

BY STEPHANIE HUAMAN, CHILDREN'S LIBRARY ASSOCIATE, MARTIN REGIONAL LIBRARY

read across the world

GREAT BOOKS TO LEARN ABOUT OTHER CULTURES

A Storytime Down Under

At the most recent National Take Your Child to the Library Day (which is celebrated every year on the first Saturday in February), my colleague Jocelyn and I decided to share a little piece of Australian culture. We held a special storytime that featured koala and kangaroo puppets, vegemite on toast — and books sent all the way from our friends at the Sunshine Coast Libraries down under!

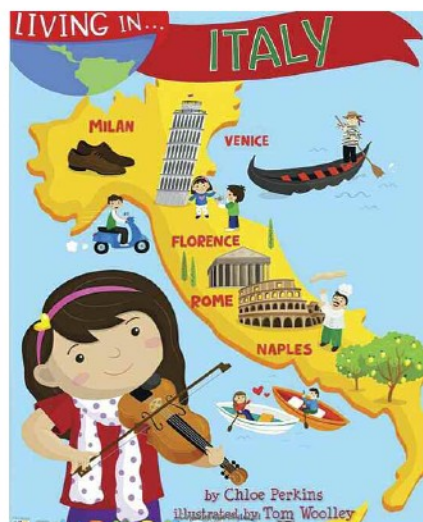
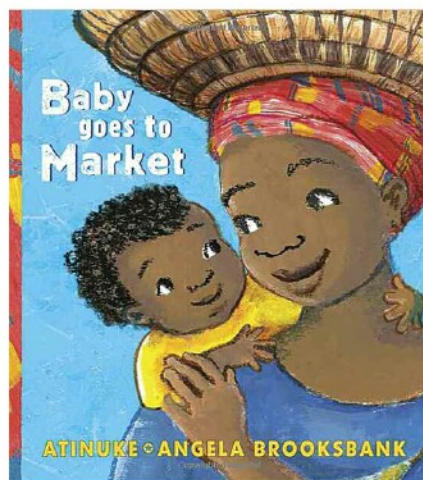
It made me appreciate how books can help us travel to places we have never been, meet new people and learn about different cultures.

In that spirit, here are some excellent books that introduce countries outside of the U.S. for you to share with your children. You can find them all at the library, of course!

Australia

Possum Magic by Mem Fox

Pay attention to the native animals from Australia that Fox presents — and the special relationship of Grandma Poss and Hush as they travel around Australia for that special magic. At the end of the book there is a map of Australia and a quick description of the “magic” items that are local to Australia. This will guarantee a trip back to the library to learn even more about

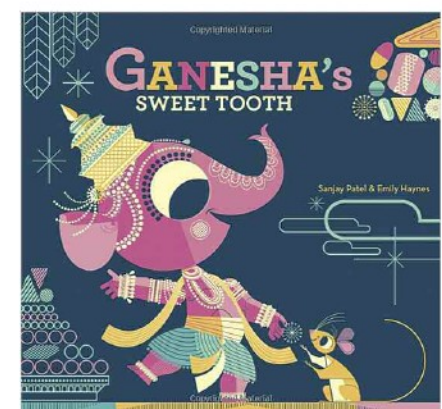
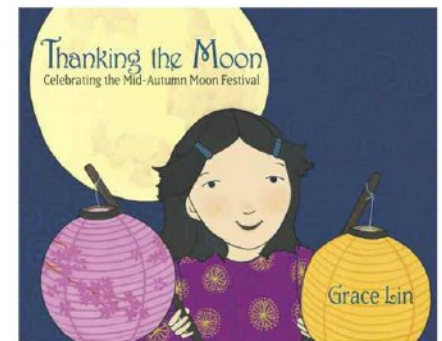
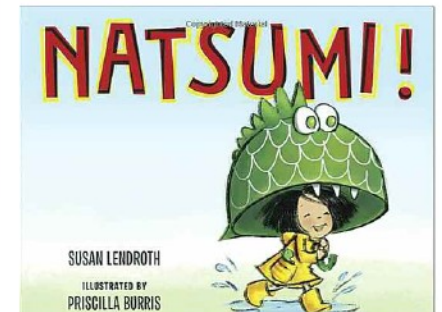
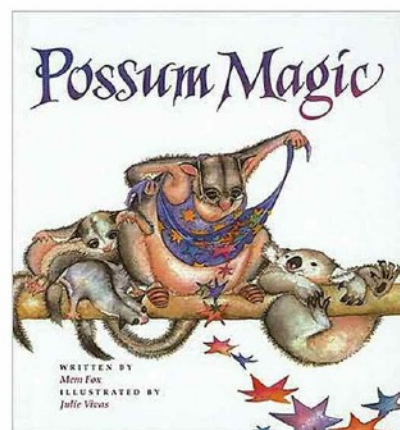
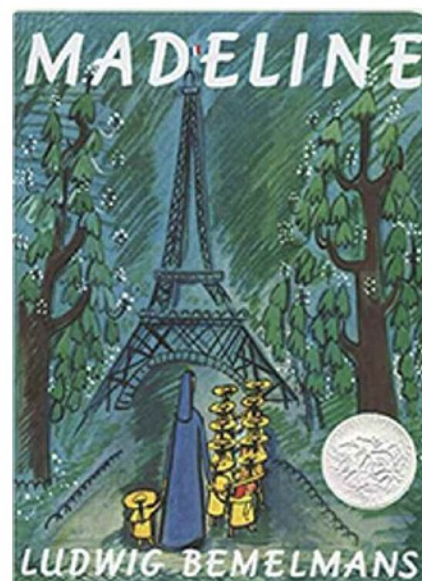


this beautiful country!

China

Thanking the Moon Celebrating the Mid-Autumn Moon Festival by Grace Lin

Come thank the moon and



make a secret wish in this beautifully illustrated book. This story starts with a family going out to

continued next page

celebrate the Mid-Autumn Moon Festival. Pretty quickly we learn how the family celebrates this occasion and which family member helps with certain tasks, even if there is a little goofing off. If you enjoy this, Lin has also recently written and illustrated a continuation describing the moon festival, *A Big Mooncake for Little Star*, which includes a recipe worth replicating!

Japan

Natsumi! By Susan

Lendroth

I enjoy this book because we are sometimes like Natsumi in some ways: we have our big personalities and talents. Sometimes it's hard to find the things we are good at, and that one person to help us find that thing. Natsumi discovers her talents and surprises everyone at her town's Japanese art festival.

India

Ganesha's Sweet Tooth by Sanjay Patel

This is a story about the Hindu God Ganesha and how he broke his tusk on a jawbreaker. Ganesha feels like his tusk is worthless until he meets a friend who gives him confidence about his broken tusk. This story is not an actual retelling of the Hindu God, but an adaptation. I love this book because it gives others a chance to enjoy a character from another land and from another culture.

Mexico

Día de los Muertos by Roseanne Greenfield Thong

A holiday that is very close to my heart and became even more important as I grew older and began to experience loss in my family. Día de los Muertos is not a sad holiday but a holiday to remember our loved ones who have passed on. This book explains the holiday and has wonderful illustrations to make you feel like you are in Mexico during Día de los Muertos.

West Africa

Baby Goes to Market by Atinuke

I love this book for so many reasons! The illustrations are so

lovely and capture the energy and vitality of an outdoor market in Africa. It is also a good introduction to counting and learning more about foreign foods. Fair warning — you will want to seek out and eat the treats that baby collects on his journey!

France

Madeline by Ludwig Bemelmans


This book was one of my favorites growing up! The iconic cover with the Eiffel Tower in the back with the French flag waving from the top is so memorable. This is a great book to talk about the iconic French structures in the book. Bonus: the last page lists all of the structures you might have forgotten since your 10th grade French class. This book is a great way to walk around France without leaving Tulsa.

Finally...

A great series from Ready to Read is something called "Living in..." It gives young readers a taste of what it's like in another country for children around their age. They can range from topics of geography in their country, history, schooling, holidays and more. Countries include Australia, South Korea, South Africa, Russia, Italy, China, Mexico, India and Brazil, all by Chloe Perkins, and *Living in Russia* by Jesse Burton.

Read Out of This World at the Summer Reading Program!

Starting on May 28, come by any of the Tulsa City-County Library's 24 branches and bookmobile and sign up for the 2019 Summer Reading Program. Children who read 8 books and visit the library 4 times between May 28 and August 3 will receive a special medal and coupon book for food and fun. Read 12 more books and kids can earn a special bonus prize! For more information, see www.tulsalibrary.org or call 918.549.7323(READ).



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