

**Growing Up Around the World:
Books as Passports to Global Understanding for Children in the United States**



Growing Up in Africa

Cameroon

Bognomo, Joël Eboueme. *Madoulina: A Girl Who Wanted to Go to School*. Boyds Mills, 1999.

Gr. 1-2. Eight-year-old Madoulina has dreams of becoming a doctor, but she must help her mother sell fritters in the marketplace instead of going to school. Happily a new teacher comes up with a solution to the family's dilemma. Joël Eboueme Bognomo lives in Cameroon.

Njeng, Pierre Yves. *Vacation in the Village*. Boyds Mills, 1999.

Gr. 1-2. Nwemb, a city boy, visits his grandparents' rural village during summer vacation. There a relative introduces him to the simple pleasures of village life. Pierre Yves Njeng lives in Cameroon.

Tchana, Katrin Hyman, and Louise Tchana Pami. *Oh, No, Toto!* Illus. by Colin Bootman. Scholastic, 1997.

Gr. 1-2. Toto, a toddler who loves to eat, creates chaos in the marketplace when he goes with his grandmother to get ingredients for a special soup. A glossary of Cameroonian foods and a recipe for egussi soup are appended. Katrin Hyman Tchana was a Peace Corps volunteer in Cameroon; Louise Tchana Pami, who is now deceased, was a citizen of Cameroon.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Stanley, Sanna. *Monkey for Sale*. Frances Foster/Farrar, 2002.

PreS-Gr. 1. Luzolo and her friend, Kiese, rescue a captured monkey at the market by trading goods from person to person until everyone has what he most desires, and the monkey is theirs to release back into the trees. Sanna Stanley grew up in the former Zaire as a child of missionaries from the United States.

Stanley, Sanna. *Monkey Sunday: A Story from a Congolese Village*. Frances Foster/Farrar, 1998.

Gr. 1-2. A monkey and several village animals create a commotion and amuse the congregation at an outdoor thanksgiving celebration where Luzolo's father is preaching. The story is based on the author's childhood experiences in the former Zaire.

Egypt

Ellabbad, Mohieddin. *The Illustrator's Notebook*. Trans. by Sarah Quinn. Groundwood, 2006.

Gr. 4-6. This bilingual edition of the original Egyptian book has English translations in the margins of the Arabic text. The notebook demonstrates how an illustrator gets his ideas and thinks about style. Reading from right to left, the reader sees the artistry of written Arabic incorporated into the illustrations. Mohieddin Ellabbad lives in Egypt.

Eldash, Khaled, and Dalia Khattab. *In an Egyptian City* (A *Child's Day* series). Benchmark Books/Marshall Cavendish, 2002.

Gr. 1-2. The typical day of a seven-year-old girl in Cairo is shown as Boushra says her prayers, goes to school, helps her mother shop at the outdoor market, visits her father at his shop, plays with her friends, and eats with her family. Khaled Eldash and Dalia Khattab both live in Egypt.

Ethiopia

Kessler, Cristina. *The Best Beekeeper of Lalibela: A Tale From Africa*. Illus. by Leonard Jenkins. Holiday House, 2006.

Gr. 1-3. Almaz knows that she wants to be a beekeeper, even though this position has traditionally been held by males in the village of Lalibela. Through good ideas and hard work she proves that she can become the best beekeeper around. Cristina Kessler lived in Ethiopia for two years and currently makes her home in the Virgin Islands.

Kurtz, Jane. *Faraway Home*. Illus. by E.B. Lewis. Gulliver Books/Harcourt, 2000.

Gr. 2-3. Before he leaves on a trip to visit his mother in Ethiopia, Desta's Ethiopian-American father tells her some of his memories of his homeland. The daughter of missionaries from the United States, Jane Kurtz lived in Ethiopia from the age of two until enrolling in college.

Laird, Elizabeth. *The Garbage King*. Barron's Educational Series, 2003.

Gr. 4-6. Two youths from differing social and economic backgrounds find themselves in the same street gang of homeless youth in Addis Ababa. They maintain their friendship even after their circumstances improve. Elizabeth Laird is a British citizen who lived in Ethiopia during the late 1960s and has frequently revisited.

Ghana

Asare, Meshack. *Sosu's Call*. Kane/Miller, 2002.

Gr. 1-4. During a storm, a disabled boy saves his fishing village and earns the villagers' respect by calling for help with the chief's drum. Meshack Asare was born and lived in Ghana until moving to London as an adult in 1983.

Provencal, Francis, and Catherine McNamara. *In a Ghanaian City* (A *Child's Day* series). Benchmark Books/Marshall Cavendish, 2002.

Gr. 1-2. Seven-year-old Nii Kwei lives in his family compound in Accra. During this typical day he does chores, goes to school, plays with friends and family, shops, and eats traditional meals. Francis Provencal and Catherine McNamara both live in Ghana.

Kenya

Lekuton, Joseph Lemasolai (with Herman J. Viola). *Facing the Lion: Growing Up Maasai on the African Savanna*. National Geographic, 2003.

Gr. 7-9. The author describes growing up with his nomadic Maasai family in northern Kenya. He was the only member of his family to receive formal schooling in Kenya and later in the United States. He currently teaches at an American high school and lives for a portion of each year in Kenya.

Mali

Diakit , Penda. *I Lost My Tooth in Africa*. Illus. by Baba Wagu  Diakit . Scholastic, 2006.

Gr. 1-3. While visiting her extended family in Mali, Amina loses a tooth and receives two chickens from the African Tooth Fairy. On the day that she must go back to the US, she discovers that her chickens now have baby chicks, and her African family promises to care for them until she returns. Baba Wagu  Diakit  was born in Mali.

Nigeria

Olaleye, Isaac. *Bikes for Rent!* Illus. by Chris Demarest. Orchard Books/Scholastic, 2001.

Gr. 1-2. In a rain forest village, a young boy finally earns enough money to rent a bicycle; however, when he damages it, he must work even more to pay for the repairs. All ends well when the boy learns to make his own bike from discarded parts. Isaac Olaleye was born and raised in Nigeria and currently lives in the United States.

Onyefulu, Ifeoma. *An African Christmas*. Frances Lincoln, 2005.

Gr. 1-3. Afam collects materials to make a Mmọ costume for Christmas. His story and the author's photographs tell of some traditional Nigerian ways of celebrating the holiday, most of which bear little resemblance to winter holiday celebrations in the US. Ifeoma Onyefulu was born and raised in Nigeria and currently lives in England.

Onyefulu, Ifeoma. *Here Comes Our Bride!: An African Wedding Story*. Frances Lincoln, 2004.
Gr. 2-3. A young boy tells about a family wedding in Benin City and the preparatory events. Ifeoma Onyefulu's photographs vividly capture the joyful traditions involved in uniting not just the couple, but their families as well.

South Africa

Cave, Kathryn. *One Child, One Seed: A South African Counting Book*. Photographs by Gisèle Wulfsohn. Henry Holt, 2003.

PreS-K. In this counting book a boy plants a pumpkin seed and, together with his family and friends, enjoys the resulting harvest meal at his homestead. Photographer Gisèle Wulfsohn lives in South Africa.

Daly, Niki. *Happy Birthday, Jamela!* Illus. Farrar, 2006.

Gr. 1-3. In this latest book in the Jamela series, Jamela decides to jazz up her new shoes by covering them with sparkles and glitter, much to the displeasure of her mother. A neighbor, an artist, thinks that the shoes are a wonderful idea and together they design enough to sell in the market, earning money to reimburse Jamela's mother. Niki Daly lives in South Africa.

Daly, Niki. *Once Upon a Time*. Illus. Farrar, 2003.

Gr. 1-2. A girl in the dry Karoo region of South Africa learns to read with the help of an elderly neighbor. Niki Daly's water color illustrations masterfully depict life in rural South Africa.

Heale, Jay. *South Africa (Festivals of the World series)*. Gareth Stevens, 1998.

Gr. 3-4. Visits to seventeen major South African festivals portray the multi-cultural peoples of the country and show how to make wire toys, a kite, sosaties (barbecued meat), and sing the South African national anthem. Jay Heale lives in South Africa.

Naidoo, Beverley. *Out of Bounds: Seven Stories of Conflict and Hope*. HarperCollins, 2003.

Gr. 4-6. Short stories from each of the decades from 1940 through 2000 highlight the defining moments of South Africa's descent into and rise out of apartheid. The stories feature youth from a variety of racial and ethnic backgrounds. Beverley Naidoo was born in South Africa and immigrated to Great Britain as a student in 1965.

Wulfsohn, Gisèle. *In a South African City (A Child's Day series)*. Benchmark Books/Marshall Cavendish, 2002.

Gr. 1-2. On this typical day, seven-year-old Bongani from Johannesburg attends school, helps his aunt at her food stand, shops with his uncle, does chores, plays in his neighborhood, and spends an evening making music with his extended family. Gisèle Wulfsohn lives in South Africa.

Sudan

Kessler, Cristina. *My Great-Grandmother's Gourd*. Illus. by Walter Lyon Krudop. Orchard Books/Scholastic, 2000.

Gr. 2-3. There is a new well and water pump in Fatima's village, but her grandmother insists on storing water in the baobab tree as in generations past. Fatima reluctantly assists her and, when the pump breaks, their efforts help the whole village. Cristina Kessler lived in Sudan for two years; she currently lives in the Virgin Islands.

Tanzania

Cervone, Barbara, ed. *In Our Village: Kambi Ya Simba Through the Eyes of Its Youth: A Project of Awet Secondary School, Tanzania, East Africa, and What Kids Can Do, Inc.* Next Generation Press, 2006.

Gr. 6-9. Editor Barbara Cervone of What Kids Can Do worked with ten secondary students, ages 16-18, and their teachers to compile a narrative and photographs of their small village near Mt. Kilimanjaro. Chapters cover such topics as livestock, the village dispensary, wireless communication, singing and dancing, good friends, and village government.

Mollel, Tololwa M. *My Rows and Piles of Coins*. Illus. by E.B. Lewis. Clarion, 1999.

Gr. 2-3. Saruni saves his carefully earned money to buy a bicycle. When his parents learn that he wants to use it to help his mother carry things to market, they reward him with the father's old bike. Tololwa M. Mollel, an Arusha Maasai who grew up on his grandparents' coffee farm in Tanzania, now lives in the United States.

Stuve-Bodeen, Stephanie. *Elizabethi's School*. Illus. by Christy Hale. Lee & Low, 2002.

Gr. K-2. Although Elizabethi is very excited to start school, she misses her family when she is there. After sharing the things she has learned when she returns home at the end of the day, she decides she can still go to school even though she loves home best. This is one of several picture books featuring Elizabethi. Stephanie Stuve-Bodeen lived in Tanzania as a Peace Corps volunteer.

Zimbabwe

Stock, Catherine. *Gugu's House*. Illus. Clarion, 2001.

Gr. 1-2. Kukamba loves to visit her grandmother's beautiful compound where she helps to mix paints and decorate the walls. When the rains come, their work is washed away and they must start over again, but everyone is happy for the vegetables that will grow and the livestock that will be fed. Catherine Stock grew up in many places around the world as she accompanied her Swedish father, a career diplomat; she attended college in South Africa.

The African Continent

Diouf, Sylviane A. *Bintou's Braids*. Illus. by Shane W. Evans. Chronicle, 2001.

Gr. 1-2. Bintou is a small girl in West Africa who yearns to have beautiful braids like her older sister. When she does a brave deed at the baptismal celebration for her baby brother, her grandmother rewards her with a special hairdo. Sylviane A. Diouf is of Senegalese and French descent and currently lives in the United States.

Ellis, Deborah. *Our Stories, Our Songs: African Children Talk About AIDS*. Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 2005.

Gr. 6-9. Sadly, to grow up in Africa, especially sub-Saharan Africa, is to be aware of the suffering and death brought about by the plague of AIDS. Deborah Ellis traveled from her home in Canada to Malawi and Zambia in 2003 and transcribed these interviews with children and teens (ages 7-19), all of whom are affected personally by the consequences of such a large epidemic.

Kurtz, Jane, ed. *Memories of Sun: Stories of Africa and America*. Greenwillow, 2004.

Gr. 4-6. Pictures of lives in Africa and in the United States, especially those that attempt to bridge these cultures, make up these twelve stories and three poems. Several are written by African authors who are not well-known in the United States; others are written by American authors with African connections.

Tadjo, Véronique, ed. *Talking Drums: A Selection of Poems from Africa South of the Sahara*. Illus. Bloomsbury, 2000.

Gr. 4-6. Poets from seventeen African nations share insights into our universe, the animal kingdom, love and celebrations, people, death, pride and defiance, and the changing times. Véronique Tadjo is an award-winning poet from the Ivory Coast who now lives in South Africa.

+++++++

**Association for Library Service to Children/American Library Association
January 2009**