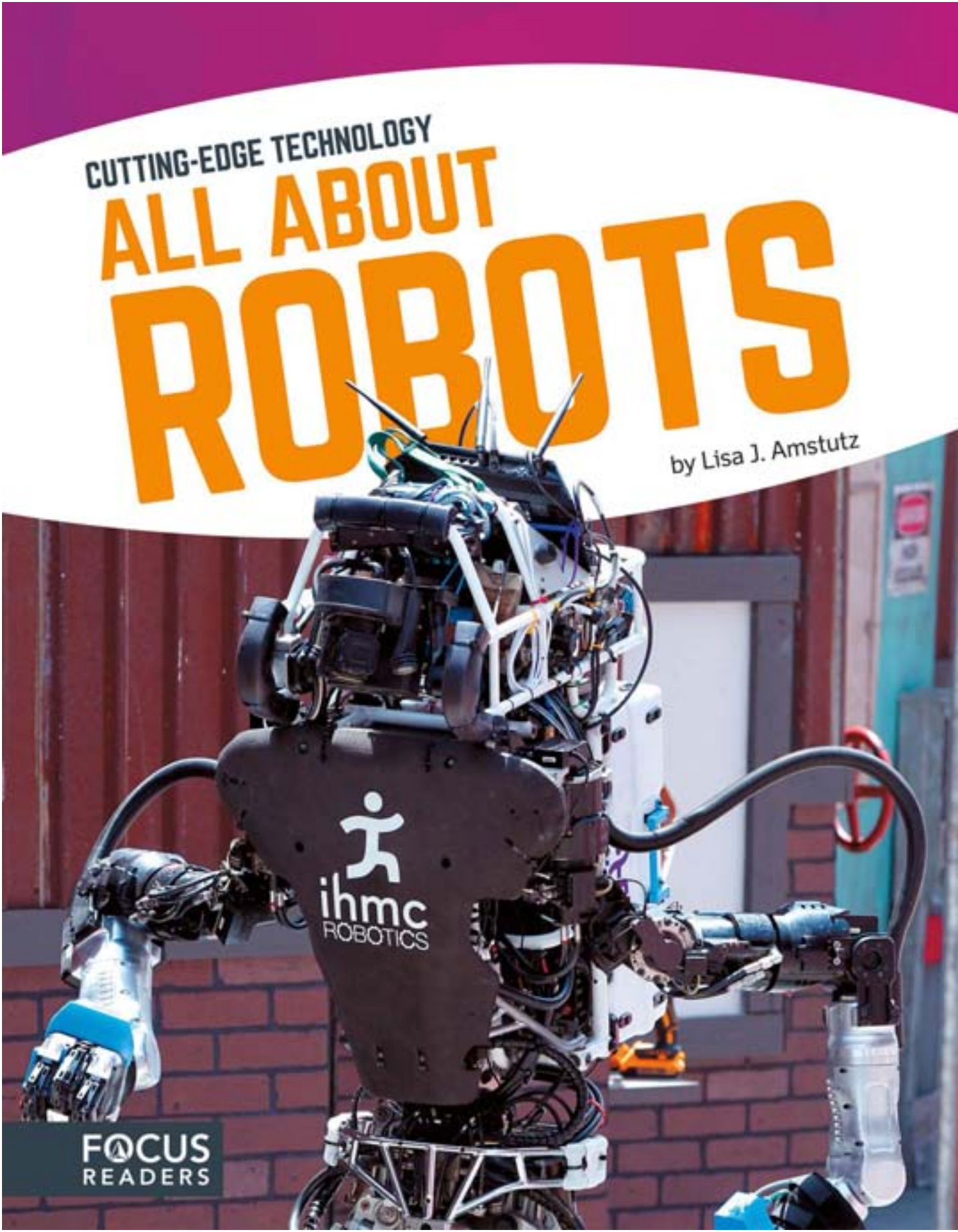
CUTTING-EDGE TECHNOLOGY

ALL ABOUT ROBOTS

by Lisa J. Amstutz



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WHAT IS A ROBOT?

Imagine waking up in the morning to find your breakfast already cooked and the table set by a robot. While you eat, robots do your laundry and vacuum the floor. Then you hop into your self-driving car and head to school. There, a robot teacher helps you with your math.

The first robotic vacuum cleaners became available in the 1990s.

Believe it or not, all of these robots already exist! Some of them are not yet widely available. But they will likely be more common in the future.

Robots are machines that are used to do tasks. The study of robots is called robotics. The scientists who make robots are called roboticists.

Robots come in many shapes and sizes. Most are made of metal and plastic. They have movable parts and follow commands. Some can sense things around them. Robots usually have at least one arm. Some robots are microscopic. Scientists are testing **nanobots** that are small enough to go inside the body.

In the future, nanobots may be the size of cells.

These tiny robots can find problems and fix them.

People have been building robot-like machines for thousands of years. Around 350 BCE, a Greek named Archytas of Tarentum created the first automaton, or machine that could move by itself. Archytas's wooden bird could fly hundreds of feet into the air.