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 Kancil 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*
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.**