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How High is the Sky?

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Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

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'The air carries enough pollen to cover every square metre of the Earth's surface every year with 100 million grains' - a fact not to be sneezed at and just one of the many snippets the author has gathered for this entertaining look at our atmosphere. 'How high is the sky?' Countless crooners have asked the question expecting no answer, but thanks to Ms Hooper we can now tell them, 200 kilometres - that's where our atmosphere finally stops - an atmosphere which is an ocean of air with ourselves the bottom-feeders. This book is about two things - the variety of creatures and substances that go to make up our air and the relative heights of natural and artificial features of the Earth. The author takes us on a succession of jumps to 36,000 km. away from the Earth's surface and shows us the sights on the way. The fresh approach that Meredith Hooper brings to this old idea is excellently sustained by her rich but uncomplicated prose style, the catholicity of her examples and her ability as an explainer. Difficult concepts like atmospheric pressure, the size of a gas molecule and the nature of thunder undergo complete clarification. This is the start of a new series which, the publishers say, is of 'books about the real world ... based on personal experience'. It's a very encouraging start and the rest should be well worth looking at. Straight up.

Running Order:

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