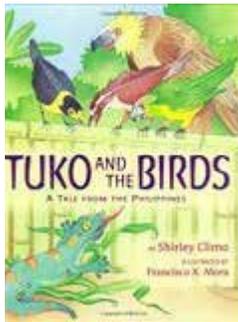


Filipino Book Collection

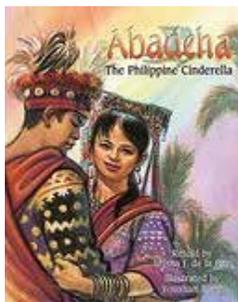
Anna Osborn

Being one of almost four million Filipinos in the United States is a source of pride for me, but growing up, it was nearly impossible to find young adult and children’s books with Filipino characters or stories about the Philippines. I share that disappointment, and the excitement I felt when I began collecting books featuring Filipino characters, with my students when we talk about books as mirrors and windows. Students often remark how interesting they find it that books about the Philippines are as much a window for me as they are for them. Here are some of the titles we enjoy discussing from my collection:



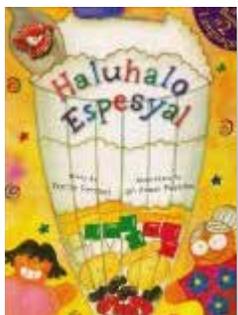
***Tuko and the Birds: A Tale From the Philippines*, Shirley Climo and Francisco X. Mora (illustrator)**

Tuko and the Birds showcases the beautiful island landscape and colorful birds of Luzon, the largest of the Philippine islands. Nipa huts, traditional dwellings, are featured throughout the illustrations in the book. The story imparts a warning about how greed can ultimately cause foolish decisions, and even embarrassment. In addition to the warning against the ills of greed, the Filipino idiom “Bahala na” reinforces the cultural belief that whatever is bound to happen will come to pass, a reference to leaving things in the hands of God or a higher power. The phrase has roots in the word *Bathala*, a supreme being whom Filipinos worshipped before the Spanish period.



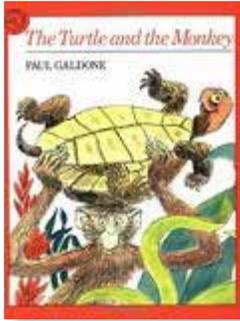
***Abadeha: The Philippine Cinderella*, Myrna J. de la Paz and Youshan Tang (illustrator)**

This Cinderella tale is tied to the indigenous people of the Philippines in both the illustrations of traditional dress and the lost ancient writings on the title page and endpapers. De la Paz uses traditional names to pull the reader deeper into this ancient tale. In the author’s note, de la Paz indicates wanting to immerse the reader in an indigenous world, but Tang’s illustrations sometimes allude to a post-colonized Philippines under Spanish rule and portray an Abadeha who appears more Latina than Asian. The vision of Bathala, too, seems more reminiscent of the Catholic Virgin Mary than an ancient Filipino goddess.



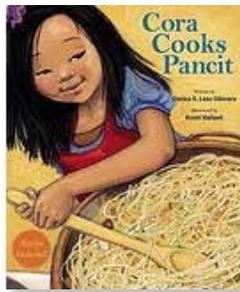
***Haluhalo Espesyal*, Yvette Ferreol and Jill Arwen Posadas (illustrator)**

Haluhalo made it onto this list for one specific reason: its reference to Japanese heritage. *Haluhalo*, or *halo-halo*, is a dessert that literally translates to “mix-mix special.” Research indicates that halo-halo goes back to prewar Japan and its practice of preserving beans in a thick, sweet syrup. Regardless of its origins, halo-halo is a Philippine dessert that can be found throughout the country.



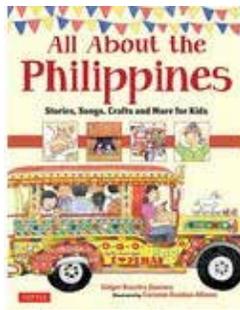
***The Turtle and the Monkey: A Philippine Tale*, Paul Galdone**

Although it makes no direct reference to Filipino culture, *The Turtle and the Monkey* is a very traditional, well-loved children’s story. The plot focuses on the interplay between the Turtle and the Monkey. Illustrations showcase the colorful vegetation found across the Philippines. In some scenes, the mountains of the Philippines form the backdrop of the setting.



***Cora Cooks Pancit*, Dorina K. Lazo Gilmore and Kristi Valiant**

Cora Cooks Pancit shares the story of a young girl making a very popular Filipino dish. Cora’s Lolo’s (grandfather’s) history—his immigration to California and his job as a cook—is not unusual. The common practice of hiring Filipinos as cooks in the United States Navy is well-documented. Gilmore’s text and Valiant’s illustrations tell the story of a young girl gaining both pride in her family heritage and new confidence in herself as a contributor to her family. A glossary of terms and Lolo’s Pancit Recipe follow the story.



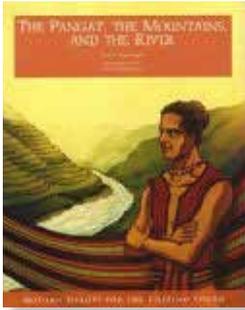
***All About the Philippines: Stories, Songs, Crafts and Games for Kids*, Gidget Rococeles Jimenez and Corazon Dandan-Albano**

All About the Philippines stands out in its thorough introduction to the vocabulary, history, and culture of the Philippines. Dandan-Albano’s illustrations help young readers enter the Philippine landscape and become immersed in Mary, Jaime, and Ari’s diverse daily lives and celebrations. The impact of centuries of colonization can be seen in the foods showcased by each of the characters in the story, from Spanish terms like *fiesta* and *lechon* to the dessert *halo-halo* that has its origins in prewar Japanese cooking.



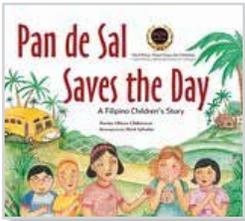
***Blackbird Fly*, Erin Entrada Kelly and Betsy Peterschmidt (illustrator)**

Blackbird Fly is the story of an immigrant girl who faces bullying because of her race. As she comes to terms with her heritage, her relationship with her mother, and her place in middle school culture, Apple faces the bullies with grace and spunk. This text is a must-have for upper-elementary and middle-school classrooms.



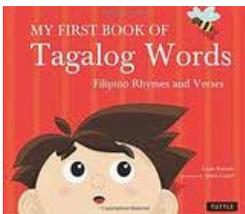
***The Pangat, the Mountains, and the River*, Luz B. Maranan and Ariel Santillan (illustrator)**

In addition to its historical significance, this tale highlights the power of storytelling within Filipino culture. The illustrations of the *apong*, the grandfather telling the story of the Filipino hero Macliing Dulag, celebrate the tattoos and dress of indigenous people. The two-page spread where Macliing Dulag faces the Philippine army indicates a tension between indigenous people and the government. Thematically, it could be argued that these pages symbolize the struggle for indigenous people to maintain their homeland and their right to live unchanged by technological progress.



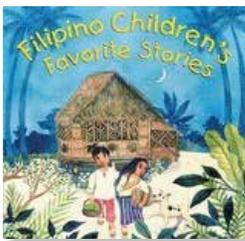
***Pan de Sal Saves the Day: A Filipino Children's Story*, Norma Olizon-Chikiamco and Mark Salvatus (illustrator)**

Pan de Sal Saves the Day is a tongue-in-cheek morality tale for Filipino children. Younger readers will giggle at Pan de Sal and her classmates, who are also named for various pastries and breads. Hidden within this lighthearted tale are many of the cultural messages Filipinos impart to their children: pride in humble circumstances, treasuring one's own talents, and the importance of sharing with your community. Rooted even deeper in this story is the message to all Filipinos that pride in national heritage—symbolized by what is sometimes called the national bread of the Philippines—is crucial. As Pan de Sal learns of her many contributions to her community, Filipino pride in the country's contributions to the larger global society shines through.



***My First Book of Tagalog Words: Filipino Rhymes and Verses*, Liana Romulo and Jaime Laurel**

My First Book of Tagalog Words is truly an introduction to the language and culture of the Filipino people. Romulo includes the following aspects of Filipino life: words for everyday items like *buktiki*, or “house lizard”; popular foods such as *pancit*, historical places like Quezon City and Vigan; and words that reference cultural expectations among Filipinos, like *galing*, a word for “praise,” and *hati*, a word for “sharing.”



***Filipino Children's Favorite Stories*, Liana Elena Romulo and Joanne de Leon**

Some of the stories in this collection harken back to Filipino myths told by indigenous people. The deity Bathala was a pre-Spanish supreme being worshipped by Filipinos. The characters in these stories are punished or rewarded depending on the values they espouse. These tales not only share Filipino mythology with children, but the morals of these stories also reinforce cultural beliefs in hard work, faithfulness, and perseverance.