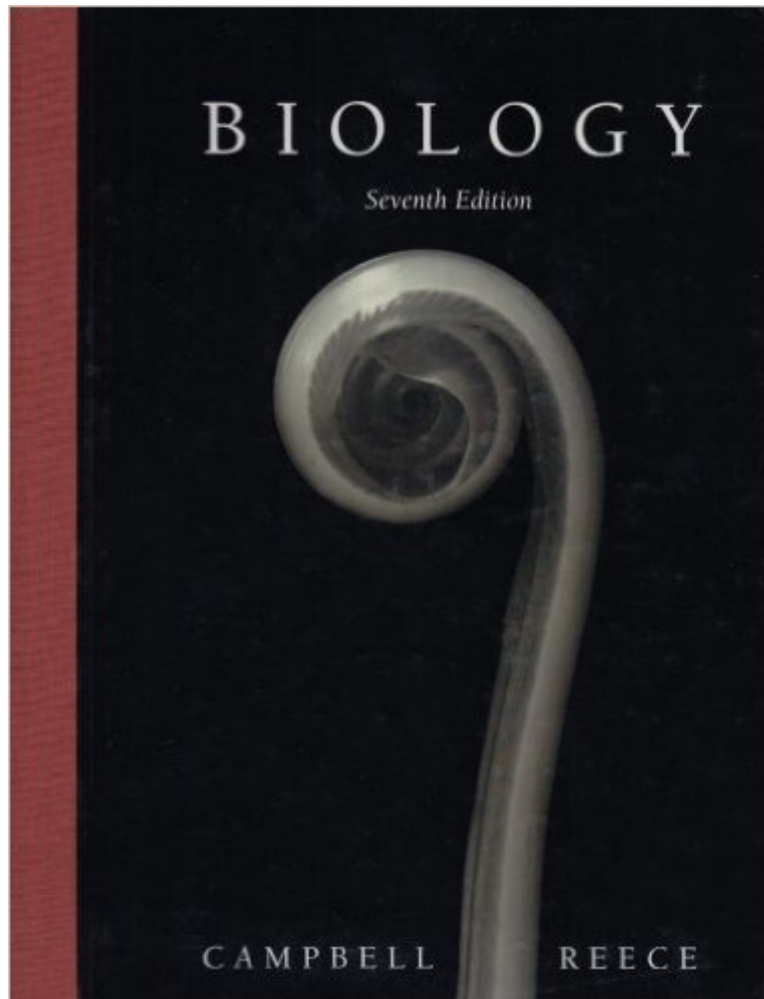


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Synopsis

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Customer Reviews

I'm working through an earlier edition of this book (because it was used and cheap) and am very impressed by it. There are a lot of excellent introductory science textbooks, but what distinguishes this one in my mind is the author's relentless effort to deepen his explanations. You don't just learn that some reaction occurs in the cell. You learn why it occurs, what its antecedents are, what their antecedents are, how feedback reactions in the cell stimulate or inhibit the reaction, and what the mechanisms of action are. At each point where the reader may be thinking, "That's interesting, but why does that happen?", all he need do is read on and very likely find that Campbell will ask, and answer, his question. Explanation must always come to a stop. But Campbell pushes his

explanations out to the frontiers of our knowledge. His explanations stop not where he thinks the student is too unsophisticated to continue, but where either there is no more known, or where it would be impossible to say more and still cover the whole subject of biology in one book. This approach shows great respect for the student. It treats the student as an intelligent person who is interested, motivated, and able to learn. It is the standard approach for more advanced texts, but it's not always found in introductory books. It's a considerable achievement to be able to write about a highly technical subject this deeply and this thoroughly, and still put it in terms that the beginning student can understand. The book is also very well produced. There are excellent illustrations, a useful glossary, an index, and many photo-micrographs.

I love the Biology book by Campbell and Reece subtitled 'Concepts & Connections', so I thought I would check out this edition also. I first studied biology nearly twenty-five years ago with a huge and lovely biology book written by an author whose name unfortunately escapes me. I loved that book, and have always judged future biology texts against that one; this one measures up well against my memory of that text. After an interesting introduction, which talks about discovery-based science in addition to theoretical/hypothesis science with interesting examples. The introduction, 'Exploring Life', leads right into the first unit, which deals with the basic chemistry needed to understand the processes of life. Water, Carbon and molecular chemistry at a basic level are explained, as these are the building-blocks of life on earth from a chemical standpoint. The book continues on an upward progression from here. The next unit is on the cell, introducing both single-celled organisms as well as how cells work in both plants and animals. Photosynthesis is explained in good detail. The unit following deals with genetics, a very 'in the news' area of biology today. This looks at genetics in plants (the early experiments of Mendel are explained here), animals, bacteria and viruses, as well as the more complex structures of DNA. The unit on evolution looks both at plant and animal evolution, as well as the way evolutionary ideas can influence the way species develop in the modern, changing world. The subsequent units look at biological diversity, the plant kingdom, and the animal kingdom. The final unit on ecology brings all things together in one eco-system in which plants, animals and environment influence each other and co-exist.

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