

BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS

PREPARED BY



SOUTHEAST ASIA CENTER

RECOMMENDED INDONESIA BOOKS FOR GRADES K-5

FOLK TALES

Go to Sleep Geko

AUTHOR: Margaret Read MacDonald and Geraldo Valerio (Illustrator)

YEAR: 2006

In this simple yet engaging retelling of a Balinese folktale, Gecko comes to realize that “his well-being depends on that of the entire village.” An extended version of this story is found in ***Gecko’s Complaint***.

The Great Race

AUTHOR: Nathan Kumar Scott and Jagdish Chitara (Illustrator)

YEAR: 2011

An adaptation of an Indonesian folk tale about Kanchil the mouse deer and Pelan the snail. Kanchil the mouse deer is the same character as Kantjil from ***Kantjil and Tiger*** (below). There are two other books by Nathan Kumar Scott, also about the trickster Kanchil: ***Mangoes and Bananas*** and ***The Sacred Banana Leaf***. The art in each of the three books is done by a different illustrator in their native South Asian styles.

Kantjil and Tiger

AUTHOR: Cathy Spagnoli and Fabricio Vanden Broeck (Illustrator)

YEAR: 1997

Cathy Spagnoli, another Seattle-based author, started collecting stories from Southeast Asian refugees in the 1980s. This trickster tale from Indonesia also features the trickster mouse deer Kantjil.

The Tiny Boy and Other Tales from Indonesia

AUTHOR: Murti Bunanta and Hardiyono (Illustrator)

YEAR: 2013

A collection of eight tales of courage from Indonesia. The last is about a strong, independent princess. These tales also appear in the author's earlier *Indonesian Folktales*, which includes an "introduction to Indonesia."

ANIMALS

Kraken-ka The Komodo Dragon

AUTHOR: Jodi Parry Belknap and Tamara Montgomery* and Joseph Dodd (Illustrator)

YEAR: 2007

A cautionary tale about the first Komodo dragon, produced by professors in the Drama Department at the University of Hawaii. This story can be supplemented with one of several science books about Komodo dragons. Another picture book that can be used to pique students' interest is *Komodo!* by Peter Sis.

HISTORY AND SCIENCE

The Day the World Exploded: The Earthshaking Catastrophe at Krakatoa

AUTHOR: Simon Winchester

YEAR: 2008

This illustrated adaptation of the author's bestselling 2003 *Krakatoa: The Day the World Exploded* chronicles the lead up to and aftermath of the Krakatoa explosion in 1883. Krakatoa, an island volcano, is located between Java and Sumatra in present-day Indonesia.

Little People and a Lost World: An Anthropological Mystery

AUTHOR: Linda Goldenberg

YEAR: 2007

A precocious fifth grader with an interest in the material would appreciate this title, which covers the *homo floresiensis* controversy. It is written for a middle school audience and explains such advanced concepts as evolution, DNA analysis and radiocarbon dating, as well as the nature of a political and scientific dispute.

BALINESE CULTURE

An Artist's Journey to Bali: The Island of Art, Music and Mystery

AUTHOR: Betty Reynolds

YEAR: 2010

As the title suggests, this illustrated encyclopedia of Balinese culture tends toward romanticization. However, the illustrations are excellent and reliable.

Cycle of Rice: A Story of Sustainable Farming

AUTHOR: Jan Reynolds

YEAR: 2009

This non-fiction book explains the complex system of water sharing and crop rotation that evolved on Bali, making it a remarkably productive rice-growing region.

Tari: The Little Balinese Dancer

AUTHOR: Pamela Noenise and Garretta Lamore (Illustrator)

YEAR: 2013

This picture book follows Tari as she overcomes her grandmother's death through dance.

Sadri Returns to Bali

AUTHOR: Elizabeth Waldmeier

YEAR: 2002

Sadri is a spirit who returns to his village during Galungan, a festival in which families pay their respects to their ancestors.

DAILY LIFE

Kampung Boy

AUTHOR: Lat

YEAR: 2006

Lat, a noted Malaysian cartoonist, tells the story of the early life of a Muslim boy growing up on a rural rubber plantation during the 1950s in this graphic novel. While the setting is Malaysia, not Indonesia, the experiences described are analogous to those that an Indonesian child growing up in a kampong might have. The sequel is ***Town Boy***.