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Expanding A Child's World: A Selected Bibliography of Books Relating to Maps for Children and Young Readers

Compiled by Marianne McKee

Now when I was a little chap I had a passion for maps. I would look for hours at South America, or Africa, or Australia, and lose myself in all the glories of exploration. At that time there were many blank spaces on the earth, and when I saw one that looked particularly inviting on a map (but they all look that) I would put my finger on it and say, "When I grow up I will go there."

Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness and the Secret Sharer* (New York: The New American Library, Inc., 1950), pp. 70–71.

I like children's books. Most are brightly colored, attractive, and fun. Many have interesting and imaginative stories. And often I find I can understand a difficult concept or an issue better in this type of book than in a more scholarly tome. As the Washington Map Society proceeds in time and requires a younger participation, what better way to involve this group than to invite them in through a good book on or related to the subject.

Periodically, requests for such titles have come up on the MapHist listserv. Tom Sander gleaned several suggestions from a 2001 conversation, and I found one as well tucked in some old papers. When I revised a bibliography of printed map resources for the Library of Virginia in 2003, I included a small section for young readers, just in case someone was looking for such books.

This is the third such project following Joel Kovarsky's "An Annotated List of Reference Books for the Beginning Antiquarian Map Collector" in the Fall 2005 *Portolan* (regularly updated on his website, <http://theprimemidian.com/bibliography.htm>) and Bert Johnson's article, "Recommended Publications from the Personal Libraries of the Washington Map Society" in the Fall 2009 *Portolan*.

As in Bert's article, I solicited the membership beginning in February 2011, and I want to thank those who responded. I have some of the books (twenty-five years of visiting the Green Valley Book Fair just south of

Harrisonburg allowed me to easily and economically pick up books on this topic), and I went to libraries and book stores (national chain and local independent) to see what was available. Of course, there is always Amazon, but although it helped in determining age appropriateness and description, I wanted to see the book, itself.

I wanted to see what would stimulate another generation to enjoy and appreciate maps. Maps tell many stories containing information, knowledge, imagination, and inspiration. Some maps are implied, some directional, some scientific, and, of course, they touch many other fields of interest, including history and art. New mapping technologies can and will result in new approaches as well.

Many of the books are non-fiction, which are easily identifiable with their facts and instruction. Then there is the fiction. The latter can be a single map serving as a guide to the book or the map or maps can be an integral part of the book, such as those in the books of J. R. R. Tolkien (*The Hobbit*), C. S. Lewis (*Narnia* series), Kenneth Grahame (*The Wind in the Willows*), Robert Louis Stevenson (*Treasure Island*), and Ursula LeGuin (*Earthsea* series). Deborah Kogan Ray writes picture book biographies of people like John Wesley Powell, Earl Douglass (dinosaur bone hunter), William Bartram (botanist), and Pablo Neruda (poet) and grounds her subjects with maps of their "territories." They can also serve as the prime illustrations of a book such as the works of Peter Sis and Virginia Lee Burton (*The Little House*) that have an interesting spatial dimension as well as story. Construction of an edifice or even a city are, I believe, map-like enough to be considered, such as the works of David Macauley, or the series on fictional cities through time, such as the fictional *Umm Al Madayan* (North Africa), *San Rafael* (Central America), *Barmi* (Mediterranean), and *Lebek* (Northern Europe), recommended by Bert Johnson. And we can't forget the lively "Marauder's Map" in the *Harry Potter* volumes. For television, there is "Dora the Explorer," always with a map in her hand. Many of these are not in the bibliography, but they are worthy of attention.

In a 1990 article (cited below), Jeffrey C. Patton and Nancy B. Ryckman, note that there should be "more collaboration between children's authors, illustrators, and cartographers." Maps are often the only illustration in a book, and as they found out in their study, maps are highly valued illustrations in the well-known Newbery (for the most distinguished contribution to children's literature) and Caldecott (for illustration) award books. They go on to say, "Why that should be so is not readily apparent, but perhaps illustrators like cartographers realize the unique and powerful ability of maps to bring something as large as a town, nation, or planet into the child's view. Once brought into the field of vision the child is provided a framework for the comprehension of spatial relationship and for the understanding of place."

There are many types of children's books relating to maps. I have categorized them as follows: the history of maps and mapmaking; introduction to maps, using maps, historical atlases, fiction/picture books/maps as guides, workbooks/educational resources, other resources, and articles.

CONTRIBUTORS

A generous contributor to this project and a Washington Map Society member, Steve Fox writes:

When my son was in elementary school, we had three placemats for the three members of the family: maps of the world and US (purchased at a toy store) and of DC (core downtown on one side, Beltway on the other; purchased on-line). By the time he was in second grade, he could close his eyes, run fingers down the edges of the US map to get the dimensions, and land a finger within half an inch of any state in the union I named. By fourth grade, he could find (eyes open) any country in the world and was the only one in his class (in 1994) who knew where Rwanda is and why it was significant, though the fact that we're a Foreign Service family might have had something to do with that as well. We traced our travels around the world on maps and always had a *National Geographic* atlas at hand, but I never found an age-appropriate book on maps for him when he was growing up.

But it seems more of these books exist today, especially the workbooks, perhaps because of the popularity of

home-schooling. It is also interesting to note that some books were first published in Great Britain or Canada.

If you want to check your library, the non-fiction books relating to maps are usually filed as 912 in the Dewey system (911 for war maps). Geography is filed as 910. The fiction books are usually filed alphabetically by author. Book stores appear to do the same with fiction, and this poses a problem as to locating an imaginative picture book or story book about or with maps. They can be found, but it can require either a search or serendipity. For out-of-print books, try Interlibrary Loan, through your local library, and websites such as AbeBooks and Amazon, eBay, and used book shops.

Thanks also to Fred DeJarlais. Speaking of *Children Map the World: Selections from the Barbara Petchenik Children's World Map Competition*, Volumes 1 and 2, he says "These would be two books I'd like to have in any library for children." The project is sponsored by the International Cartographic Association. A theme is provided and maps are created by young artists from 4 to 15.

Adele Haft mentions "Ursula LeGuin's wonderful multi-volume coming-of-age *Earthsea* (now in movie form), but it's certainly one of my new favorites as far as maps in children's literature."

Evelyn Edson remembers books by Louise Andres Kent in the "He Went With" series. "I remember particularly *He Went with Marco Polo* and *He Went with Christopher Columbus*. In these books Kent tells the story of a fictional young boy who goes along on these expeditions. Each book has a map inside the covers. These books are mostly out of print, but still available through Amazon."

Tony Campbell and Imre Demhardt recommend interesting websites, respectively:

<http://www.maphistory.info/teachers.html>

<http://lazarus.elte.hu/ccc/ccc.htm> (International Cartographic Association, Commission on Cartography and Children)

What follows is a selected bibliography with a suggestion of appropriate ages (always just a guess, really) and, often, a brief description of the book. It is by no means comprehensive—not all the books mentioned above are included—and it is just to serve as a guide into this type of literature.

If nothing else, I hope this starts a conversation. Our young people, our young readers, are our future. For

many reasons, including our electronic connections, it is a smaller world today. It is important to expand their world. Maps can do that. They not only ground the history, geography, art, and science of this world, they allow us to look at the context in which so much happens on this blue planet.

HISTORY OF MAPS AND MAPMAKING

- Dash, Joan. *The Longitude Prize*. New York: Frances Foster Books/Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2000. With illustrations, glossary, time line, bibliography, and index. Ages 9–12. *The story of the search for determining longitude in the 17th century. I found this listed on the MapHist listserv some years ago. Dava Sobel's Longitude was published in 1995.*
- Duvoison, Roger. *They Put Out to Sea: The Story of the Map*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1959. Originally published in 1944. With illustrations, bibliography, and index. Ages 9–12. *Explorations up to Magellan. However, the dialogue is contrived and a little off-putting.*
- La Pierre, Yvette. *Mapping a Changing World*. New York and Charlottesville, Va.: Thomasson-Grant and Lickle Publishing Inc., 1995. Illustrated. Young adult. *Nicely done work addressing the history of maps and mapmaking. Dick Stephenson is acknowledged for his "expertise and guidance."*
- Ross, Val. *The Road to There: Mapmakers and Their Stories*. Toronto: Tundra Books, 2003. With illustrations, bibliography, and index. Young adult. *My review of this book is in the Fall 2004 Portolan, The book contains interesting stories about interesting people, and introduces a variety of aspects in the history of maps.*
- Morrison, Taylor. *The Coast Mappers*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company/Walter Lorraine Books, 2004. With illustrations, bibliography, and glossary. Ages 9–12. *Many of our Washington Map Society members are referenced in the acknowledgements. This book tells of the U.S. Coast Survey's effort to map the west coast of the U.S. under the pressure of burgeoning maritime traffic following the gold rush of 1849. See also Civil War Artist by the same author, which documents the publishing of newspaper illustrations, the same process used for maps of the period.*
- Hathway, James A. *The Story of Maps and Map-Making: How Man has Charted His Changing World from Ancient Times to the Space Age*. The Golden Library of Knowledge Series. Golden Press, 1966.
- Smith, A. G. *Where Am I?: The Story of Maps and Navigation*. Toronto: Kids Publishing, 1997. Fitzhenry and Whiteside, 2001. Ages 9–12. *Smith illustrates this introductory history of cartography with his own black-and-white line drawings, bringing to life the major historic maps, personalities, and instruments in the field.*
- Steffoff, Rebecca. *The Young Oxford Companion to Maps and Mapmaking*. Oxford University Press, USA, 1995. Young adult. *This book is one of the Young Oxford Companion series which covers a wide variety of topics. Its 300 pages contain some 350 entries, strives to combine the virtues of a dictionary and an encyclopedia, and produces a cartographic version of a desk encyclopedia for young readers.*

INTRODUCTION TO MAPS

- Fanelli, Sara. *My Map Book*. New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1995. First published in London: All Books for Children, 1995. Ages 4–8. *Childlike drawings showing maps of bedroom, school, playground, and other parts of her life important to her.*
- Hartman, Gail. *As the Roadrunner Runs: A First Book of Maps*. New York: Bradbury Press, 1994. Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing, 1994. Ages 4–8.
- _____. *As the Crow Flies: A First Book of Maps*. New York: Scholastic, 1991. Aladdin, 1993. Ages 4–8. *These two books move from maps of the neighborhoods of a lizard, a jackrabbit, a roadrunner, a mule, and a deer, in the case of the first book, to a map of the whole area. In the second book, the maps belong to an eagle, a rabbit, a crow, a horse, and a gull. They are simple, yet very effective.*
- Leedy, Loreen, *Mapping Penny's World*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2000. Ages 4–8. *Lisa is given an assignment to draw a map of someplace familiar, and decides to draw her room as seen by Penny, her Boston terrier. From the bedroom Lisa goes on to draw maps of Penny's favorite places. As Steve Fox notes, "Not least, the fact that it is written from a girl's perspective will help bring in an audience that might be tougher to reach than the traditional 'boys and a pirate treasure map' genre brings to cartographic concepts."*
- Rockwell, Anne. *Our Earth*. San Diego/New York/London: Silver Whistle/Harcourt Brace & Company, 1998. Ages 4–8. *More geography related, but clear maps and colorful definitions of earth forms.*
- Sweeney, Joan. *Me on the Map*. New York: Dragonfly Books/Crown Publishers, Inc., 1996. Ages 4–8. *Starting with her bedroom, a young girl maps her place in the world.*

MAKING AND USING MAPS

Beasant, Pam, and Alastair Smith. *How to Draw Maps and Charts*. Tulsa, Oklahoma: EDC Publishing, 1997. First published by Usborne Publishing Ltd, London, in 1993.

Knowlton, Jack. *Maps and Globes*. New York: HarperCollins, 1986.

_____. *Geography from A to Z: A Picture Glossary*. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1988. *In the first book, cartographical terms and types of maps are presented in a clear and simple way. The geography book is nicely illustrated and presents land forms in alphabetical order.*

Rabe, Tish. *There's a Map on My Lap!* New York: Random House, 2002. *One of the Cat in the Hat's Learning Library. Information in rhyme, fun.*

Taylor, Barbara. *Be Your Own Map Expert*. New York: Sterling Publishing Company, Inc., 1994. Originally published in Great Britain. Ages 9–12.

_____. *Maps and Mapping: Geography Facts and Experiments*. New York: Kingfisher Books, 1993.

Weiss, Harvey. *Maps: Getting From Her to There*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1991. Ages 9–12. *Good information well presented.*

Young, Karen Romano. *Small Worlds: Maps and Mapmaking*. New York: Scholastic Nonfiction, 2002. With bibliography, websites, and index. Young adult. *Interviews with mapmakers, a good mix of history and technology. A lot of information, nicely presented.*

Stienecker, David I. *Maps*. New York: Benchmark Books, 1998. Ages 9–12. *Combines history with technology and projects. Contains a glossary, and questions posed are answered at the end of the book.*

Trumbauer, Lisa. *Lost!* Heinemann-Raintree, 2007. Ages 9–12. *Using only step-by step directions and traditional tools and skills, readers find their way from the Eiffel Tower to the Calais lighthouse. In a concession to what the child has probably been asking the read-along parent throughout the book, GPS is introduced on the last page.*

FICTION/PICTURE BOOKS/MAPS AS GUIDES

Bonner, Mary Graham. *The Magic Map*. New York: The Macaulay Company, 1927. *An odd book I picked up at a book sale. About a young boy with a geography book who falls asleep and has an adventure. In the illustrations, the maps look like people and talk.*

Fritz, Jean. *Where are You Going, Christopher Columbus?* New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, Inc., 1980.

Gannett, Ruth Stiles. *My Father's Dragon*. Random House, Inc., 1948. *A Newbery Honor Book. Map of the dragon's island on endpapers.*

Keller, Laurie. *The Scrambled States of America*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, LLC, 1998. *States switch places at a party. With some information about each state at the end.*

Hopkinson, Deborah. *Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt*. New York: Dragonfly Books/Alfred A. Knopf, 1993, 1995. Ages 9–12. *A young African-American girl learns sewing from her aunt, and when she understands what a map is, she constructs a quilt with pieces showing the way to Canada via the Underground Railroad to escape their slavery.*

Shulevitz, Uri. *How I Learned Geography*. New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 2008. Ages 4–8. *A Caldecott Honor Book, a young World War II Polish refugee escapes a poor and hungry life looking at his father's world map bought with money meant for food.*

Sis, Peter. *Follow the Dream: The Story of Christopher Columbus*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1991. With note to the reader and biographical sketch. *The story of Christopher Columbus through 15th century maps and other contemporary resources.*

_____. *Madlenka*. Frances Foster Books/Farrar Straus Giroux, 2000. With cut-away windows. *The universe of a child expressed on one New York City block.*

_____. *The Three Golden Keys*. Frances Foster Books/Farrar Straus Giroux, 1994. *To show his daughter where he grew up, the author shows the city of his youth through a mysterious black cat leading him through the city to find keys that will lead him in to his childhood home.*

_____. *A Small Tall Tale from the Far Far North*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1993. *An explorer survives a dangerous journey from Central Europe to the Arctic with the help of Eskimos.*

_____. *Starry Messenger: A book depicting the life of a famous scientist, mathematician, astronomer, philosopher, physicist Galileo Galilei*. New York: Frances Foster Books/Farrar Straus Giroux, 1996. *Wonderful maps illustrate this story of Gallileo. A Caldecott Honor Book.*

_____. *Tibet Through the Red Box*. New York: Frances Foster Books/Farrar Straus Giroux, 1998. *The story of the author's father, a documentary filmmaker in the Soviet Union, who was forced to film a military operation, the construction of a road that would connect Tibet to China. Becoming separated from his group by a natural disaster, he*

found he was in Tibet and kept a diary of his experiences, some of which are depicted through elaborate mandalas, which are, in essence, maps. A Caldecott Honor Book.

HISTORICAL ATLASES

Historical Atlas of the United States. National Geographic Society (US), 1988 (Rev. 1993). Bob Moir writes that "replete with colorful maps, charts and graphics, this large format volume treks through the centuries from early European contact to late 20th century."

Kuennecke, Bernd, Susan L. Woodward, and Steven K. Pontius. *An Atlas of Virginia: The 17th, 18th, and Early 19th Centuries*. [S.I.]: Virginia Geographic Alliance, 1989.

WORKBOOKS/EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

Aberg, Rebecca. *Map Keys*. 2003.

Moore, Jo Ellen. *Beginning Geography: How to Use a Map*. Volume 1. Monterey, Calif.: Evan-Moor Educational Publishers, 1991. Grades K–2. *Clear illustrations and an excellent poster map of the seven continents. Other topics in the Beginning Geography series are Land Forms and Bodies of Water, Volume 2, with a poster map and land forms and waters to be identified on verso; and Continents and Oceans, Volume 3, with a poster map of the world continents and animals to answer the question, where do I live?*

Moore, Jo Ellen. *Beginning Maps and Globes*. Social Studies Series. Monterey, Calif.:Evan-Moor Educational Publishers, 1995. Grades 1–3. *Part of the Social Studies Series, which includes (for mapping) Beginning Map Skills.*

Robson, Pam. *Geography for Fun: With easy-to-make geography projects*. Mankato, Minn.: Stargazer Books, 2005. First published by Aladdin Books Ltd in 2001.

Other topics in the series Mountains and Our Moving Earth, Ecosystems, Food and Farming, People and Places, Rivers and Seas.

Oleksy, Walter G. *Maps in History*. Children's Press, 2003. Ages 9–12. *Also Mapping the Seas and Mapping the World (Franklin Watts, 2003).*

Wade, Mary Dodson. *Map Scales*. 2003. *These are in the "Rookie Read-About Geography" series for beginning readers, published by Scholastic, which also features titles such as Looking at Maps and Globes, Types of Maps, and Longitude, along with many cartographic titles. They feature large type and a mix of photographs and bright, simple maps and diagrams to illustrate and walk the reader through basic concepts.*

OTHER RESOURCES

Larsen, Reif. *The Selected Works of T. S. Spivet: A Novel*. Penguin Press HC, 2009. *About a 12-year old boy who is a genius and a mapmaker. He wins an award from the Smithsonian and travels from Montana to Washington, D.C. Good reviews, but probably more for adults.*

Children Map the World: Selections from the Barbara Petchenik Children's World Map Competition, Volumes 1 and 2. 2005.

The Global Puzzle. A Broader View, Inc. Atlanta, Ga. 2008. *600 pieces, many pieces shaped like the countries so they do not interlock.*

The Seven Continents of the World Jigsaw Book. With six 48 piece jigsaws. San Francisco, Ca., The Five Mile Press Pty, first published 2004. Book format. *Pages opposite jigsaw pages describe the continents, show the continent within a world map, and present facts about each continent.*

USA Floor Puzzle. San Francisco, Ca., The Five Mile Press Pty, first published 2007. Ca. 60 pieces. Ages 3–5 years.

World in a Box: Create and print your own stunning personalized maps of the World. New York/London: Sterling, 2008. *More computer oriented, the "box" includes a CD-ROM, mapping tools, and an 80 page instructional booklet.*

ARTICLES

The articles are somewhat dated, but the information is interesting and helpful.

Billman, Carol. "Reading and Mapping: Directions in Children's Fantasy." *Proceedings of the Annual conference of the Children's Literature Association*, 1982, pp. 40–46.

Hunt, Peter. "Landscapes and Journeys, Metaphors and Maps: The Distinctive Feature of English Fantasy." *Children's Literature Association Quarterly*, Vol. 12, No. 1, Spring 1987, pp. 11–14.

Muehrcke, Phillip C., and Juliana C. Muehrcke. "Maps in Literature." *The Geographical Review*, Vol. 64, No. 3, July 1974, pp. 317–338.

Patton, Jeffrey C., and Nancy B. Ryckman. "Maps in Children's Literature." *Cartographic Perspectives*, No. 6, Summer 1990, pp. 3–12.

Rieke, Judith. "Maps in Children's Books." *SLJ School Library Journal*, November 1983, pp. 38–39.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

A graduate of the College of William and Mary and of the Catholic University of America School of Library Science,

Marianne M. McKee is co-editor with Richard W. Stephenson of Virginia in *Maps: Four Hundred Years of Settlement, Growth, and Development*. She retired in early 2005 from the Library of Virginia, where she worked full-time since 1982 and with the map collection since 1987. Her past contributions to this journal include "From contracts to copperplates: the making of the 1827 state map of Virginia, the corrections

in 1859, and the copperplate printing project of 2004" (Issue 78 – Fall 2010) and a review of the below listed book *The Road to There: Mapmakers and their Stories* (Issue 60 – Fall 2004). The author much appreciates the assistance of Bert Johnson with this article.



