



Title: Lessons in Chemistry: A Novel
Author: Bonnie Garmus
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BOOK RESUME: LESSONS IN CHEMISTRY

BOOK SYNOPSIS

Chemist Elizabeth Zott is not your average woman. In fact, Elizabeth Zott would be the first to point out that there is no such thing as an *average* woman. But it's the early 1960s and her all-male team at Hastings Research Institute takes a very unscientific view of equality. Except for one: Calvin Evans; the lonely, brilliant, Nobel Prize-nominated grudge-holder who falls in love with—of all things—her mind. True chemistry results.

But like science, life is unpredictable. Which is why a few years later Elizabeth Zott finds herself not only a single mother, but the reluctant star of America's most beloved cooking show *Supper at Six*. Elizabeth's unusual approach to cooking ("combine one tablespoon acetic acid with a pinch of sodium chloride") proves revolutionary. But as her following grows, not everyone is happy. Because as it turns out, Elizabeth Zott isn't just teaching women to cook. She's daring them to change the status quo.

Laugh-out-loud funny, shrewdly observant, and studded with a dazzling cast of supporting characters, *Lessons in Chemistry* is as original and vibrant as its protagonist.

REVIEWS AND PRAISE

"[Garmus] delivers an assured voice, an indelible heroine and relatable love stories . . . At the center of the novel is Elizabeth Zott, a gifted research chemist, absurdly self-assured and immune to social convention . . . Elizabeth is a feminist and modern thinker [. . .] in a world nowhere ready for her mind, character or ambition . . . [Garmus] charm[s]. She's created an indelible assemblage of stubborn, idiosyncratic characters. She's given us a comic novel at precisely the moment we crave one." —*Washington Post*

"Feminism is the catalyst that makes [*Lessons in Chemistry*] fizz like hydrochloric acid on limestone. Elizabeth Zott does not have 'moxie'; she has courage. She is not a 'girl boss' or a 'lady chemist'; she's a groundbreaker and an expert in abiogenesis . . . To file Elizabeth Zott among the pink razors of the book world is to miss the sharpness of Garmus's message. *Lessons in Chemistry* will make you wonder about all the real-life women born ahead of their time—women who were sidelined, ignored and worse because they weren't as resourceful, determined and lucky as Elizabeth Zott. She's a reminder of how far we've come, but also how far we still have to go." —*New York Times Book Review*

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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.

MEDIA AND RESOURCES

- [Bonnie Garmus on her “subversive” novel “Lessons in Chemistry,” CBS Sunday Morning \(2023\)](#)

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