



At The Same Moment, Around The World

Written by Clotilde Perrin

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At 6:00 in the morning in Senegal, Keita awakens to help his father count fish and so begins a journey around the world to explore what children are doing in each of the 24 time zones at the same time. This journey begins at the Greenwich Meridian and travels eastward visiting select cities in the zone for each hour. The text on each page begins, “At the same moment in . . .” followed by the name of a specific city, country and often other identifying geographical markers, such as “Himalayan mountains near the towering Mount Everest” or “in the desert between Ayers Rock and Sydney, Australia,” or simply “Apia, Samoa.” Each page provides the typical name of a child who is doing something typical of that culture.

However, each child’s actions are ones that readers can connect with such as shopping in the market, taking a dog for a walk, or kissing parents good night. A typical text is: “At the same moment, in Sofia, Bulgaria, it is eight o’clock in the

morning when Mitko chases after the school bus.” The pictures reveal a somewhat whimsical character whose hair and skin color fit with that setting and a glimpse of an ordinary scene in which this character might be enacting the text. In Mitko’s case, it is a cold weather scene with a young boy hurrying to a bus.

With illustrations created in pencil and colored digitally, Clotilde Perrin has created rich detail that speaks specifically to each culture with light and dark color tones indicating the time of day being portrayed. Yet, as with the actions of the child, the contexts are realistic with which readers can identify and consider similarities and differences between their own events of the day at specific hours and that of other children around the globe. The various people, items, and settings appear to be authentic for that one moment in time, in one city, and for the one child. However, the book invites readers to explore each city and compare photographs and descriptions to verify what they observe in the pictures and to learn more about other contexts of the countries that share the huge expanse of one time zone.

The focus of the book is time zones and so concludes with two pages of information entitled “About Time Zones” with sections on Early Timekeeping, The Invention of Time Zones, and Accurate Timekeeping. End pages of blue swirls give the impression of water that envelopes the 24 children in their communities. Attached to the final end page is a World Map that identifies each city and country shared in the book with borders that picture the faces and names of the 24 children whose lives were briefly visited. Additionally, one can open the book so the front and back are a flat surface and find that the cover image extends to the back of the book depicting a circular map with each country’s child specifically placed around its

rim. Once the book is read, children will enjoy locating the characters whose brief life portraits they find in the book.

Originally published in France as *Au meme instant, sur la Terre*, the format in French is that of an accordion style that the author/illustrator says is meant to be put on the ground and walked around. Perrin has published more than 25 books since 2002 that can be seen on her inviting website (<http://www.clotildeperrin.net/>). Most of these are in French and reveal an identifying style of character and use of color for young readers weaving throughout various genres.

Other books that might be used with this to show perspective in cultures through geography and time for young readers are *Walk this World* by Jenny Broom (2013), *It's About Time: Untangling Everything You Need to Know about Time* by Pascale Estellon (2014), and *Maps* by Aleksandra and Daniel Mizielenska (2013).

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