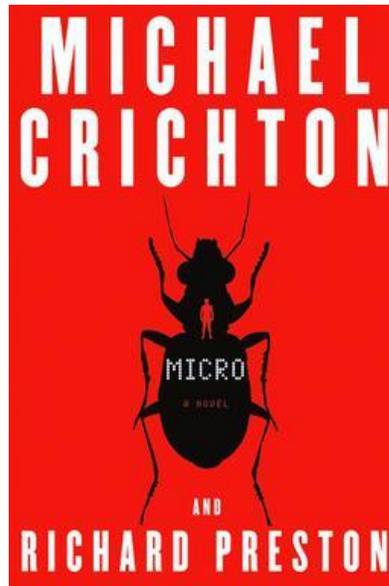


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Micro: A Novel

Michael Crichton & Richard Preston

Introduction

Micro: A Novel by Michael Crichton was published posthumously in 2011 with HarperCollins. Richard Preston, a science writer, finished the book after it was discovered on Crichton's computer upon his death in 2008. This adventure story, a lot like Crichton's *Jurassic Park*, educates many readers of the life in this micro world. During the introduction of this book, it described David Attenborough's concern with modern children's loss of the natural world. After reading the detailed descriptions of each organism in *Micro*, this book should be able to paint a picture for those who are unaware of our natural environment.

About the book

In this book, a group of science graduate students are recruited to visit Oahu, Hawaii in hopes of working for a secretive nanotech company called Nanigen. Nanigen is led by Drake, a money and power-rich psychopath who soon turns the student's trip into a nightmare. When one of the students, Peter, finds out a nasty secret, Drake decides to turn against the students and shrink them using one of his machines. As the students are placed in the rainforests of Hawaii, they are left to fend for themselves against all the micro creatures inhabiting the area. With their knowledge and skill set, the students are able to fight off many creatures they come across on their journey to stay alive. With Crichton and Preston's science background, *Micro* has easily become one of the most exciting thrillers. The descriptive details in this novel make you, as a reader, feel like you are living in this micro world with the students, fighting off creatures such as ants, spiders, wasps, and birds, to name a few. Are the students skilled enough for them to come out alive? Don't wait until DreamWorks finishes their film on this novel, read it now.

Discussion Guide

1. Did you learn anything new about a specific insect or other creature by reading Crichton and Preston's novel? What did you learn?
2. There were many knowledgeable facts Crichton and Preston included in *Micro*, however, there were many disputable facts as well. What facts were believable and what was unlikely?
3. Erika Moll, the entomologist, was able to determine which insects were a danger to the group in the micro world. Do you, after studying entomology, feel as if you would be able to survive the micro world with your knowledge of insects? Why or Why not?

4. To defend themselves, the students use many weapons. One defense mechanism they used was collecting chemicals from plants and animals to shoot or inject into their enemy. Is there anything else you can think of using as a weapon other than what is seen in the book (do not count weapons they were equipped with, such as machetes)?
5. A parasitic wasp inserted its ovipositor into Danny's arm and laid eggs. The students, Danny included, did not notice this until the larvae hatched and started moving around inside his arm. Do you think, if Erika Moll were still alive at this point, they could have found a solution for Danny? What would you have suggested or did (if it were you who had been parasitized with eggs)?
6. Peter Jansen was surprisingly killed by a miniature sniper employed by Drake. Being a leader, I thought he would come out of this alive. What do you think the symbolism is for killing off the leader of the group?
7. Karen King, the arachnologist, wanted to stay in the micro world. She described this world as beautiful and was willing to face all the dangers to be "where she belonged." Do you think you would have the same feelings as Karen King? Why or why not?
8. Do you think the technology presented in the novel is a good solution to discover new findings in our natural world? In other words, if it were possible, would shrinking humans be the best way to discover new organisms and investigate their ways of living? How about the creation of small bots instead of shrinking humans?