

Resource Review

The periodic table: A visual guide to the elements

By Paul Parsons and Gail Dixon. Published by Quercus, New York

Review by Dr WP Palmer, senior lecturer in Science education (retired)

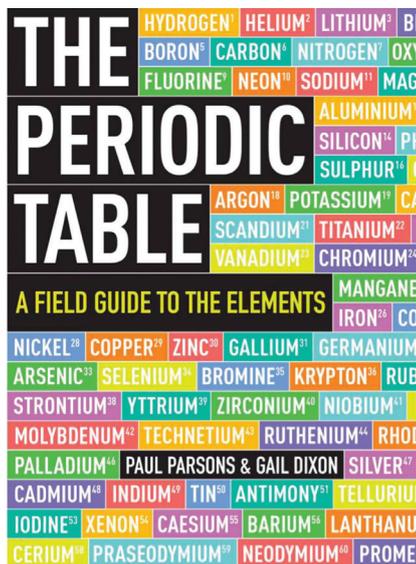
I found *The periodic table: A visual guide to the elements* to be a very well-produced and interesting book that could be recommended for any secondary school library. It is also of value to teachers who want to update their knowledge of the properties and uses for some of the more unusual elements. At US\$14.95 (cheaper via some online sources), many teachers may consider purchasing a personal copy. The authors are Dr Paul Parsons and Gail Dixon, both of whom are experienced journalists with the British science and technology journal, *Focus*.

person who discovered it, its current uses and any biological significance, such as the poisonous or life-saving nature of it or its compounds. The page opposite contains a full page colour photograph of the element. Ten elements have four pages, rather than two, that relate to them. These elements are hydrogen, oxygen, silicon, iron, krypton, silver, lanthanum, tungsten, gold and uranium. At the start of the book, there is a contents page, a clearly produced periodic table and an introduction. Elements with atomic numbers 101 to 118, the trans-fermium elements, are dealt with together in a final two pages of text followed by a glossary and index. Overall, the brief, modern descriptions of the elements and some of their major compounds with the full-colour picture is a positive feature, although it is reminiscent of an online web page.

A couple of features that could be improved were the elements of repetitiveness when considering the lanthanides and actinides. Also, on page 43, the word 'mixed' is used whereas the phrase 'chemically combined with' would be better in the sentence 'Silicon mixed with carbon forms silicon carbide ...'

Apart from those deficiencies features the book is thoroughly recommended.

The periodic table: A visual guide to the elements is a paperback book of 240 pages. The general pattern of the book is a two-page description of each element in the periodic table, including the history of the discovery of the element, some story about the element or the



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