



## Children's Literature Builds Global Competence

The youngest readers can become armchair travelers. Children's literature about the world and its cultures compels young minds to investigate ways of life and thinking that can be different—or quite similar—to their own. It offers important perspectives as students build basic literacy skills.

When young learners finish a book about another culture, ask them to:

- Recount the story in their own words, and listen to see if they use new vocabulary used in the story.
- Compare and contrast this story with another similar story. Are there common themes (e.g. good versus bad) or storytelling methods (e.g. a quest) that they can detect?
- Ask the reader to say or write something about the mood of the story.
- With e-readers and online books, ask the reader to talk about how words, images, and possibly sound relate to one another. Do they repeat, or does words have one job to do, and images another?

## Interactive Online books

[\*Being Global\*](#). This book encourages students to think about what it means to be part of the wider world and focuses on diversity and sustainability. Interactivity includes games, a quiz, and a journal.

[\*Flight of the Pamplemousse\*](#). iPad book for elementary students involving travel through dreamlands and France. Accompanying educator guide available.

[\*Flap! Flap! Swish! Swish! Mala Mala!\*](#) This book is made up entirely of photos taken at the South African game reserve, Mala Mala. It follows a wild dog as he meets other animal residents of the reserve.

[\*Laloo the Red Panda\*](#). This is the story of a red panda cub who learns about culture and the natural environment of East Asia as he takes a long journey home.

[\*Abuela's Weave\*](#). The story of a Latin American marketplace told through the perspective of a young girl who works with her grandmother.

[\*Rechenka's Eggs\*](#). A folktale about elaborately painted Easter Eggs from the Ukrainian (Eastern Orthodox) world.

[\*Once I Was a Monkey: Stories Buddha Told\*](#). The Jataka Tales are stories known throughout Asia. This book offers young readers a glimpse into this rich storied tradition.

[\*A Ride on Mother's Back: A Day of Baby Carrying Around the World\*](#). From the tropical rainforest to the arctic, this book helps readers explore bonding between mother and child.

# Book Lists

## African

[Africa Access Review](#), an online database, contains over 1000 annotations and reviews of children's books written by university professors, librarians, and teachers most of whom have lived in Africa and have graduate degrees in African Studies.

[African Study Center's Bibliography of Children's Literature](#). The Boston University outreach center has been promoting the study of Africa for half a century. See their list of recommended books.

## Asian and Asian American Resources

[Asian Pacific American Librarian Association](#). Look especially at their award winning picture, young adult and adult books.

[Cynthia Leitich Smith's Lit Review](#). Children's and young adult books with Asian heritage themes housed on author Cynthia Leitich Smith's website.

[NEA](#). See the Asian American book list on their site.

[San Francisco Public Library](#) has a kids section listing books on the Asian American Experience.

## Latin American

[Reforma](#) (National Association to Promote Library and Information Services to Latinos and the Spanish Speaking). Many resources including bilingual story time resources, Spanish story time and teen Latino titles.

[School Library Journal](#). Resources for finding Latino Kid Literature.

## Middle Eastern

[Literature for Young People](#). Islamic Traditions and Muslim Cultures is a site by Rutgers Professor Kay E. Vandergrift.

[Multicultural Children's Literature](#) is a site by Professor Smith, Professor Emeritus, Towson University. He includes a list of Middle Eastern fiction and nonfiction.

## Multicultural

[American Library Association](#). Great websites for kids section has many websites to help you organized by sections such as Expand the Classics, Language Learning, and resources in Spanish.

[Children's Book Press](#). Lists many international and bilingual titles—it is a catalog site though, you must order books from here.

[Paper Tigers](#). Has reviews of multicultural books in English from around the world. There is also an extensive resources list.

[University of Wisconsin School of Education](#). The library offers a list of multicultural books every child should know. This list is organized by reading level.