



**Title:** Black Swan Green  
**Author:** David Mitchell  
**Imprint:** Random House  
**Publisher:** Random House Publishing Group  
**On sale date:** February 27, 2007  
**ISBN:** 9780812974010  
**Format:** Paperback

# BOOK RESUME: BLACK SWAN GREEN

## BOOK SYNOPSIS

From award-winning writer David Mitchell comes a sinewy, meditative novel of boyhood on the cusp of adulthood and the old on the cusp of the new.

*Black Swan Green* tracks a single year in what is, for thirteen-year-old Jason Taylor, the sleepest village in muddiest Worcestershire in a dying Cold War England, 1982. But the thirteen chapters, each a short story in its own right, create an exquisitely observed world that is anything but sleepy. A world of Kissingeresque realpolitik enacted in boys' games on a frozen lake; of "nightcreeping" through the summer backyards of strangers; of the tabloid-fueled thrills of the Falklands War and its human toll; of the cruel, luscious Dawn Madden and her power-hungry boyfriend, Ross Wilcox; of a certain Madame Eva van Outryve de Crommelynck, an elderly bohemian emigré who is both more and less than she appears; of Jason's search to replace his dead grandfather's irreplaceable smashed watch before the crime is discovered; of first cigarettes, first kisses, first Duran Duran LPs, and first deaths; of Margaret Thatcher's recession; of Gypsies camping in the woods and the hysteria they inspire; and, even closer to home, of a slow-motion divorce in four seasons.

Pointed, funny, profound, left-field, elegiac, and painted with the stuff of life, *Black Swan Green* is David Mitchell's subtlest and most effective achievement to date.

## REVIEWS AND PRAISE

"Great Britain's *Catcher in the Rye*—and another triumph for one of the present age's most interesting and accomplished novelists." —*Kirkus Reviews* (starred review)

"[David Mitchell has created] one of the most endearing, smart, and funny young narrators ever to rise up from the pages of a novel. . . . The always fresh and brilliant writing will carry readers back to their own childhoods. . . . This enchanting novel makes us remember exactly what it was like." —*The Boston Globe*

"[A] brilliant new novel . . . In Jason, Mitchell creates an evocation yet authentically adolescent voice." —*The New York Times Book Review*

"[David Mitchell is a] prodigiously daring and imaginative young writer. . . . As in the works of Thomas Pynchon and Herman Melville, one feels the roof of the narrative lifted off and oneself in thrall." —*Time*

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\*Publisher suggested age range covers the wide range of readers publishers envision using the book, whether for independent reading, family sharing, group study, or in other ways. Educators have the best sense of the appropriate range for their diverse learners they work with and understand these ranges vary depending on a book's intended use.

### **AWARDS AND ACCOLADES**

- Winner of a 2007 American Library Association Alex Award
- Finalist for the 2006 *Los Angeles Times* Book Prize for Fiction
- Shortlisted for the 2006 Costa Book Award for Novel
- A 2006 American Library Association Notable Book
- *A School Library Journal* “Best Adult Book 4 Teens”
- Named One of the Ten Best Books of the Year by *Time*
- Named One of the Best Books of the Year by *The Washington Post Book World*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, *Rocky Mountain News*, and *Kirkus Reviews*

### **MEDIA AND RESOURCES**

- [Teacher’s Guide](#)
- [Reader’s Guide](#)

### **RESPONSE TO CHALLENGES**

- [“Removal First, Review Second? NCAC Questions Handling of Challenge to ‘Black Swan Green,’”](#) National Coalition Against Censorship (2014)
  - “After careful review, the review committee determined that the book met district educational standards, though they decided that it not be taught this year because it would be out-of-sequence with the rest of the curriculum.”

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