

wonderful wizard of oz author

wonderful wizard of oz author: A Deep Dive into the Life and Legacy of L. Frank Baum

The world of children's literature was forever transformed by the imaginative tales of L. Frank Baum, the brilliant author behind the timeless classic, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*. His creative storytelling, vivid characters, and pioneering contributions to fantasy literature continue to enchant readers of all ages. In this article, we explore the life, works, and enduring legacy of the wonderful wizard of oz author, shedding light on the man whose imagination created one of the most beloved stories in literary history.

Who Was L. Frank Baum? An Introduction

Lyman Frank Baum, commonly known as L. Frank Baum, was an American author born on May 15, 1856, in Chittenango, New York. He is best known for writing *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, published in 1900, which ignited a cultural phenomenon and spawned countless adaptations in films, theater, and other media. Baum's work is characterized by its inventive worlds, memorable characters, and moral undertones, making him a pioneer in the fantasy genre.

Throughout his life, Baum was a prolific writer, publishing numerous books, plays, and stories. His creative spirit and unique narrative style made him a beloved figure in American literature, especially among young readers. His influence extends beyond his most famous work, as he laid the foundation for modern fantasy storytelling.

The Early Life of the Wonderful Wizard of Oz Author

Childhood and Family Background

L. Frank Baum was born into a modest family. His father, Benjamin Baum, was a wealthy businessman, and his mother, Cynthia Ann, was a homemaker. The family's affluence allowed Baum access to a good education and a comfortable childhood. However, Baum's early years were marked by personal tragedy; his father passed away when Baum was just four years old, which deeply affected him.

Educational Journey and Early Career

Baum attended various schools but did not pursue formal higher education. Instead, he ventured into numerous careers, including:

- Selling newspapers
- Working as an actor and playwright

- Publishing and editing newspapers and magazines

His early experiences in the entertainment industry and publishing helped shape his storytelling skills and understanding of audience engagement.

The Birth of the Wizard of Oz Legend

Inspiration and Writing of The Wonderful Wizard of Oz

Baum's inspiration for The Wonderful Wizard of Oz stemmed from his desire to create a modern fairy tale that reflected American values and landscapes. He wanted to craft a story that was distinctly American, diverging from European fairy tales. The narrative was initially conceived as a story for his own children, which he later expanded into a full-length novel.

The book was published in 1900 and was an immediate success. Its vibrant illustrations, authored by W. W. Denslow, played a significant role in capturing readers' imaginations. The novel's success led to a series of sequels and established Baum as a prominent author of children's literature.

Key Themes and Elements in the Book

Baum's Oz series features several notable themes:

- The importance of friendship and courage
- The value of intelligence and resourcefulness
- The idea that home is where the heart is
- A celebration of American culture and landscapes

The book's memorable characters, such as Dorothy, the Scarecrow, the Tin Woodman, and the Cowardly Lion, embody virtues and flaws that make them relatable and enduring.

Biographical Highlights of L. Frank Baum

Personal Life and Family

Baum married Maud Gage, a granddaughter of suffragist Matilda Joslyn Gage, in 1882. They had four children together. Baum's family life was integral to his inspiration, as his children's curiosity and imagination fueled his storytelling.

Career Milestones

- Published Father Goose: His Book in 1899, a collection of humorous verse for children.
- Released The Wonderful Wizard of Oz in 1900, initiating the famous series.
- Wrote numerous sequels and related stories that expanded the Oz universe.
- Worked in the theater, producing plays based on his stories.

Challenges and Later Years

Despite his success, Baum faced financial difficulties at various points. His later years were marked by attempts to capitalize on Oz's popularity through stage productions and merchandise. Sadly, Baum passed away on May 6, 1919, just shy of his 63rd birthday, leaving behind a literary legacy that would grow far beyond his lifetime.

Legacy and Impact of the Wonderful Wizard of Oz Author

Influence on Children's Literature and Fantasy Genre

Baum revolutionized children's literature by creating stories that combined fantasy, adventure, and moral lessons. His vivid world-building and memorable characters set a standard for future fantasy authors, influencing writers like C.S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien, and others.

Enduring Cultural Impact

- The 1939 film adaptation The Wizard of Oz, starring Judy Garland, brought Baum's characters to a global audience.
- Numerous stage adaptations, including the famous musical The Wizard of Oz.
- A vast array of merchandise, toys, and themed attractions.
- Continued popularity in literature, with new adaptations, reprints, and reinterpretations.

Why L. Frank Baum Remains a Beloved Author

Baum's storytelling mastery, combined with his ability to craft a magical universe rooted in moral values, ensures his stories remain relevant. His work encourages imagination, bravery, and the idea that everyone has unique qualities that make them special.

Conclusion: Celebrating the Wonderful Wizard of Oz Author

L. Frank Baum's contributions to literature transcend generations. His ability to create a fantastical world filled with heroism, humor, and heart has cemented his place as a legendary figure in American literary history. Whether through the pages of *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* or its numerous adaptations, Baum's influence continues to inspire and delight audiences worldwide.

For those interested in children's literature, fantasy, or American cultural history, exploring Baum's life and works offers invaluable insights into the power of imagination and storytelling. The wonderful wizard of oz author's legacy is a testament to how one person's creative vision can shape an entire genre and touch countless lives across the globe.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who is the author of The Wonderful Wizard of Oz?

L. Frank Baum is the author of *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*.

When was The Wonderful Wizard of Oz first published?

It was first published in 1900.

What inspired L. Frank Baum to write The Wonderful Wizard of Oz?

Baum was inspired by his interest in American folklore, fairy tales, and his desire to create a uniquely American fairy tale.

Are there other books written by L. Frank Baum related to Oz?

Yes, Baum wrote numerous sequels and related books set in the Oz universe, including *The Marvelous Land of Oz* and *Ozma of Oz*.

What is L. Frank Baum's legacy in children's literature?

Baum is considered one of the most influential writers in children's literature, known for creating the enduring and beloved Oz series.

Did L. Frank Baum write any other notable works besides Oz books?

Yes, Baum authored several other works, including *The Life and Adventures of Santa Claus* and *Queen Zixi of Ix*.

How did L. Frank Baum's background influence his writing of The Wonderful Wizard of Oz?

Baum's background as a playwright and journalist, along with his interest in American culture and folklore, influenced his imaginative storytelling.

Is L. Frank Baum's The Wonderful Wizard of Oz based on any real-life events?

No, the story is a fantasy created from Baum's imagination, though it reflects themes of self-discovery and adventure.

How has L. Frank Baum's work impacted popular culture?

Baum's Oz series has inspired countless adaptations, including movies, musicals, and merchandise, cementing its place in popular culture worldwide.

Additional Resources

L. Frank Baum: The Visionary Behind The Wonderful Wizard of Oz

When it comes to iconic children's literature that has left an indelible mark on readers worldwide, few works are as enduring and beloved as *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*. This enchanting tale, filled with vivid characters and fantastical adventures, was penned by a man whose creative genius and literary craftsmanship continue to influence storytelling today — L. Frank Baum. In this feature, we delve into the life, career, and legacy of the author often celebrated as the mastermind behind the Land of Oz, exploring what makes him a truly wonderful figure in literary history.

Early Life and Foundations of Creativity

Birth and Childhood Influences

Lyman Frank Baum was born on May 15, 1856, in Chittenango, New York. The youngest of seven children in a family that valued education and storytelling, Baum's early years were marked by a rich imagination and a fascination with fairy tales and adventure stories. His father, Benjamin Baum, was a wealthy businessman, which provided young Frank with a relatively privileged upbringing, yet his childhood was also punctuated by economic hardships and family struggles.

Growing up in a household where storytelling was a common pastime, Baum developed a keen sense for narrative, often creating fantastical stories to entertain family and friends. This early affinity for storytelling laid the groundwork for his later literary pursuits.

Formative Years and Early Career

Before becoming a renowned author, Baum explored various professions, including acting, journalism, and retail business. His stint as an actor, particularly in traveling theater companies, exposed him to the dramatic arts and storytelling techniques, enriching his understanding of narrative structure and character development.

Baum's entrepreneurial spirit also led him into the publishing industry. In the 1880s, he founded a magazine called *The Paradise of Children*, which aimed to provide wholesome entertainment for young readers. This venture reflected his deep interest in children's literature and his desire to craft stories that could inspire and delight.

The Creation of the Wizard of Oz

Inspiration and Development

The journey to creating *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* was neither swift nor straightforward. Baum was inspired by a combination of personal experiences, prevailing literary trends, and a desire to craft a uniquely American fairy tale.

In the late 19th century, fairy tales and fantasy stories were predominantly European in origin. Baum sought to create a distinctly American myth, infused with themes and characters that resonated with American children and culture. His fascination with the idea of a magical land accessible through imagination and adventure culminated in the conception of Oz.

Baum began working on the story in 1898, initially as a serialized story titled *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*. His goal was to create a narrative that combined fantasy, adventure, and moral lessons, all wrapped in a captivating and accessible story for children.

Publishing and Immediate Success

Published in 1900 by the George M. Hill Company, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* was an instant hit. Its colorful illustrations, engaging narrative, and memorable characters captivated both children and adults alike. The book's success sparked a series of sequels and cemented Baum's reputation as a leading figure in children's literature.

The novel's blend of whimsy and moral lessons, along with its rich world-building, set it apart from other children's stories of the time. Baum's imaginative depiction of Oz, with its vibrant landscapes and diverse inhabitants, created a universe that has fascinated generations.

Literary Style and Themes

Distinctive Narrative Voice

Baum's writing is characterized by its warmth, humor, and accessibility. His narrative voice is conversational, often directly addressing the reader, which fosters a sense of intimacy and engagement. His use of simple yet vivid language makes his stories easy to follow, while also allowing for imaginative visualization.

He employed a straightforward storytelling approach, emphasizing moral values such as courage, kindness, and perseverance, woven seamlessly into his fantastical narratives.

Recurring Themes and Motifs

Baum's works, especially the Oz series, explore themes that resonate universally:

- Self-Discovery and Personal Growth: Characters like Dorothy and the Scarecrow discover their own inner strengths through their adventures.
- The Power of Friendship and Kindness: Relationships and compassion are central to overcoming challenges.
- Courage and Perseverance: Many characters face fears and difficulties, highlighting the importance of resilience.
- The Illusion of Power and Authority: The true magic resides within oneself, often contrasted with superficial displays of power.

The stories also reflect a fascination with technology and progress, subtly incorporating elements of American innovation and optimism.

Legacy and Impact

Influence on Children's Literature

Baum's creation of Oz revolutionized children's literature by blending fantasy with American cultural elements. His stories introduced a new genre of imaginative storytelling that was both entertaining and morally instructive. The success of the Oz books inspired countless authors and contributed to the growth of the fantasy genre.

The vivid characters and settings from Baum's books have become iconic, inspiring adaptations across various media, including stage productions, films, television series, and merchandise.

Enduring Cultural Significance

The Wizard of Oz has become a cultural phenomenon, with its influence extending beyond literature into popular culture. The 1939 film adaptation starring Judy Garland is arguably one of the most famous movies of all time, further cementing the story's place in American cultural history.

Baum's influence is also evident in the proliferation of Oz-themed parks, merchandise, and adaptations, all of which continue to introduce new generations to his imaginative universe.

Legacy of the Author

L. Frank Baum's work has inspired a vast array of adaptations, sequels, and reinterpretations. His approach to storytelling—combining moral lessons with engaging fantasy—serves as a model for writers and storytellers worldwide.

Despite the success, Baum faced criticism and challenges, including debates over the commercialism of his works and the portrayal of certain characters. Nonetheless, his pioneering efforts in fantasy storytelling have secured his place as a literary visionary.

Additional Notable Works and Contributions

While Baum is best known for *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, his literary output includes numerous other works:

- Oz Series (14 books): Including titles like *The Marvelous Land of Oz*, *Ozma of Oz*, and *The Road to Oz*.
- Other Children's Books: Such as *Father Goose: His Book* and *The Sea Fairies*.
- Theatrical Works: Baum was involved in writing and producing plays, some based on his stories.

He also contributed to early efforts to establish a distinctly American children's literature tradition, emphasizing imagination and moral integrity.

Why L. Frank Baum Remains a "Wonderful" Author

To sum up, L. Frank Baum's enduring appeal lies in his ability to craft worlds that are at once fantastical and meaningful. His stories transcend mere entertainment—they offer moral guidance, celebrate imagination, and reflect American optimism and ingenuity.

His mastery in creating a richly detailed universe like Oz, populated with memorable characters such as Dorothy, the Scarecrow, the Tin Woodman, and the Cowardly Lion, exemplifies his talent for

character development and world-building.

Moreover, Baum's influence persists in modern storytelling—his work has inspired generations of writers, filmmakers, and artists, ensuring that the magic of Oz continues to enchant audiences.

Conclusion

L. Frank Baum stands as a towering figure in children's literature, a visionary creator whose imagination brought forth one of the most beloved fictional universes in history. His ability to blend moral lessons with captivating fantasy has made *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* a timeless classic. Whether through the enduring popularity of the books, the iconic film, or countless adaptations and references, Baum's legacy as a wonderful author remains firmly secure.

For anyone seeking inspiration in storytelling, or simply looking to explore a world of wonder, Baum's work exemplifies the power of imagination and the enduring magic of a well-told story. His contributions continue to inspire new generations to dream big, believe in themselves, and find their own courage along the yellow brick road.

Wonderful Wizard Of Oz Author

wonderful wizard of oz author: *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* Lyman Frank Baum, 1999 *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* remains one of the world's most beloved and widely read books. Throughout a century of remarkable change, the popularity of L. Frank Baum's classic tale has endured and grown, embraced by generation after generation of children and the young at heart. To honour the centennial of its publication in 1900, the University Press of Kansas is presenting this special anniversary edition that combines Baum's original text with the contributions of two renowned artists: book illustrator Michael McCurdy and writer Ray Bradbury. The book embraces and celebrates the oft-kidded connection between Baum's wondrous story and the state of Kansas.

wonderful wizard of oz author: The Wonderful Wizard of Oz L. Frank Baum, 2004-09 L. Frank Baum's timeless classic *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* was the first uniquely American fairy tale. A combination of enchanting fantasy and piercing social commentary, this remarkable story has entertained and beguiled readers of all ages since it was first published in 1900. Ray Bradbury writes in his Introduction, Both [Baum and Shakespeare] lived inside their heads with a mind gone wild with wanting, wishing, hoping, shaping, dreaming, and it is this same hunger that makes all of us continue to seek out the story of Oz--and be nourished by it. This Modern Library Paperback Classic is set from the text of the definitive first edition and includes the New York Times review of that edition as well as the original Preface by the author.

wonderful wizard of oz author: *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz - Lyman Frank Baum* Lyman Frank Baum, 2021-05-20 *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* is an American children's novel written by author L. Frank Baum and illustrated by W.W. Denslow, originally published by the George M. Hill Company in May 1900. It has since seen several reprints, most often under the title *The Wizard of Oz*, which is the title of the popular 1902 Broadway musical adaptation as well as the iconic 1939 live-action film. The story chronicles the adventures of a young farm girl named Dorothy Gale in the magical Land of Oz after she and her pet dog Toto are swept away from their home in Kansas by a

cyclone. The book is one of the best-known stories in American literature and has been widely translated. The Library of Congress has declared it America's greatest and best-loved homegrown fairytale. Its groundbreaking success, and that of the Broadway musical adapted from the novel led Baum to write thirteen additional Oz books that serve as official sequels to the first story. In January 1901, George M. Hill Company completed printing the first edition, a total of 10,000 copies, which quickly sold out. It had sold three million copies by the time it entered the public domain in 1956.

wonderful wizard of oz author: The Wonderful Wizard of Oz L. Frank Baum, 2022-05-02 Dorothy is a young girl who lives with her Aunt Em, Uncle Henry, and dog, Toto, on a farm on the Kansas prairie. One day, she and Toto are caught up in a cyclone that deposits them and the farmhouse into Munchkin Country in the magical Land of Oz. The falling house has killed the Wicked Witch of the East, the evil ruler of the Munchkins. The Good Witch of the North arrives with three grateful Munchkins and gives Dorothy the magical silver shoes that once belonged to the Wicked Witch. The Good Witch tells Dorothy that the only way she can return home is to follow the yellow brick road to the Emerald City and ask the great and powerful Wizard of Oz to help her. As Dorothy embarks on her journey, the Good Witch of the North kisses her on the forehead, giving her magical protection from harm. On her way down the yellow brick road, Dorothy attends a banquet held by a Munchkin named Boq. The next day, she frees a Scarecrow from the pole on which he is hanging, applies oil from a can to the rusted joints of a Tin Woodman, and meets a Cowardly Lion. The Scarecrow wants a brain, the Tin Woodman wants a heart, and the Lion wants courage, so Dorothy encourages them to journey with her and Toto to the Emerald City to ask for help from the Wizard.

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wonderful wizard of oz author: The Wonderful Wizard of Oz (illustrated and Annotated) L. Frank Baum, 2020-08-26 Contain book summary and analysis. Author biography and photos. Overview with story Pictures. The story that taught the world there's no place like home! In this fairy tale so magical that it seems every child is born knowing it, a tornado transports Dorothy Gale and her dog, Toto, from the flat prairies of Kansas to the marvelous Land of Oz. A fantastic journey soon follows, as Dorothy travels a yellow brick road in search of a sorcerer with the power to send her home. Joining her are the Scarecrow, the Tin Woodman, and the Cowardly Lion, each of whom has a wish just as important as Dorothy's. All of their dreams will come true if they can only make it to the Emerald City and the wonderful Wizard of Oz. One of the most beloved children's books of all time, L. Frank Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* has inspired countless adaptations, including the classic 1939 film starring Judy Garland. This ebook has been professionally proofread to ensure accuracy and readability on all devices.

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quickly sold out. The Wonderful Wizard of Oz sold three million copies by the time it entered the public domain in 1956.

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wonderful wizard of oz author: The Wonderful Wizard of Oz L. Frank Baum, 2021-03-22 Perspective and Narrator The Wonderful Wizard of Oz brings the reader through a third-person point of view through the use of an accompanying narrator. Themes of home, journeying and hidden strength are expounded on through the use of the third-person narrator. About the Title The book puts the focus on Dorothy, an orphaned girl who is the main character and frequently seeks the

advice of the wonderful wizard thus making the wizard an essential character. In the end, Dorothy discovered the man was just an ordinary person with a wonderful heart but not a wizard as many people in Oz think. The wonderful wizard of Oz is a beautiful story and the author himself defined it as a modern fairytale. We have to keep in mind that even though it has been more than a hundred years since this book was published it still carries the name of a modern fairytale. It was published around the time that the Grimm brothers and Charles Perrault were publishing and even then it was different from all the other fairytales. While he was writing the book, the author thought that the kids need a story with no ghosts, fairies, or any scary events. He wanted to entertain the children and keep the book full of joy and without sadness. He stated that in the preface of the book. In every modern fairytale, the author follows his idea and gets a lot of poeticism and joy into the story, and leaves out the cruelty and sadness. In this book, we will meet the Wicked Witch from the East and one from the West but instead of being scary, they are funny. The book has a lot of positive characters such as Dorothy and her friends Cowardly Lion, Scarecrow, Tin Woodman. They represent three very important characteristics such as courage, wisdom, and sensitivity. The witches are divided into the good ones and the bad ones. Even though the author wanted to entertain the kids this book carries a moral lesson. Everything that we admire can be found in ourselves and we just need to know how to recognize it. The author tries to tell us that we can do miracles every single day even if they are small because the small things make life real. Besides all of that, it is important not to be selfish because together we can find the true meaning of life.

wonderful wizard of oz author: The Wizard of Oz L. Frank Baum, 2020-07-28 BE CLASSIC with The Wizard of Oz, introduced by award-winning, bestselling author Judy Blume. Dorothy thinks she is lost forever when a terrifying tornado crashes through Kansas and whisks her and her dog, Toto, far away to the magical Land of Oz. To get home Dorothy must follow the yellow brick road to the Emerald City and find the wonderfully mysterious Wizard of Oz. Together with her companions the Tin Woodman, the Scarecrow, and the Cowardly Lion, whom she meets on the way, Dorothy embarks on a strange and enchanting adventure. Will she ever find her way home?

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wonderful wizard of oz author: L Frank Baum - The Wonderful Wizard of Oz L Frank Baum, 2020-11-24 When Dorothy and her little dog Toto are caught in a tornado, they and their Kansas farmhouse are suddenly transported to Oz, where Munchkins live, monkeys fly and Wicked Witches rule. Desperate to return home, and with the Wicked Witch of the West on their trail, Dorothy and Toto - together with new friends the Tin Woodsman, Scarecrow and cowardly Lion - embark on a fantastic quest along the Yellow Brick Road in search of the Emerald City. There they hope to meet the legendary, all-powerful Wizard of Oz, who alone may hold the power to grant their every wish. Just as captivating as it was a hundred years ago, this is a story that all ages will love. Includes a biography of the author.

wonderful wizard of oz author: The Marvelous Land of Oz (□□□□□) L. Frank Baum, 2011-01-25 Second Oz book; Scarecrow and Tin Woodman are back with hero named Tip. 120 black-and-white, 16 full-color illustrations.

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wonderful wizard of oz author: The Wonderful Wizard of Oz L Frank Baum, 2021-03-21 Dorothy is a young girl who lives in a one-room house in Kansas with the care-worn Uncle Henry and Aunt Em; the joy of her life is her dog, Toto. A sudden cyclone strikes, and, by the time Dorothy catches Toto, she is unable to reach the storm cellar. They are still in the house when the cyclone carries it away for a long journey. When at last the house lands, Dorothy finds that she is in a beautiful land inhabited by very short, strangely dressed people. The Witch of the North informs her that she is in the land of the Munchkins, who are grateful to her for having killed the Wicked Witch of the East (the house having landed on the witch), thus freeing them. The Witch of the North gives Dorothy the silver shoes of the dead witch and advises her to go to the City of Emeralds to see the Great Wizard Oz, who might help her return to Kansas. The witch sends Dorothy off along the yellow brick road with a magical kiss to protect her from harm. On the long journey to the Emerald City, Dorothy and Toto are joined by the Scarecrow, who wishes he had brains; the Tin Woodman, who longs for a heart; and the Cowardly Lion, who seeks courage. They face many trials along their route, but they overcome them all, often because of the Scarecrow's good sense, the Tin Woodman's kindness, and the bravery of the Cowardly Lion. At last they reach the Emerald City, where the Guardian of the Gates outfits them with green-lensed glasses and leads them to the Palace of Oz. Oz tells them that no favours will be granted until the Wicked Witch of the West has been killed.

wonderful wizard of oz author: The Wonderful Wizard of Oz L. Frank Baum, 2017-02-22 The Wonderful Wizard of Oz is an American children's novel written by author L. Frank Baum and illustrated by W. W. Denslow, originally published by the George M. Hill Company in Chicago on May 17, 1900. It has since been reprinted on numerous occasions, most often under the title The Wizard of Oz, which is the title of the popular 1902 Broadway musical as well as the iconic 1939 musical film adaptation. The story chronicles the adventures of a young farm girl named Dorothy in the magical Land of Oz, after she and her pet dog Toto are swept away from their Kansas home by a cyclone. The novel is one of the best-known stories in American literature and has been widely translated. The Library of Congress has declared it America's greatest and best-loved homegrown fairytale. Its groundbreaking success and the success of the Broadway musical adapted from the novel led Baum to write thirteen additional Oz books that serve as official sequels to the first story. Baum dedicated the book to my good friend & comrade, My Wife, Maud Gage Baum. In January 1901, George M. Hill Company completed printing the first edition, a total of 10,000 copies, which quickly sold out. The Wonderful Wizard of Oz sold three million copies by the time it entered the public domain in 1956.

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