inspiration combine nicely here." • Booklist "It is a very clever retelling by an author who really knows his subject." Usher is a classics professor at the University of Vermont, and discusses the historical Diogenes in an excellent afterword. • Infodad.com

M. D. USHER is a classics professor at the University of Vermont. His first book for children, *Wise Guy: The Life and Philosophy of Socrates*, was named an NCSS-CBC Notable Trade Book in the Field of Social Studies. He lives in Shoreham, Vermont. MICHAEL CHESWORTH has illustrated numerous children's books, including *Inventor McGregor* by Kathleen T. Pelley and the Morgy series of chapter books by Maggie Lewis. He lives in Amherst, Massachusetts.

This book was a gift for my daughter who teaches kindergarten. She was looking for stories about Greece on the level of 5 year olds. Aside from Aesop fables, there is nothing around for that level child. The myths are a bit too much for little ones. When I saw this I hoped it would due. She was pleased that there was something childlike out there.

Dogs are dogs are dogs, but Diogenes was definitely a different kind of dog. He had no intention of rolling over for anyone, let alone fetching a bone because "he wanted to be his own master." One day, as he had his face buried in his bowl of food, he noticed a little mouse. The little mouse didn't seem to have a care in the world and Diogenes decided he wanted to be just like that. The next day he gave up all his worldly possessions, meaning a dog house, a collar and leash, and left for Athens, the big city. Without a care in the world he only had a walking stick and his bowl, which he proudly sported on his head. The city was stupendous and bursting with activity. Athens would be a great place to try new tricks. He learned to beg for food, sleep in "an old pot," how to deal with the climate, and he even "begged from statues." He certainly was enjoying being his own master and enjoying the simple life. He was a bit of an odd dog, but soon he found fame and many "people traveled from all over to see his latest trick." Even Alexander the Great took an interest in him, but one day the dogsnatcher threw him in a net and took him to the pound. Was this going to be the end of his freedom or was there more in store for Diogenes? This is a fascinating story of Diogenes, a Greek dog who gave up everything to live like a king. I liked the interesting allusion to the "real" Diogenes in this story, a story that subtly has a lot to tell the young reader. This tale would be an excellent introduction to ancient Greek life in the homeschool or classroom setting. The artwork is

animated, lively, and will make the reader chuckle when they see the wide-eyed independent Diogenes at "work." In the afterword there is a concise and very interesting biography about the real Diogenes who "dedicated himself to a life of voluntary poverty and of questioning commonly held practices and beliefs."

Diogenes, an unusually thoughtful dog in ancient Greece, lived a comfortable life free of trouble or need. Yet Diogenes wanted more; he wanted to be his own master. Inspired by his observations of a carefree mouse, Diogenes left all his creature comforts behind and set off for the great city of Athens. There he spent the rest of his doggy days performing various tricks to teach people about the value of a simple lifestyle and the importance of avoiding moral bankruptcy. Based on the actual story of a man who founded the Cynic school of philosophy, this unique book offers children an interesting opportunity to explore ethics and morals in an ancient Greek setting.

This book is clever and funny, and explains the life of Diogenes in a way that children will love. My kids and I both thoroughly enjoyed this book. My oldest son, who is four, asked for it to be read to him several times, including the afterword, which gave more information on the philosopher. Portraying the philosopher Diogenes as a dog is a fantastic idea, because it not only makes it engaging for children, but it really helps to underscore what Diogenes's philosophy was about. This is a terrific book to use if you are classically homeschooling your child, btw.

our two-year-old loves it...a toddler intro to greek tales (yes, a dog is the main character). first borrowed it from our library, now buying it!

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Diogenes Laertius: Lives of Eminent Philosophers, Volume I, Books 1-5 (Loeb Classical Library No. 184) Diogenes Diogenes the Dog-Man (Plato & Co.) Diogenes the Cynic: Sayings and Anecdotes, With Other Popular Moralists

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