

If You Were Me and Lived in...Greece: A Child's Introduction to Culture Around the World**Carole P. Roman**

CreateSpace (Sep 23, 2014)

Softcover \$9.99 (30pp)

978-1-4975-2618-1

Roman's latest book goes to Greece to teach new vocabulary and cultural concepts to English-speaking children in a context they can understand.

Around the world in eighty books? Given the pace of new additions to Carole P. Roman's If You Were Me and Lived In... series, that might not be far off the mark. In the latest volume of the rapidly growing series, Roman offers her familiar, kid-friendly tour of daily life in another country. This time the prekindergarten to early elementary reader is whisked off to Greece, birthplace of the Olympic Games.

As with her other titles, Roman begins with a brief geography lesson but quickly gets down to the questions that will most entice young readers: What would you eat if you lived in Greece? How about *tzatziki* (yogurt and cucumber sauce) or maybe grilled octopus, a dish sure to capture a young child's imagination? What would your name be? Would you be Georgios or Nikolaos, or maybe Eleni or Katerina?

Full-page images rendered in dark, warm browns and greens seldom seen in young children's books create a welcoming atmosphere, as do the friendly faces of the unnamed boy and girl who lead the tour. Roman paints a multicultural picture of Greece, which she calls "the crossroad of Europe, Western Asia, and Africa," by rendering her characters with a variety of skin tones.

Roman's text teaches new vocabulary and concepts to children in a context they can understand. Her age-appropriate description of democracy, for instance—"a government run by many people rather than a single ruler"—provides just enough information for little listeners. The story quickly turns back to the day-to-day details that fascinate youngsters, like special celebrations such as the Feast of St. Basil, when you might find a lucky coin in your cake, and daily activities such as shopping for toys, when you might use euros to buy a *koukla* (doll).

As with the other entries in the series, the somewhat complex text is best read aloud by an adult, who need not worry about mispronouncing a word at story time; Roman includes pronunciation guides throughout, as well as a useful glossary at the end. Kids will pull these books off the shelf again and again, comparing the lives of children just like them in all corners of the globe.

SHEILA M. TRASK (January 15, 2015)

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