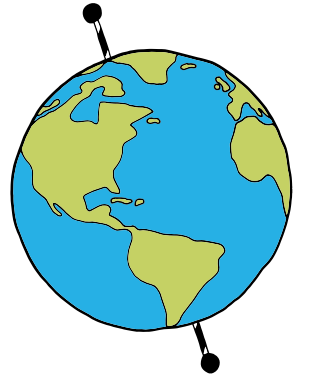




# North Pole South Pole

The Journey of Creating Cultural Understanding in First and Second Grade



# CONTENTS

---

01 | Background: p. 08  
The Problem  
The Importance

02 | Research: p. 14  
Ideation  
Thesis Proposal  
Target Audience

03 | Process: p. 26  
Visual Inspiration  
Design Process  
Logo Development  
Prototype & Test

04 | Design Solutions: p. 46  
Final Mark  
Picture Books  
Flashcards  
Posters  
App / Website

05 | The Sources: p. 92  
Appendices  
Acknowledgments

LISA TOTH DOUAIFIA  
web site: [lisadouaifia.com](http://lisadouaifia.com)  
email: [hello@lisadouaifia.com](mailto:hello@lisadouaifia.com)  
phone: 614-506-8761

NORTH POLE SOUTH POLE  
MFA Graphic Design Thesis  
web site: [northpolesouthpole.us](http://northpolesouthpole.us)

ACADEMY OF ART UNIVERSITY  
School of Graphic Design  
79 New Montgomery  
San Francisco, CA 94158

©2014  
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

# FOREWORD

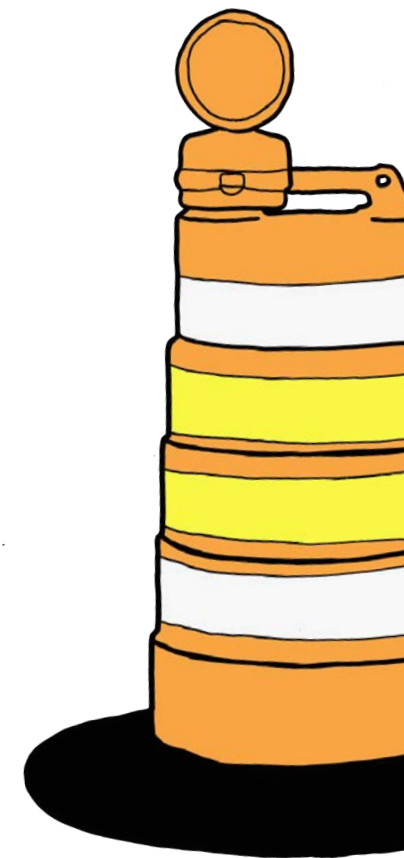
---

As long as I can remember I have always loved being around kids. I believe this passion was passed on to me from my mom, who has been a teacher for almost 30 years. She has repeatedly encouraged me to be a teacher because of my love for children. There is something about the honesty and wit individuals have at such a young age, that has always fascinated me.

I believe being born and raised in Ohio, always being part of the majority, has had a huge influence on my own personal cultural awareness and understanding of the world. As a young adult I started discovering people and places that were unknown to me, never being encouraged while growing up to explore beyond the familiar. It became truly apparent to me how slim my cultural knowledge was when I met my husband who is from Algeria. Being married to someone who grew up on the other side of the world from me really opened my eyes and mind to what I was unaware of. This void has become a mission for myself to become more familiar with and have a better understanding of our world and is the backbone to my thesis. I feel that I missed out on opportunities because I was not exposed to or aware of what existed. I believe it is vital for the future generations to be encouraged to explore our world and discover everything it has to offer.

# BACKGROUND

The Problem  
The Importance



# THE PROBLEM

## Americans & Geography

Americans have always withheld the ranking of being one of the worst countries at knowing world geography. Many excuses have been given as the reason to this: America is so large, it has no need to be concerned with other countries; America is so far away from the rest of the world, it's hard to know what's going on in other places; and the list goes on. It is quite alarming that one of the largest countries knows so little about the world.

Along with the lack of geographic knowledge comes the lack of cultural understanding. Geography is more than just places on a map. It is global connections between people and cultures, economics and environments. This lack of knowledge and understanding leads to intolerance and ignorance.

# 63%

of young Americans can not identify Iraq or Saudi Arabia on a map.



The world is a cultural melting pot that brings value to a community. Humanity bonds through the values exchanged between cultures.

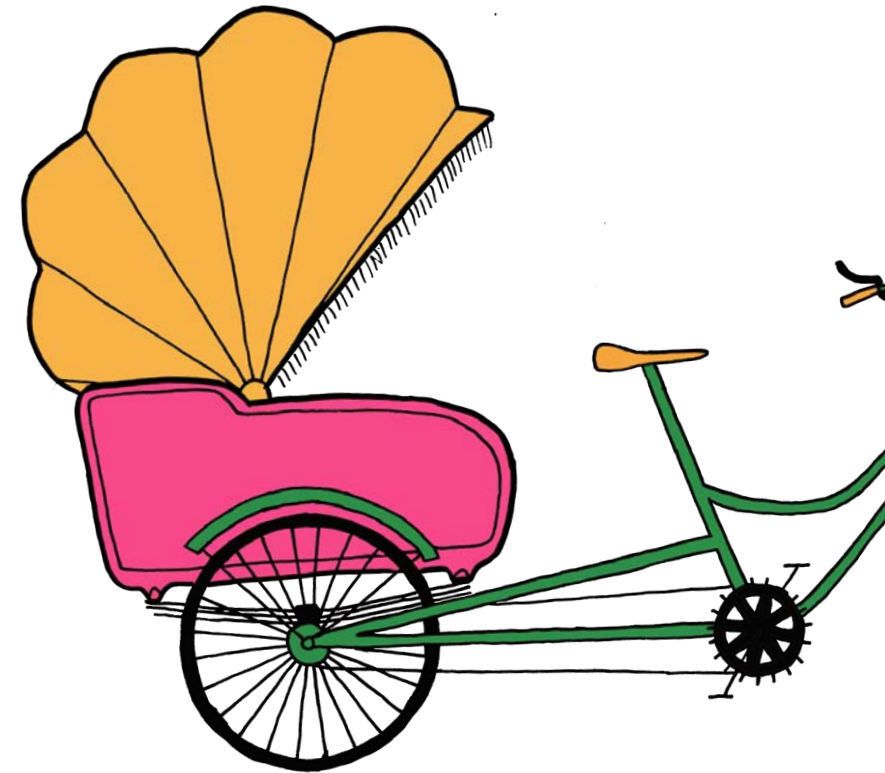
Current geography lessons often involves memorization. Memorization is knowing without learning.

### Why it Matters

There are many reasons as to why Americans are shaky on world geography. Most of the tools used to teach geography are plain, not engaging and sometimes overwhelming. Memorization or are often a common way of teaching things such as the fifty states or the order of the presidents. But what kind of learning is that? What is really being learned when something is memorized? It runs parallel to the best parts of learning. It never intersects, it goes around all of the action. Memorization is a way of knowing without learning, answering without any understanding.

# RESEARCH

Research & Ideation  
Thesis Proposal  
Target Audience





# RESEARCH & IDEATION

After determining my objective, I began in depth research and exploration in order to provide an effective design solution for the problem.



## Digging Deeper

The main objective of the research was to find out as much as possible on the topic and how other issues might be related. I also began ideation development and preliminary design solutions at this stage. This involved a lot of reading, note taking and sketching. I developed and distributed surveys and enlisted the insights of educators to find the source of the problem.

**CONNECTING KIDS WITH CULTURE**

1. What grade level do you teach?  
 K-2  
 3-5  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

2. What type of school do you teach at?  
 Public  
 Private  
 Charter  
 Prep  
 Vocational  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

3. Do you think school systems are functioning well in the US?  
 Yes  
 No  
 If No, please briefly explain:  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

4. Out of 35 nations, where do you think the US ranks in subjects such as math, science and reading?  
 Top 10  
 Middle  
 Bottom 10

5. Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements on why American students are behind other nations academically:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Funding	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quality of Teachers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Low Expectations of Students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Home Life of Student	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of Importance Placed on Education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6. As an educator, do you use The Department of Education's learning standards?  
 Yes  
 No

7. Do you find the standards helpful?  
 Yes  
 No

8. How closely do you follow the standards?  
 Very  
 Somewhat  
 Not At All

9. Does the curriculum you currently use include teaching global culture? i.e. Exporting and importing, How countries connect and influence one another  
 Yes  
 No

10. Do you think teaching globalized thinking is important?  
 Yes  
 No

11. Would you be open to using a tool that may better help you teach world culture?  
 Yes, even if it replaces my current curriculum.  
 Yes, but only if it can be added to my current curriculum.  
 No, there is no more room in my curriculum.  
 No, I do not think it is an important enough topic to focus on.

Comments or Concerns:  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**CONNECTING KIDS WITH CULTURE**

1. Do you have children currently in school?  
 Yes  
 No

2. How important is learning world culture to you?  
 Very Important  
 Somewhat Important  
 Not Very Important  
 Not Important At All

3. Do you think it is important to teach young kids global thinking?  
 Yes  
 No

4. Did you learn about world culture in elementary school?  
 Yes  
 No

5. If No, how did you learn about world culture? (check all that apply)  
 At home, from parents  
 Through reading/watching the news  
 At an older age, through experience

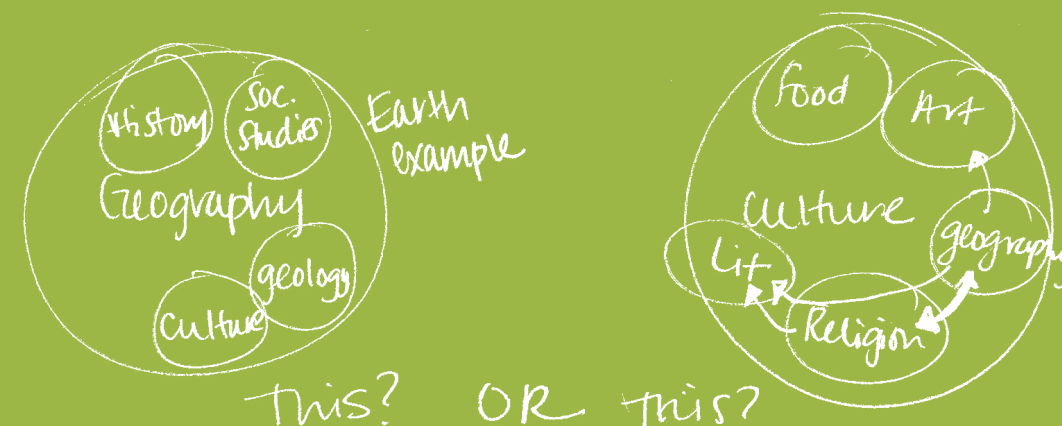
6. Did you feel prepared, when graduating high school, to make informed decisions about your rights and responsibilities as a young adult?  
 Yes  
 No

7. Please briefly explain your previous answer:  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

8. Out of 34 countries, where do you think the US ranks among them?  
 1  
 10  
 25  
 30

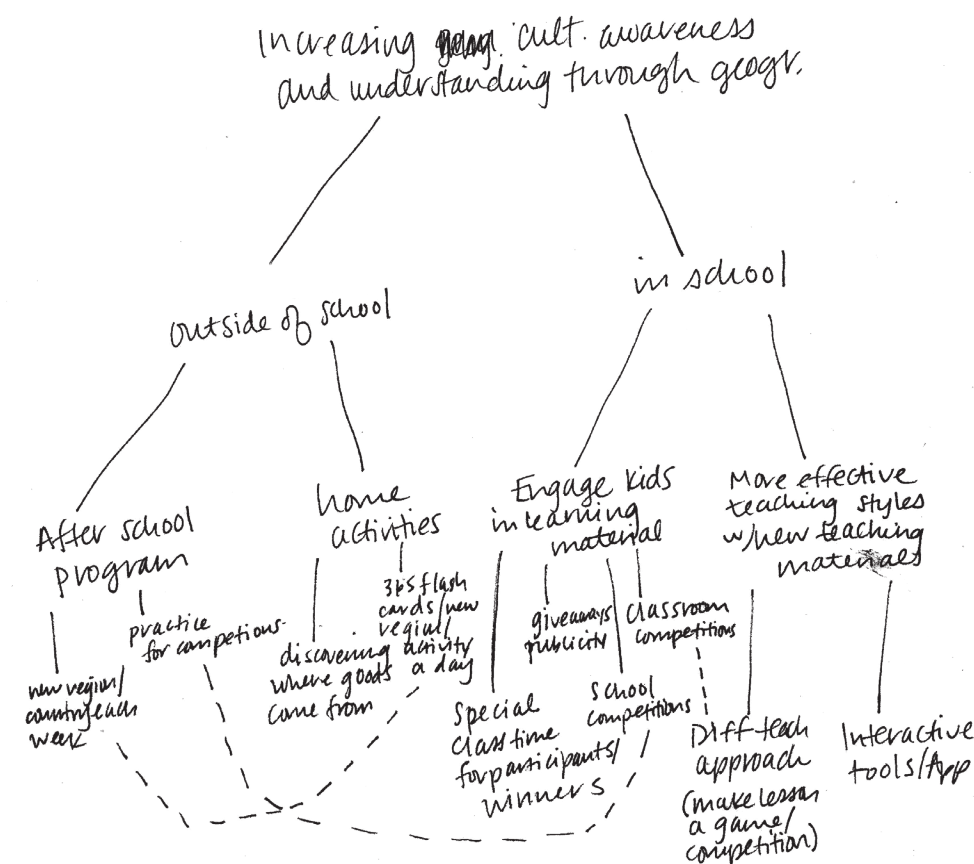
9. Are you surprised to know that the US ranks academically 25th out of 34 countries in subjects such as math, science and reading?  
 Yes  
 No

10. Why do you think American school kids are lagging behind other nations? (check all that apply)  
 Funding from the government  
 Parents involvement and the student's home life  
 Quality of teachers  
 Low expectations of students  
 Financial stability of the student's family  
 Other (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_



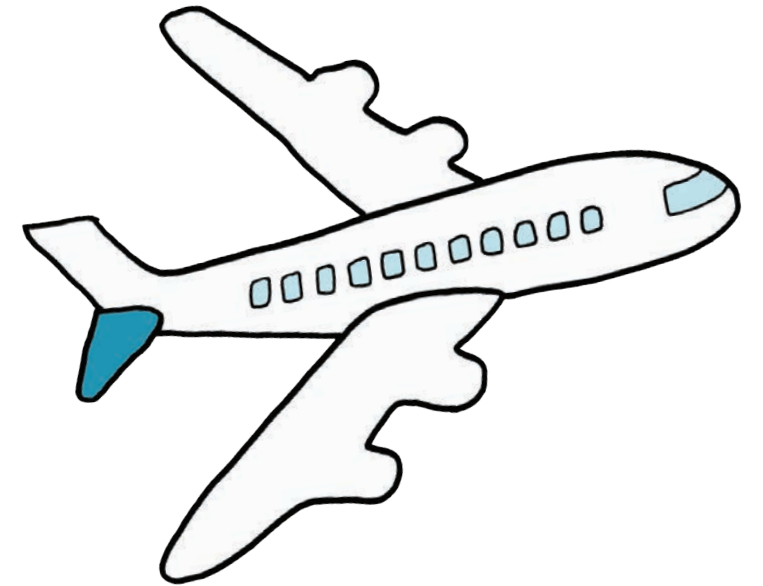


Over the summer I spent time interviewing students to explore how they learn about the world and other cultures. The insights from these interviews were what led me to the opportunity.



# THESIS PROPOSAL

To create fun and engaging resources that can be integrated into current school curriculum that inspires kids to make global connections in their everyday lives.



# TARGET AUDIENCE

“Our greatest natural resource is the minds of our children.”

*Walt Disney*



## Narrowing It Down

My target audiences are 1st and 2nd graders living in Ohio.

I first started with a broad audience and then began narrowing it down based on discoveries in my research. My target audiences are 1st & 2nd graders living in Ohio. I decided to narrow in on a specific state in order to make it more relatable to the kids and to make a more lasting impression. The more it is made about “them” the more easily they can imagine themselves in the different experiences and environments created.

# PROCESS

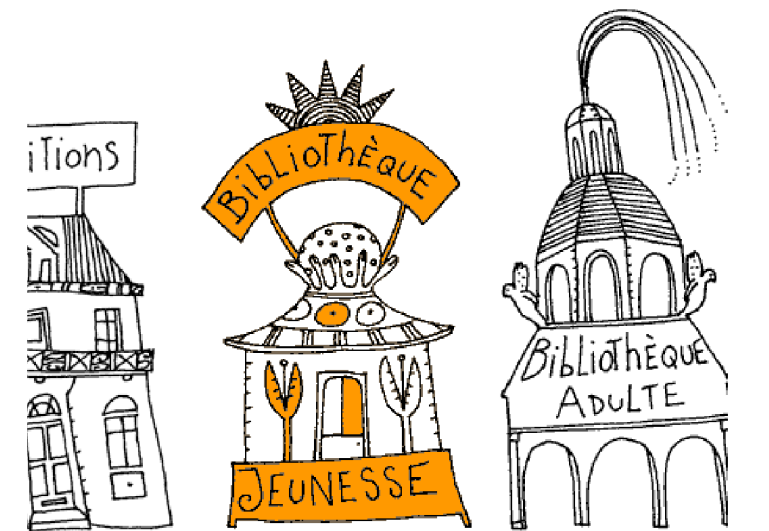
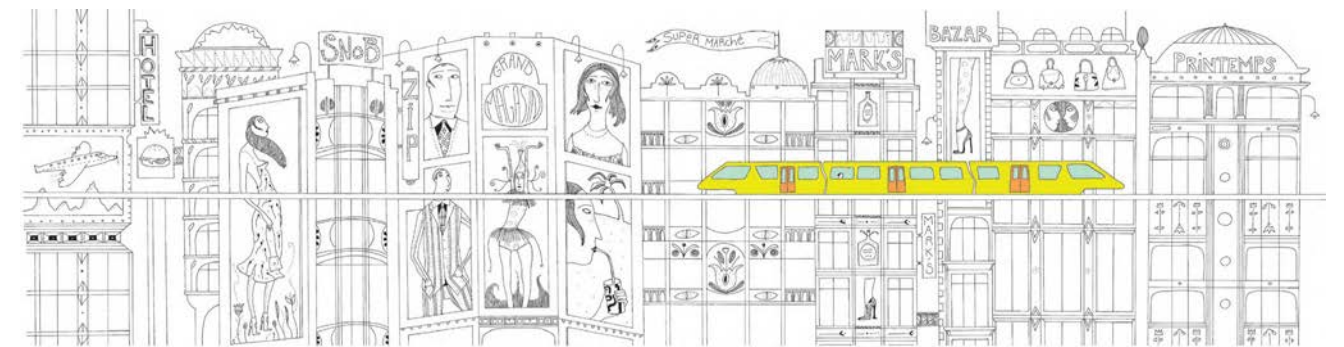
Visual Inspiration  
Design Process  
Logo Development  
Prototype & Test



# VISUAL INSPIRATION

## Finding A Style

I was inspired by an amazing Swiss illustrator Albertine Zullo. The simplicity of the black and white line drawings combined with bright, bold colors is what really drew me to her work. I felt with my illustration capabilities this was a style I could effectively accomplish. I chose to go with a less refined approach to achieve the feeling of a child-like drawn illustration.

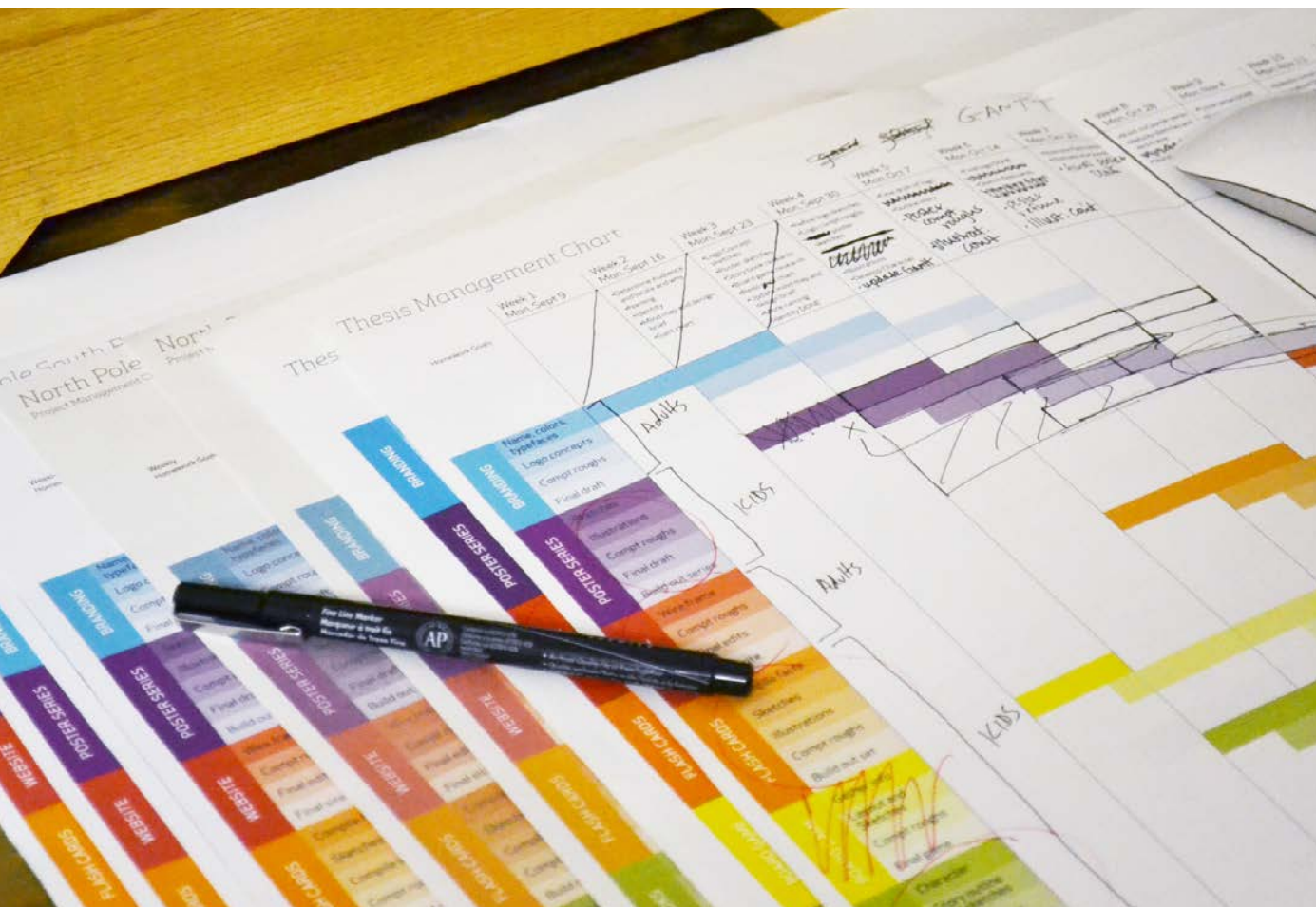




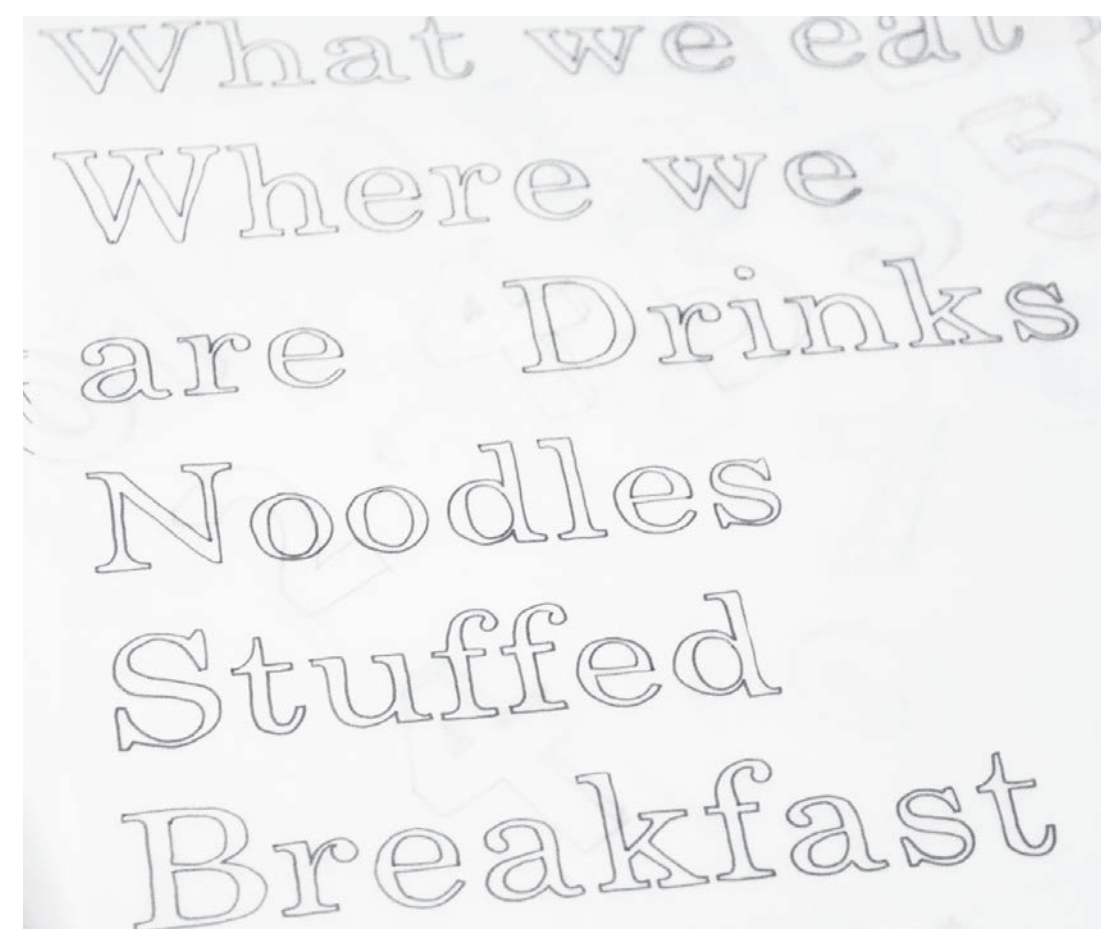
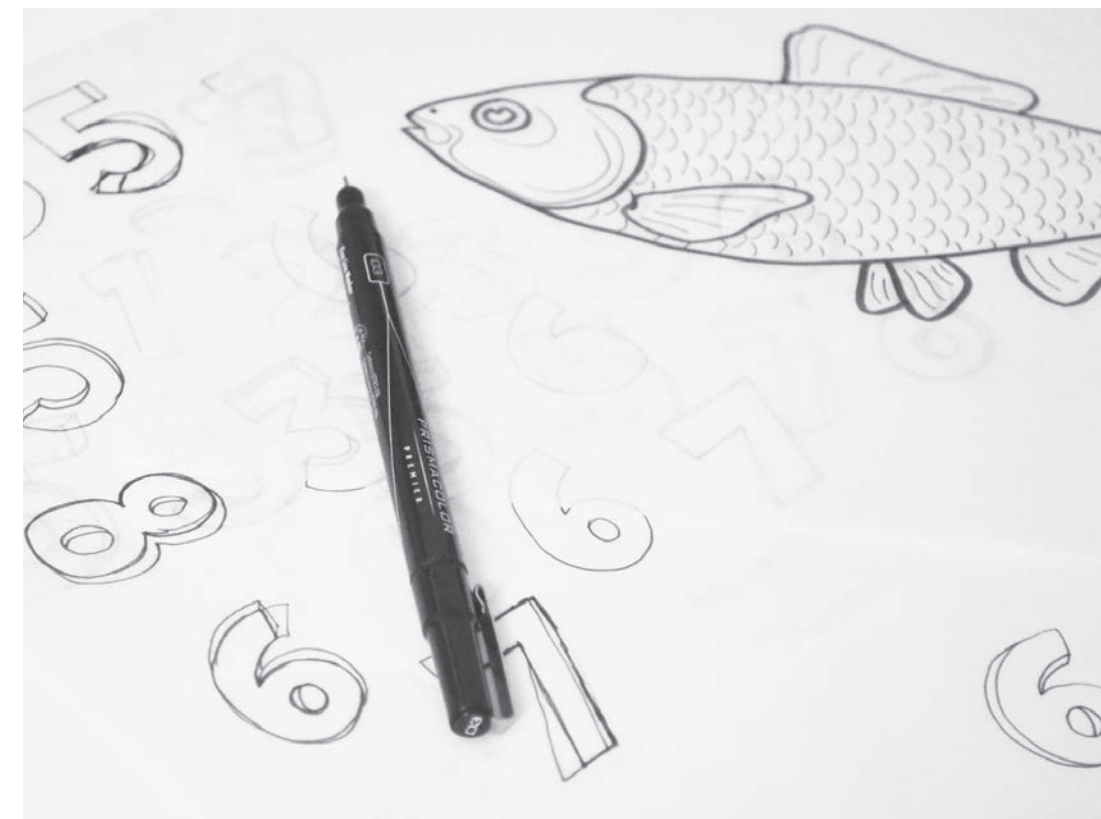


# DESIGN PROCESS

I used detailed Gantt charts to make sure I kept on track with each deliverable. I also used Post-its, Post-its and more Post-its.

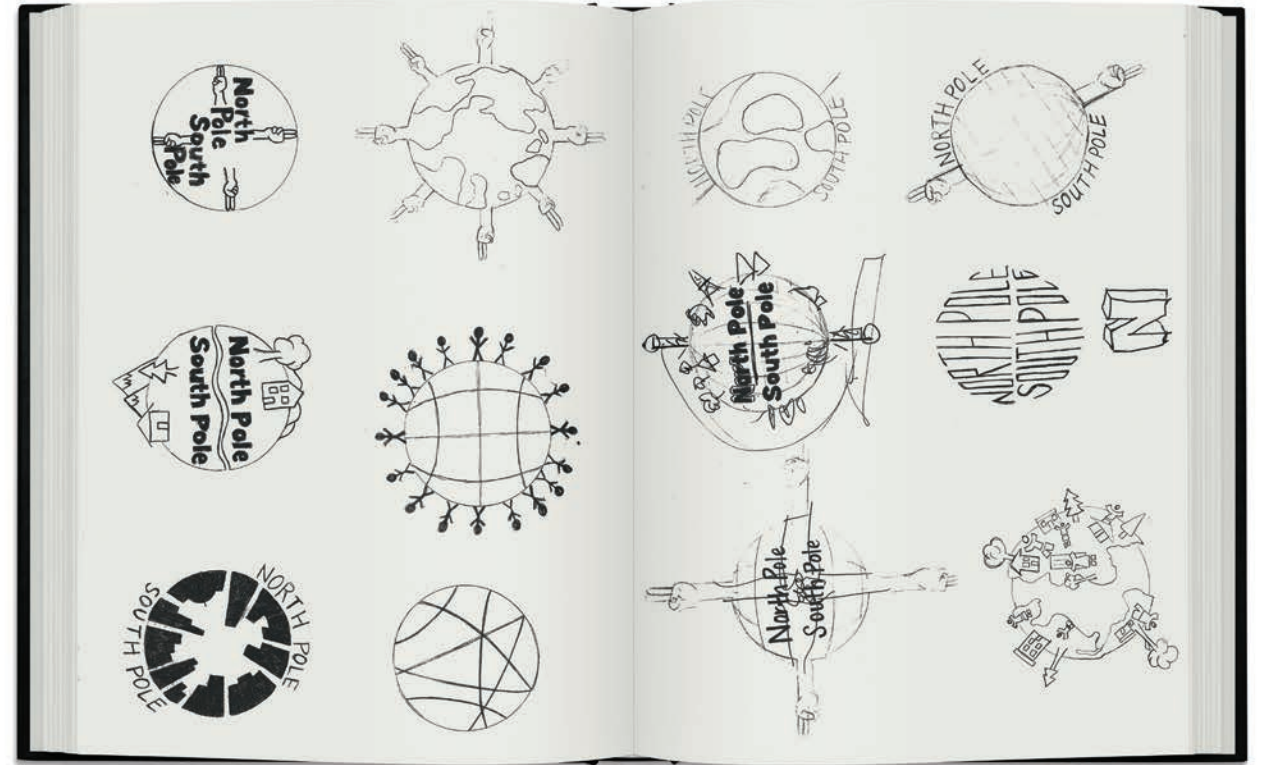


I spent a lot of time sketching an endless number of iterations before going to pen. From there I scanned in my illustrations and turned them into vectors.



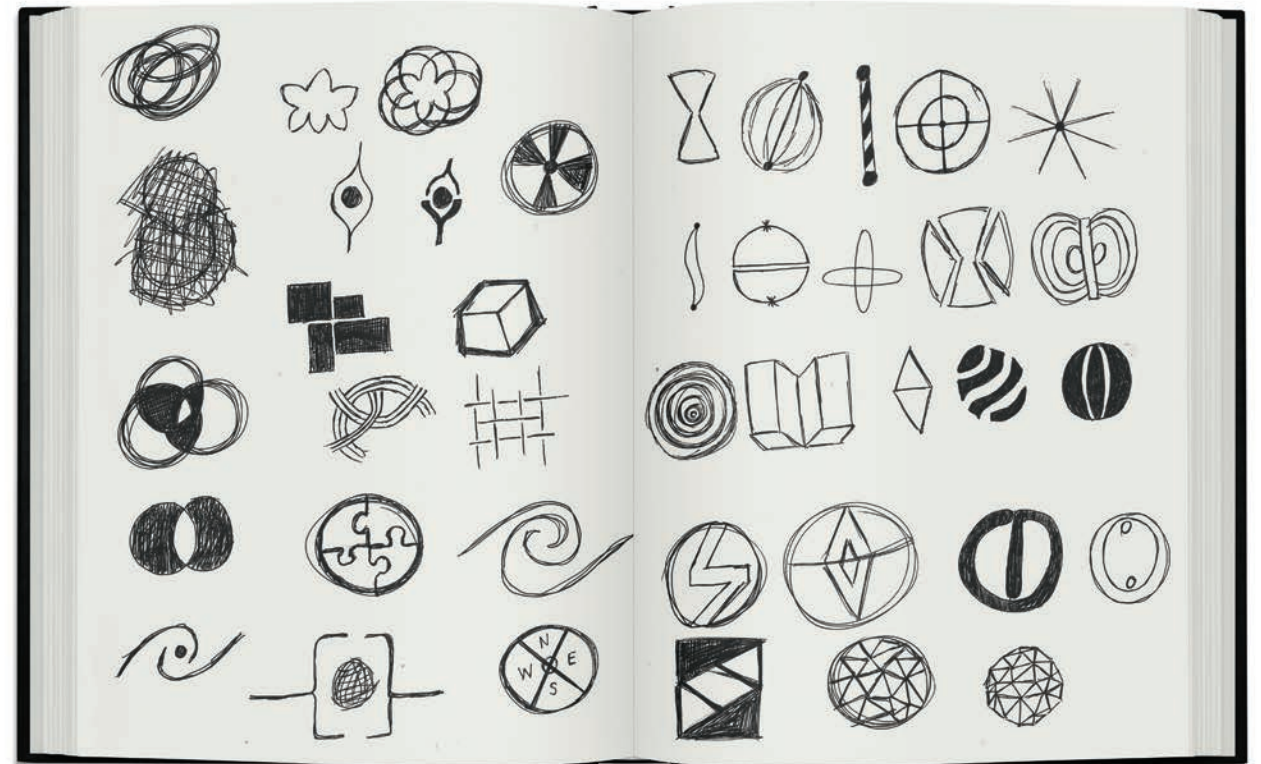


# LOGO DEVELOPMENT



## The Whole World

The concept of the logo is to visually express the unity of the entire world with keeping a fun and whimsical aspect to it. By hand drawing the type I was able to get a school notebook feel like a doodle drawn by a child. It also needed to be consistent and cohesive with my other illustrations



# PROTOTYPE & TEST

## Back to School

I revisited the same school I had chosen to for the student interviews, Daniel Wright Elementary school in Ohio. Sheryl Hardin and Patricia Toth, both educators at the school, were mentors to me throughout this entire journey. They provided me with current resources available to them in the classroom, as well as valuable insights and ideas to take into consideration. I tested the picture books and flashcards on twenty-two first graders.

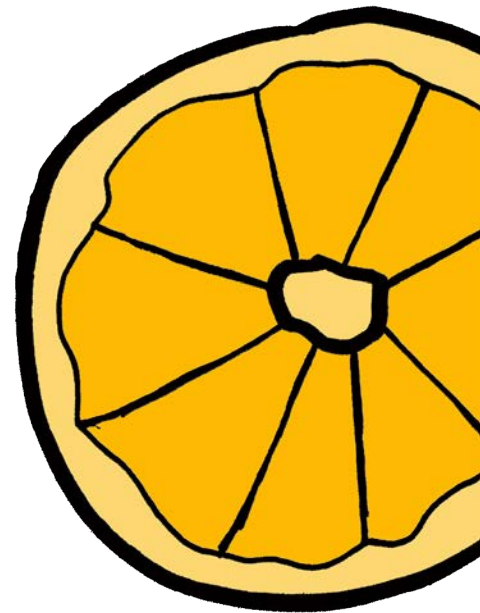




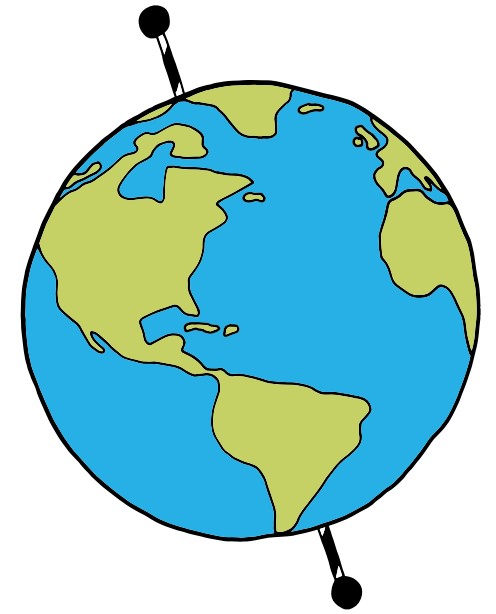
“Education is not the filling of a pail. But the lighting of a fire.”  
*William Butler Yeats*

# DESIGN SOLUTIONS

- Final Mark
- Picture Books
- Flashcards
- Posters
- App / Website



# FINAL MARK





# PICTURE BOOKS

The picture books introduce kids to everyday experiences and environments around the world. One-on-one comparisons are used to show both similarities and differences between Ohio and other countries.



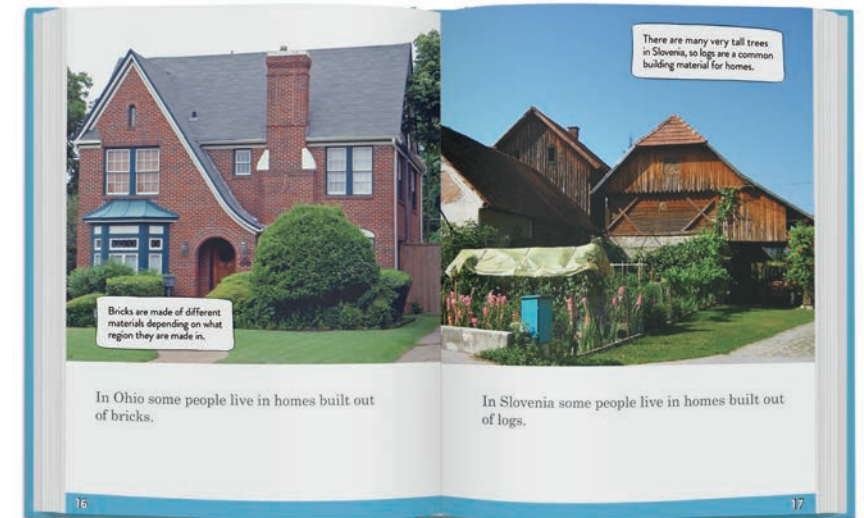
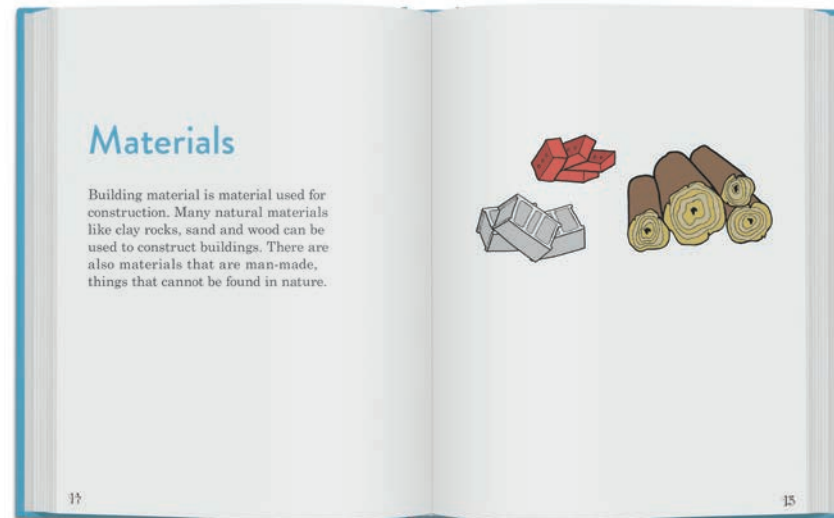
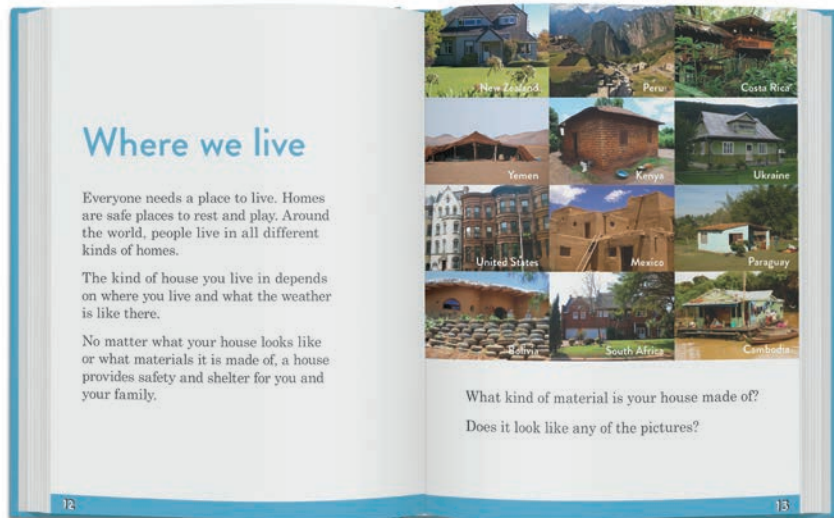
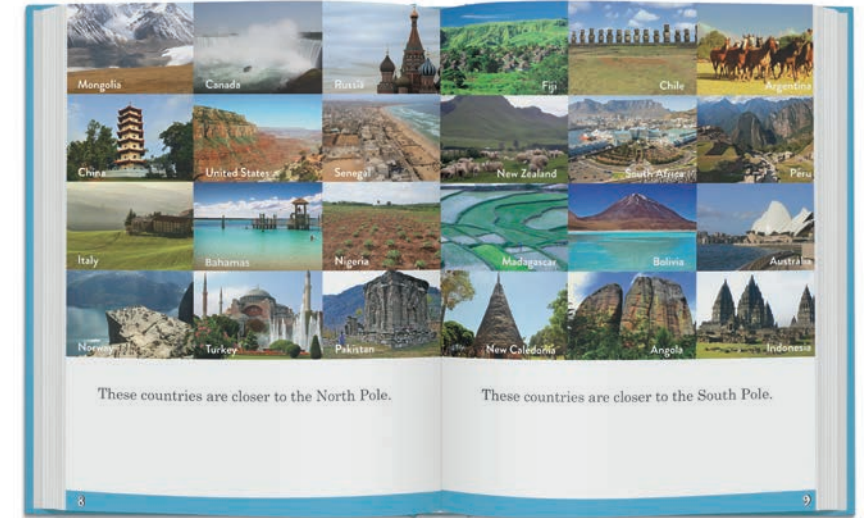
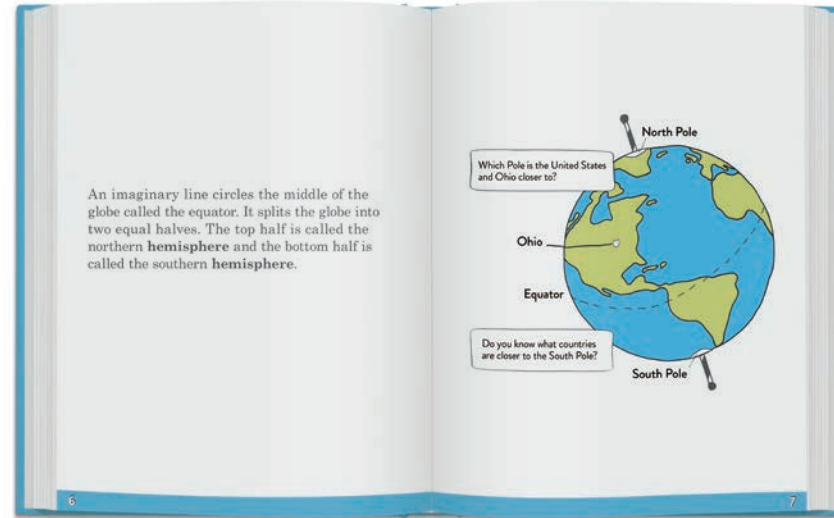
Homes and meals are the topics for first grade. Work and transportation are the topics for second grade.

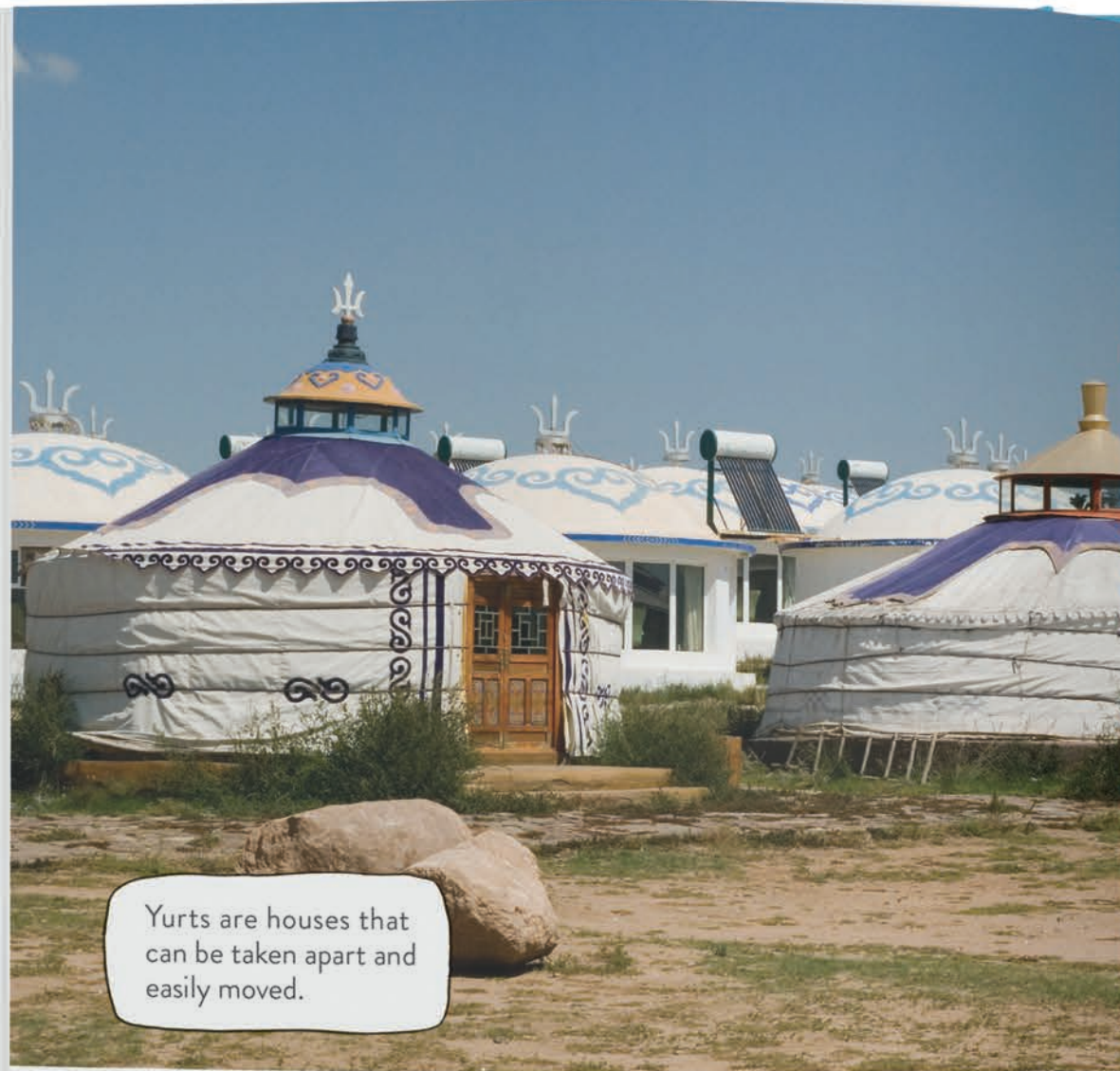
## Four Domains

The topics for the picture books were determined based on the current Ohio learning standards for Social Studies in the first and second grade. In first grade they focus on being an individual member of a family. They begin to understand how families lived long ago and how families live in other cultures. They also begin to build beginning map skills. The two books for first grade focus on homes and meals.

In second grade work serves as an organizing theme. They learn about jobs today and long ago. And they deepen their knowledge for diverse cultures. The two books for second grade focus on work and transportation.

The books were designed to be easily altered to fit any state and their curriculum standards with the framing device and message staying the same. "Ohio" can be changed to any state and it will still translate clearly.





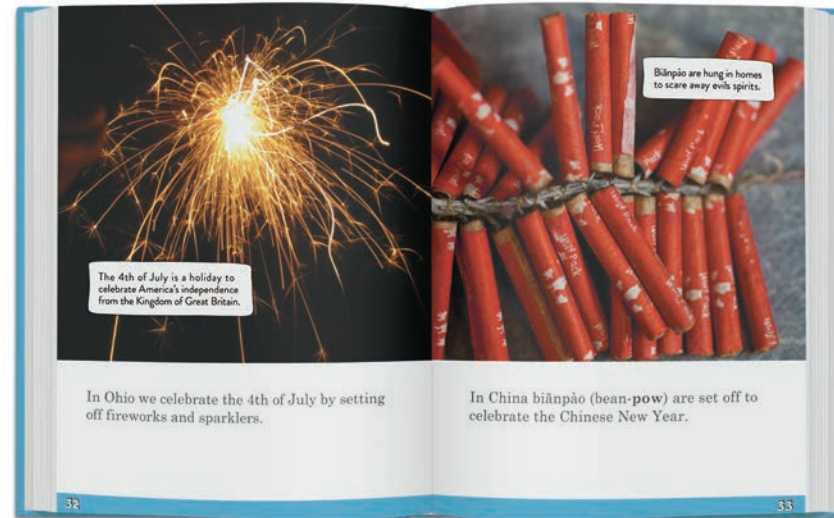
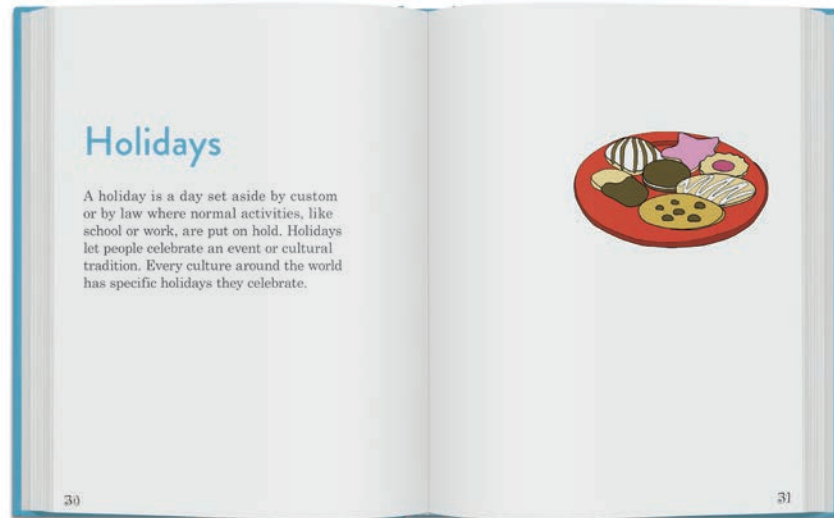
Yurts are houses that can be taken apart and easily moved.

In Mongolia some people live in a yurt (yert).



A khaima allows air to easily flow through it keeping the inside cool.

In Saudi Arabia some people live in a khaima (**khi**-ma) in the desert.





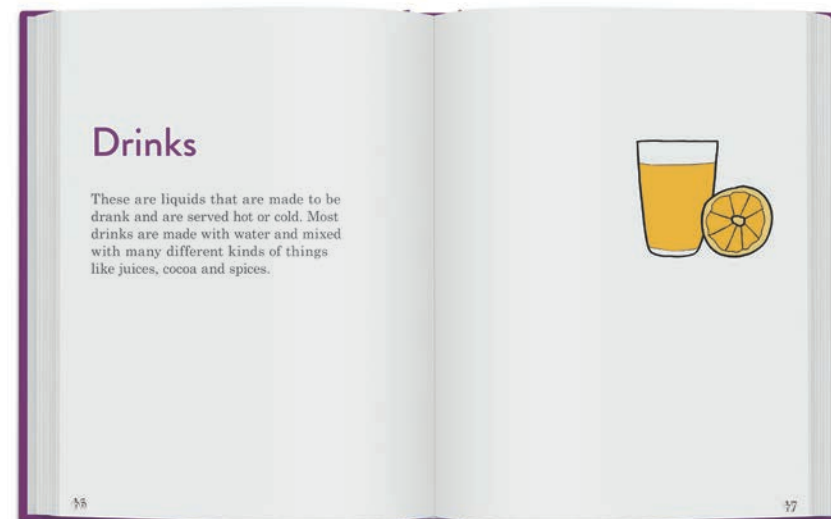
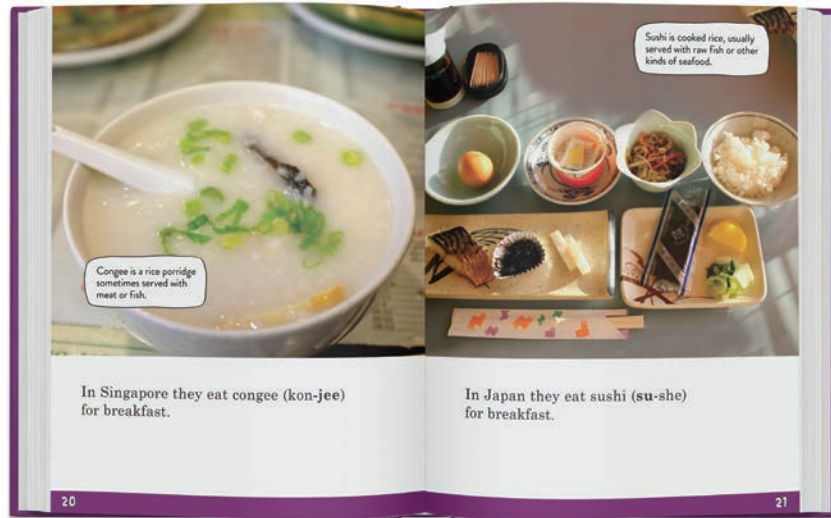
Evidence shows that pancakes could have been the earliest and most common breakfast food eaten in prehistoric time.

In Ohio we eat pancakes for breakfast.



Palacsintas are often eaten in the summer, stuffed with fruit, yogurt and jams.

In Hungary they eat palacsintas (pal-uh-seen-tas) for breakfast.





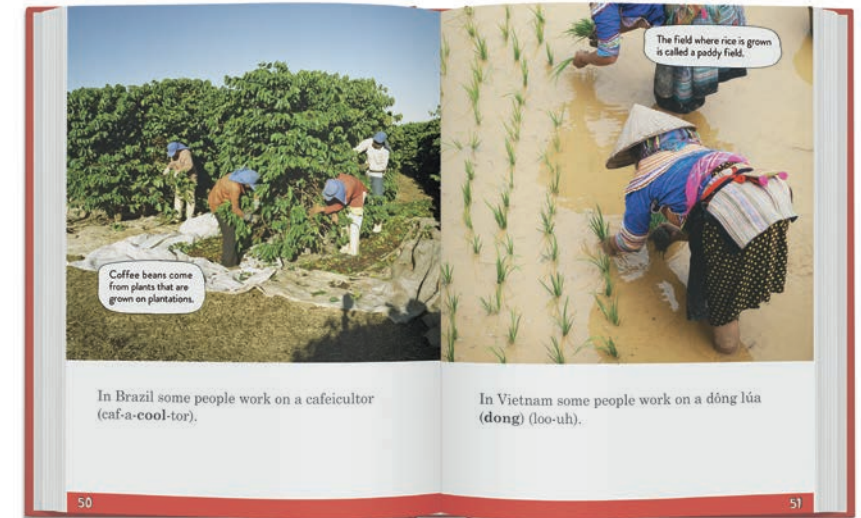
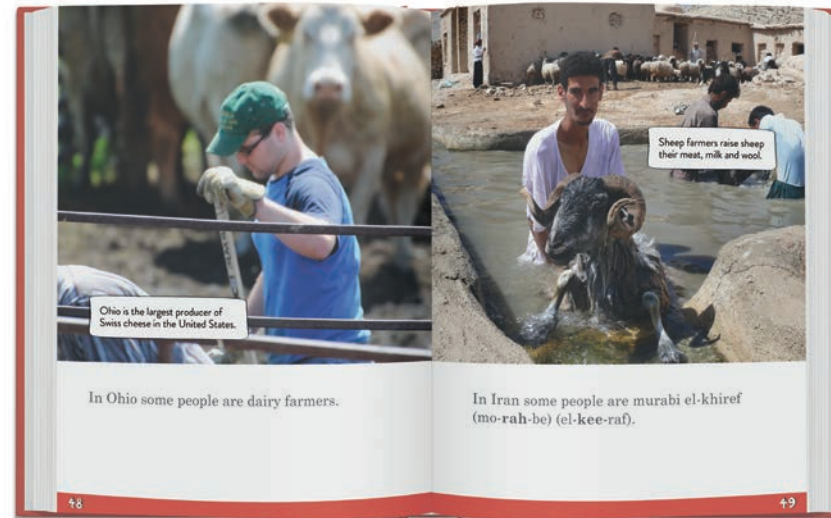
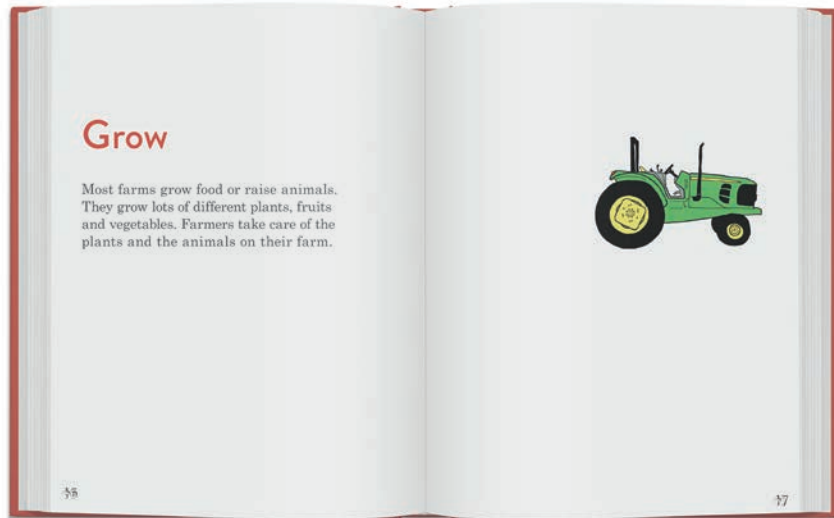
Police officers have many different kinds of responsibilities. The most important one is protecting people in the community.

In Ohio some people work as a police officer.



Male officers wear a traditional hat called a custodian helmet when patrolling by foot.

In England some people work as a bobby.

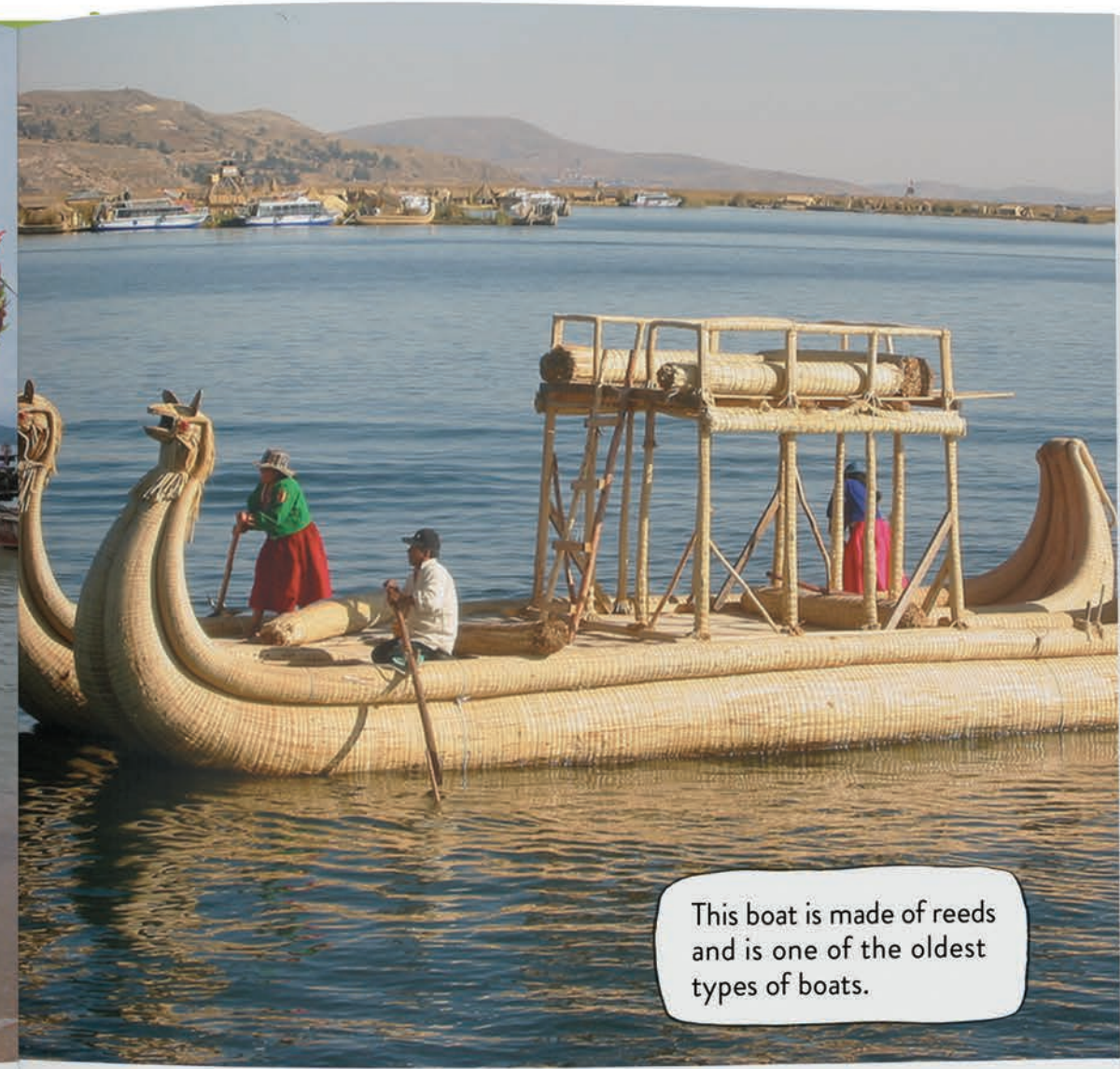






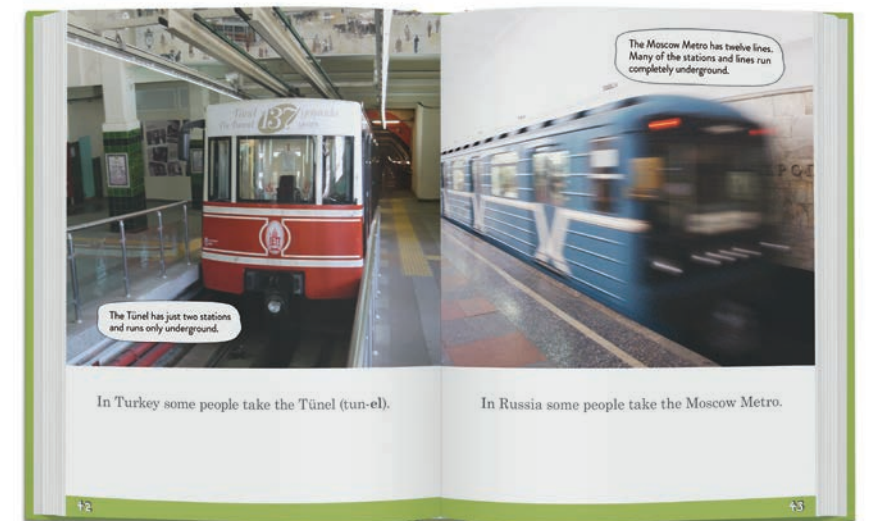
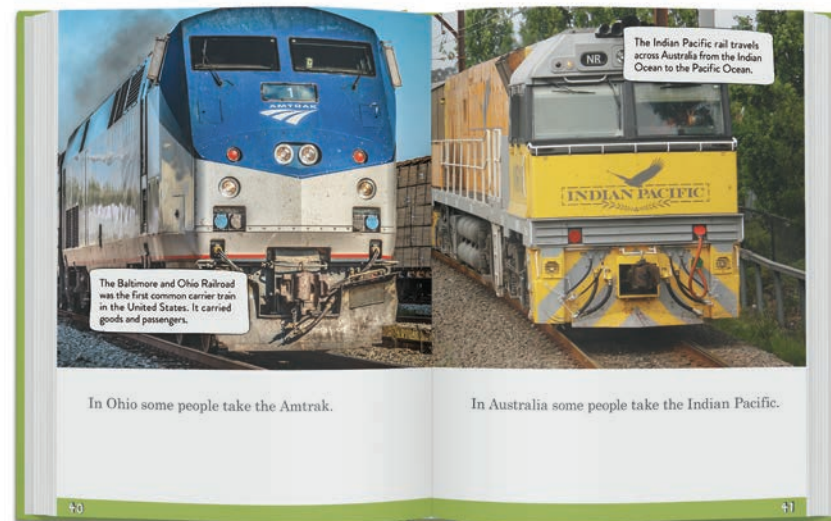
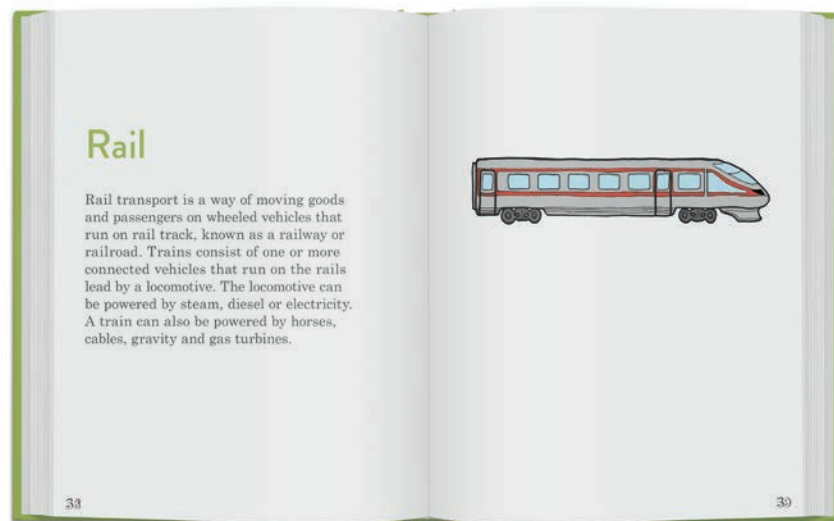
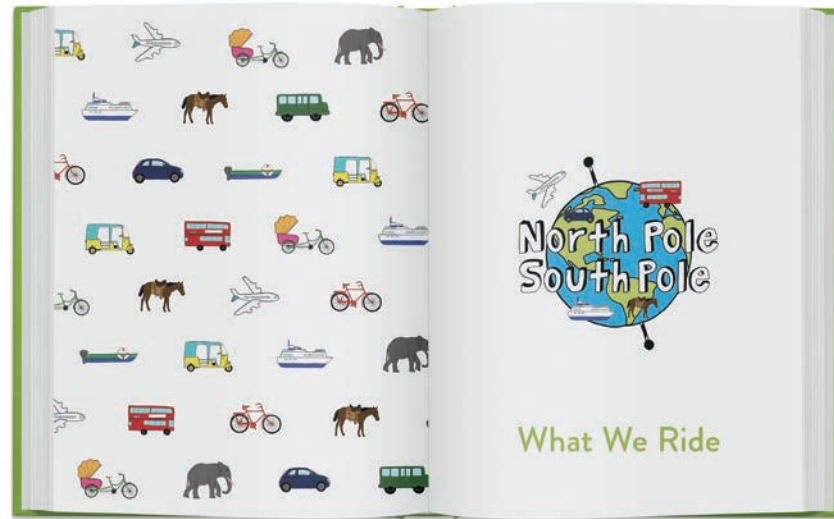
Ruea Hang Yao means long-tail boat.

In Thailand some people ride in a Ruea Hang Yao (roo-ya) (hang) (yow).



This boat is made of reeds and is one of the oldest types of boats.

In Peru some people ride in a totora (toe-toe-ra) boat, a traditional fishing boat.



# FLASHCARDS

The flashcards introduce everyday items from different cultures. They correspond to the four domains of the books and focus on vocabulary and pronunciation.

## Learning Vocabulary and Pronunciation

The flashcards directly relate to the four domains of the picture books. They are 60 cards total, 15 for each domain. They highlight everyday items from different cultures. Non-phonetic respelling was used for the pronunciations in all of the deliverables. This is an informal way of indicating the pronunciation of foreign words. It is done by literally respelling the word using common English words and sounds. The sounds in bold indicate stress and hyphens are used for syllabication.



**KILT**  
(kilt)



A traditional knee-length garment worn by men and boys on special occasions and for sporting events.

Scotland 



**ISRAEL**



**FLEMENCO**  
(fluh-mayn-co)



A kind of Spanish folk music and dance that includes singing, hand clapping and dancing.

Spain 



**MALI**





**MOROCCO**



**NAAN**  
(non)



A puffy bread made with yeast and cooked in a clay oven.


India 




**ITALY**



**SLÆDEHUNDE**  
(slay-day-hoon)



A group of dogs that pull a sled. This is important in arctic areas where no other vehicles can go.

Greenland 





# DO YOU KNOW...

I'm a YURT (yert) from Mongolia.



I'm a BLOCK OF FLATS from England.

## WHAT DIFFERENT KINDS OF HOUSES ARE ALL AROUND THE WORLD?

Everyone needs a place to live. Homes are safe places to rest and play. Around the world, people live in all different kinds of homes. The kind of house you live in depends on where you live and what the weather is like there.



Find out more at: [northpolesouthpole.co.uk](http://northpolesouthpole.co.uk)

# DO YOU KNOW...

I'm a STETHOSKOP (state-hos-cope) from Belgium.



I'm a PYLÔNE DE LA CIRCULATION (pee-lon) (do) (la) (sirk-oo-lay-shun) from Switzerland.

## WHAT DIFFERENT KINDS OF JOBS PEOPLE DO ALL AROUND THE WORLD?

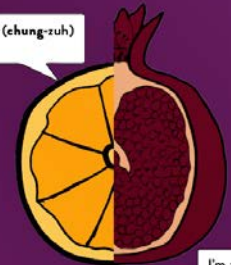
Going to work is an important part of life. At work, people use their skills to complete tasks and earn money. There are many different types of workplaces and different kinds of jobs. Sometimes the kind of work people do depends on where they live.



Find out more at: [northpolesouthpole.co.uk](http://northpolesouthpole.co.uk)

# DO YOU KNOW...

I'm a CHÈNG ZI (chung-zuh) from China.



I'm an ANAR (uh-nar) from Iran.

## WHAT DIFFERENT KINDS OF FOOD IS EATEN ALL AROUND THE WORLD?

Everyone needs food to live. Food helps our bodies to do things during the day like growing, learning, playing and feeling. We eat different kinds of foods depending on the time of day, the kind of occasion, or where we live. Our diets depend on what foods we have access to, which is usually what grows near us.



Find out more at: [northpolesouthpole.co.uk](http://northpolesouthpole.co.uk)

# DO YOU KNOW...

I'm a TUK-TUK  
(took-took)  
from Thailand.



I'm a XANG (sang)  
from Laos.



## WHAT DIFFERENT KINDS OF RIDES ARE USED ALL AROUND THE WORLD?

Everyone uses transportation for the same reasons: to move passengers or goods from one place to another. Many countries have unique modes of transportation and ways to get around.



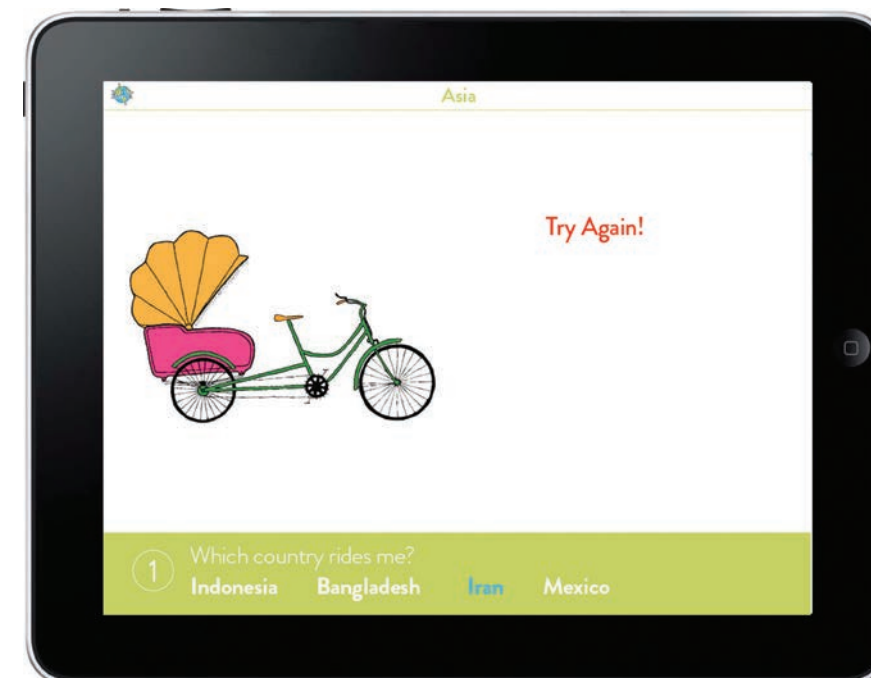
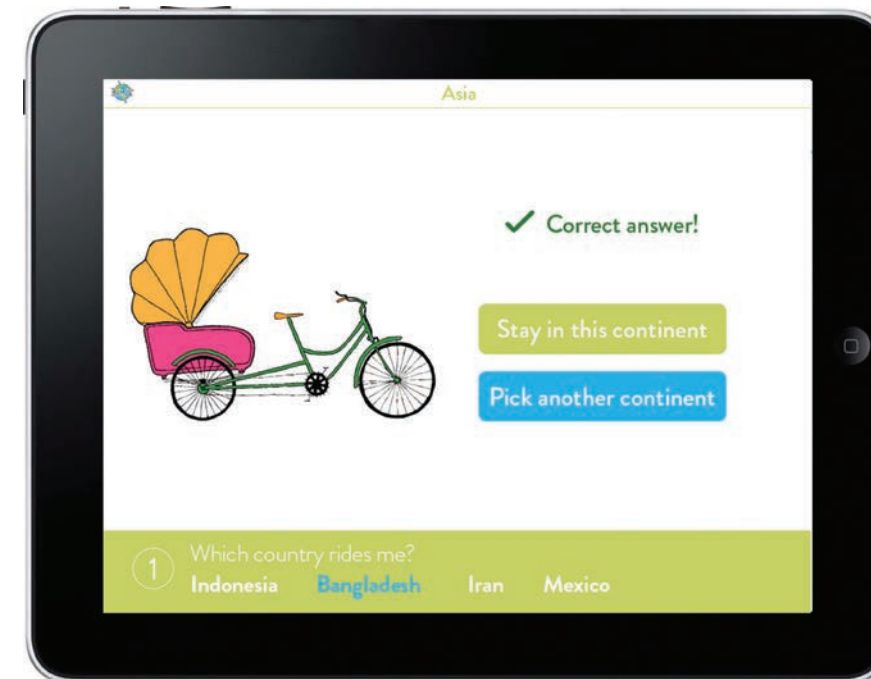
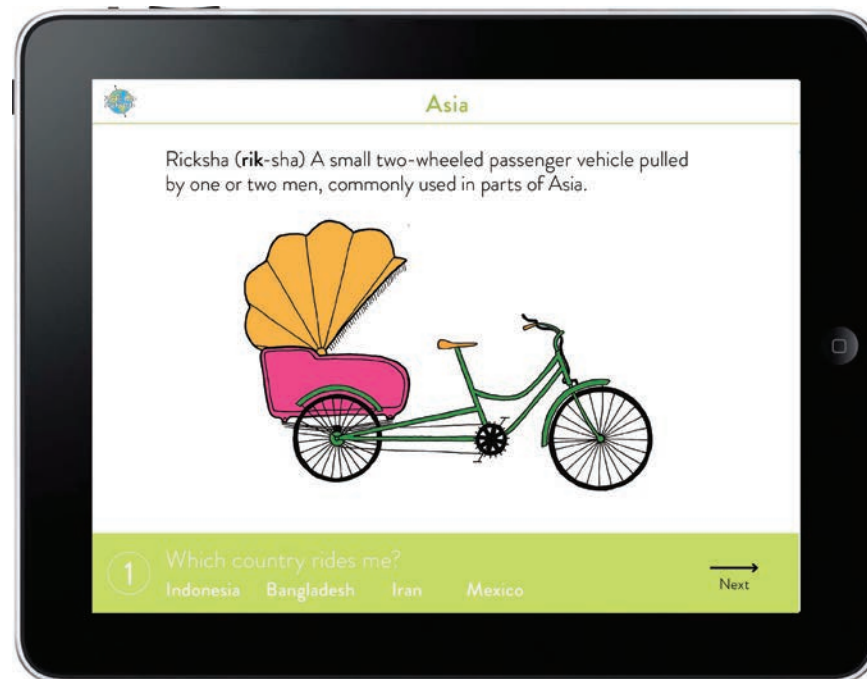
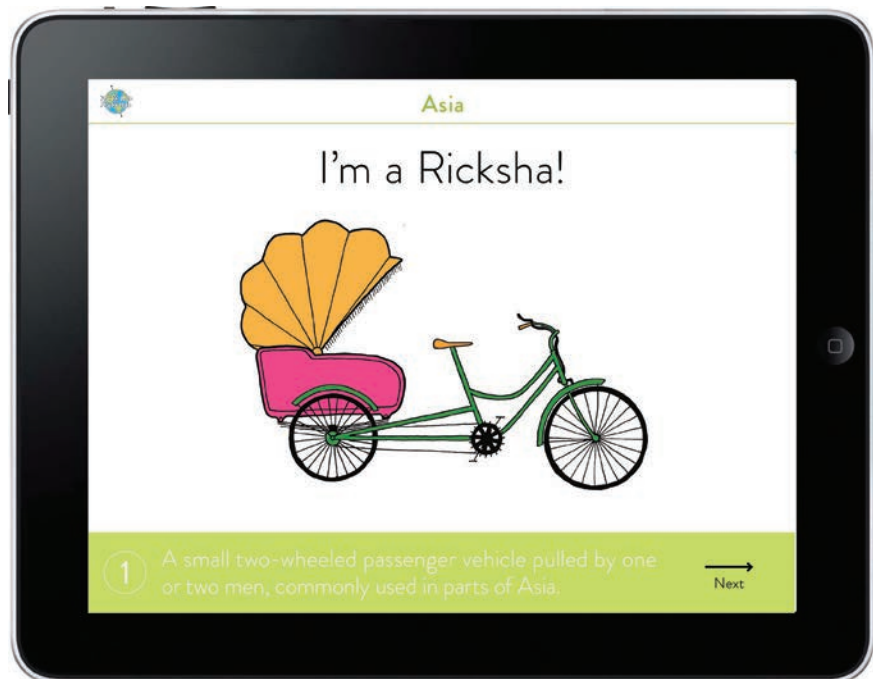
Find out more at:  
[northpolesouthpole.us](http://northpolesouthpole.us)



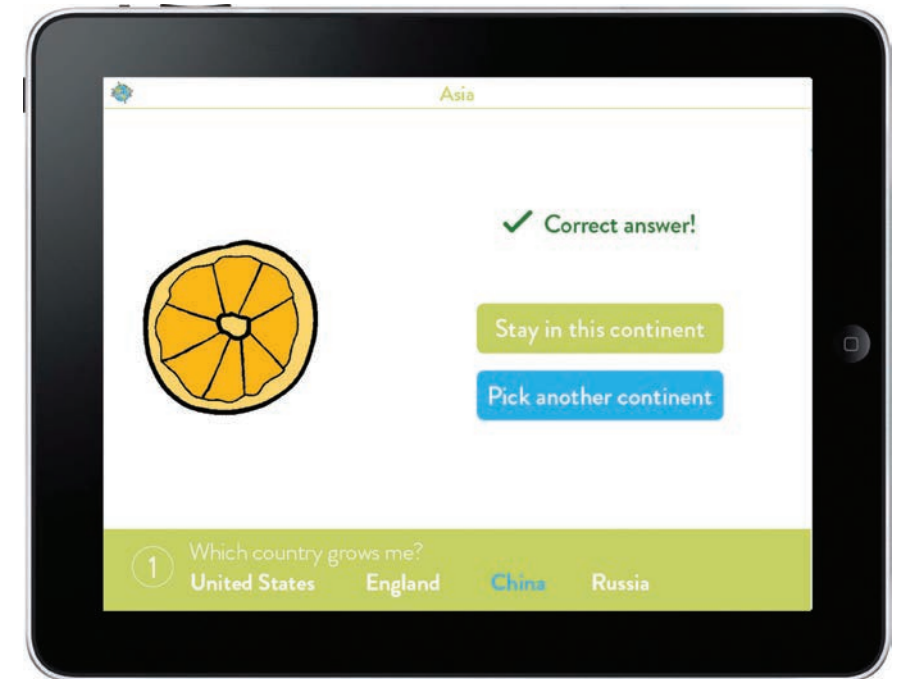
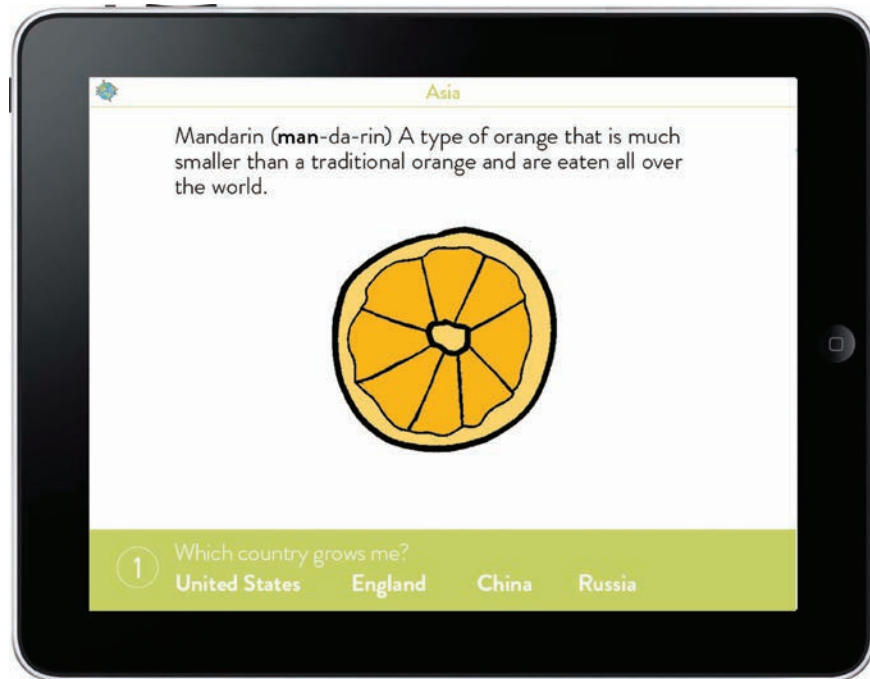
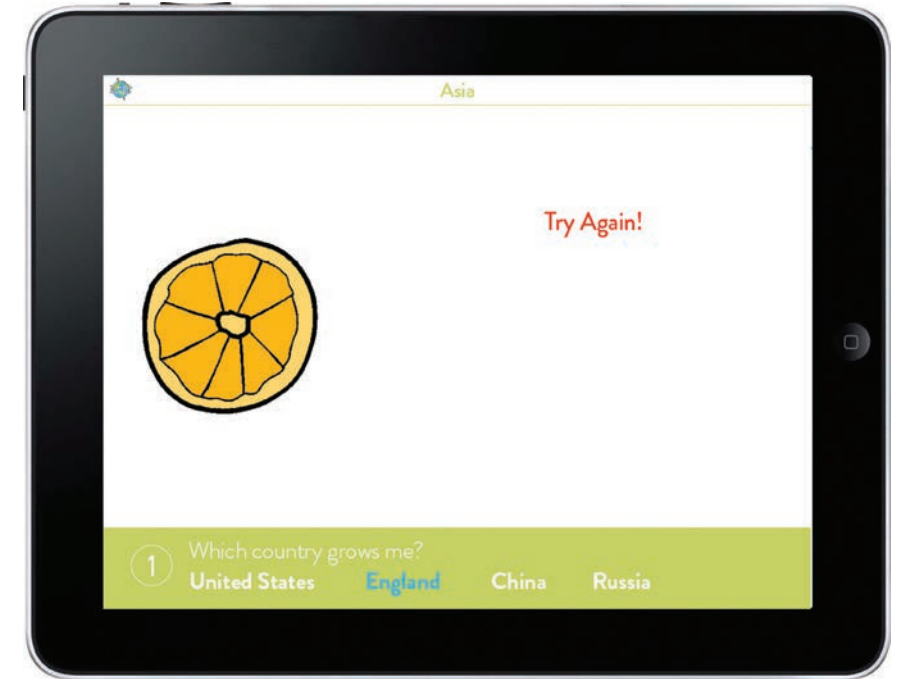
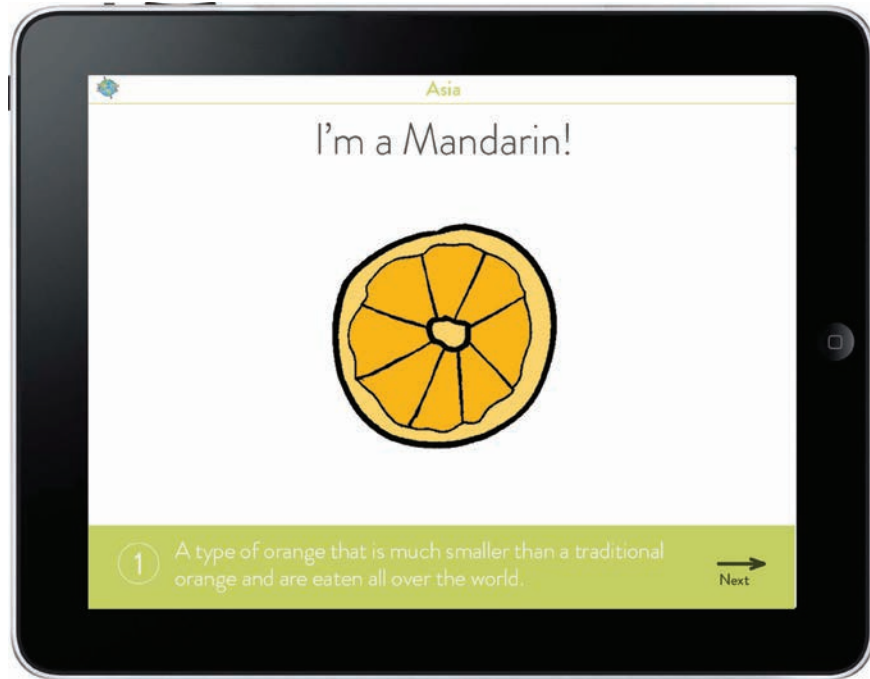


# IPAD APP

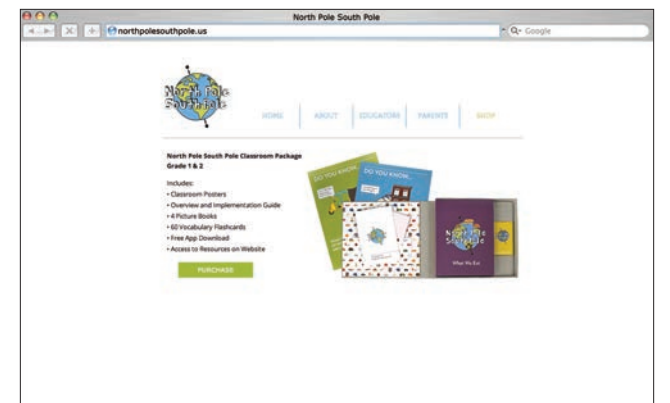
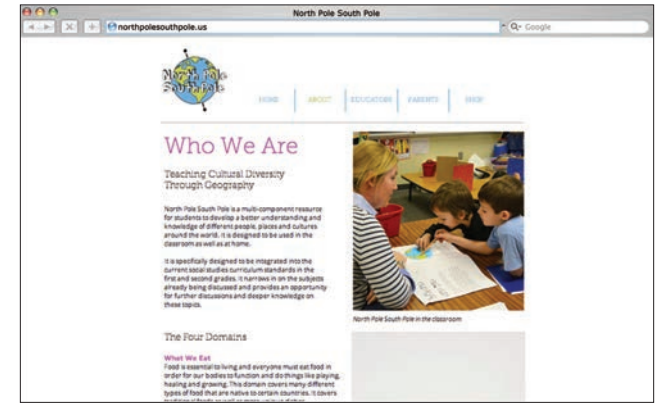
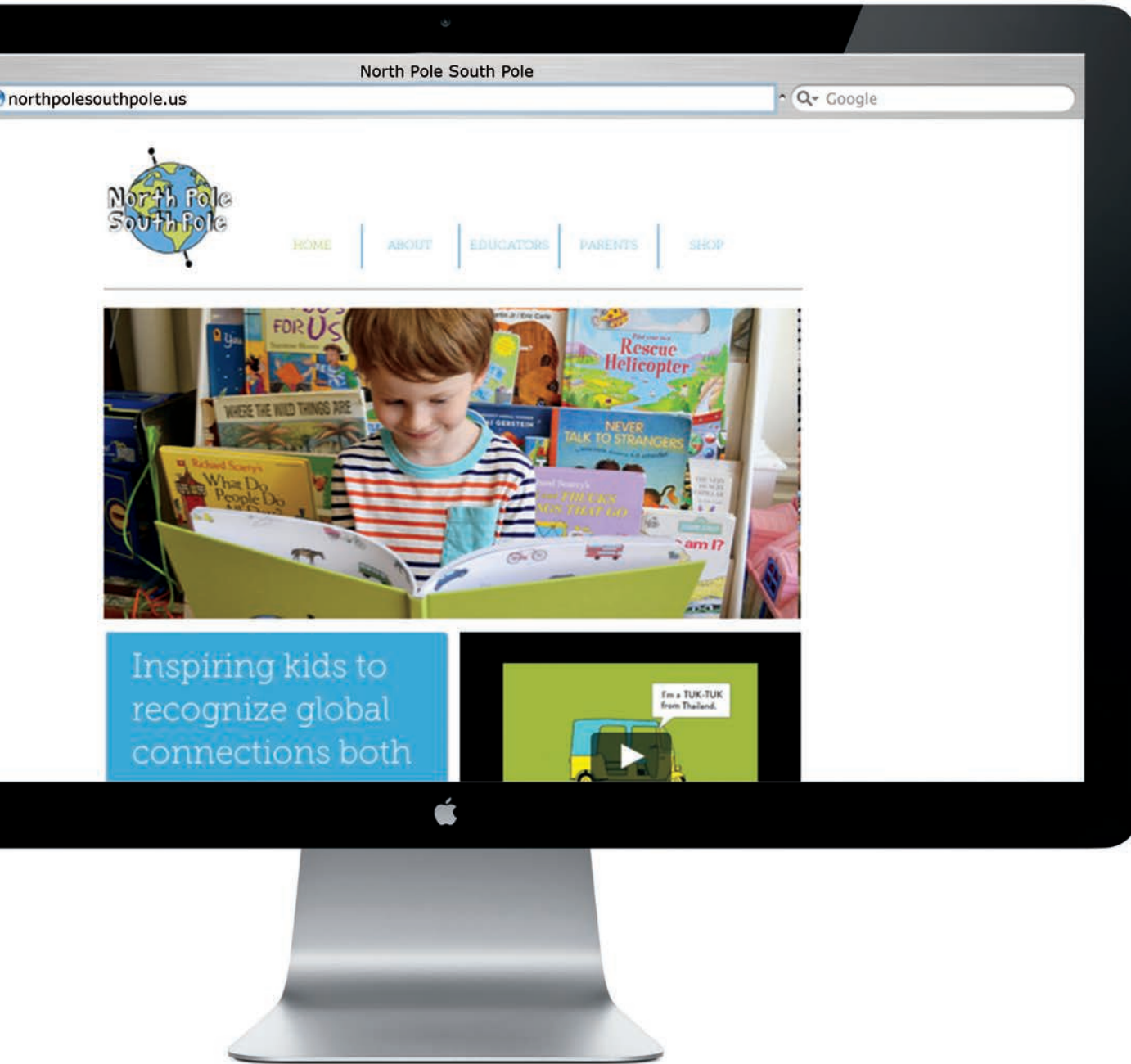








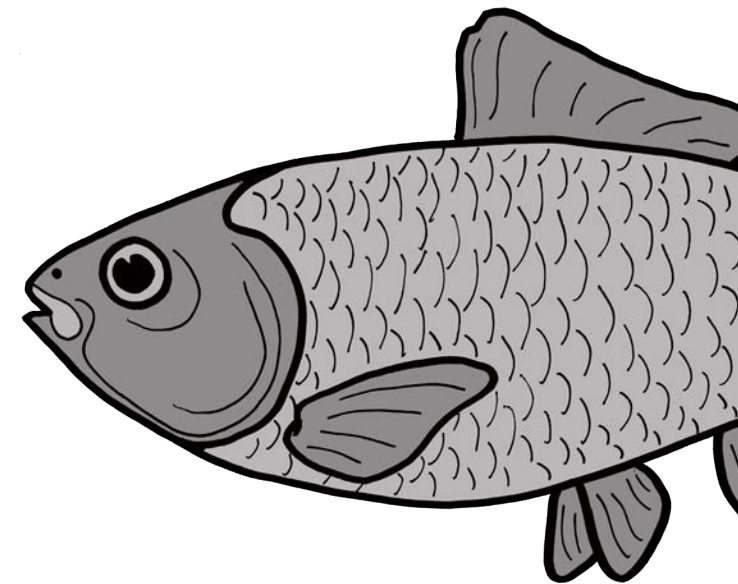
# WEBSITE



# APPENDICES

Sources

Acknowledgments



# BIBLIOGRAPHY

## Books

Bingham, Jane. *A World Of Food: Italy*.  
Minneapolis: Clara House Books, 2010. Print.

Ganeri, Anita. *A World of Food: India*.  
Minneapolis: Clara House Books, 2010. Print.

Senker, Cath. *A World of Food: Lebanon*.  
Minneapolis: Clara House Books, 2010. Print.

Fox, Mem. *Whoever You Are*.  
Illus. Leslie Staub. Orlando: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1997. Print.

Tavangar, Homa Sabet. *Growing Up Global*.  
New York: Ballantine Books, 2009. Print.

Dorros, Arthur. *Abuela*.  
Illus. Elisa Kleven. New York: Dutton Children's Books, 1991. Print.

Ho, Winnie. *It's a Small World*.  
Illus. Nancy Kubo. New York: Disney Press, 2011. Print.

Sherman, Richard M., Robert B. Sherman. *It's a Small World*.  
Illus. Joey Chou. New York: Disney Press, 2011. Print.

Adamson, Heather. *Homes in Many Cultures*.  
Mankato: Captstone Press, 2008. Print.

Alexander, Heather. *A Children's Introduction to The World*.  
Illus. Meredith Hamilton. New York: Black Dog & Leventhal Publishers, 2010. Print.

Spinelli, Jerry. *I Can Be Anything*.  
Illus. Jimmy Liao. New York: Little, Brown & Company, 2010. Print.

Hollyer, Beatrice. *Let's Eat! What Children Eat Around the World*.  
New York: Henry Holt & Company, 2003. Print.

Russell, Henry. *Countries of the World: Russia*.  
Washington, D.C.: National Geographic Society, 2008. Print.

Adler, David A. *Time Zones*.  
Illus. Edward Miller. New York: Holiday House, 2010. Print.

Hibbert, Clare. *A World of Food: China*.  
Minneapolis: Clara House Books, 2010. Print.

Barker, Geoff. *A World of Food: Mexico*.  
Minneapolis: Clara House Books, 2010. Print.

## Online

Bingham, Jane. *A World Of Food: Italy*.  
Minneapolis: Clara House Books, 2010. Print.

Ganeri, Anita. *A World of Food: India*.  
Minneapolis: Clara House Books, 2010. Print.

Senker, Cath. *A World of Food: Lebanon*.  
Minneapolis: Clara House Books, 2010. Print.

Fox, Mem. *Whoever You Are*.  
Illus. Leslie Staub. Orlando: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1997. Print.

Tavangar, Homa Sabet. *Growing Up Global*.  
New York: Ballantine Books, 2009. Print.

Dorros, Arthur. *Abuela*.  
Illus. Elisa Kleven. New York: Dutton Children's Books, 1991. Print.

Ho, Winnie. *It's a Small World*.  
Illus. Nancy Kubo. New York: Disney Press, 2011. Print.

Sherman, Richard M., Robert B. Sherman. *It's a Small World*.  
Illus. Joey Chou. New York: Disney Press, 2011. Print.

Adamson, Heather. *Homes in Many Cultures*.  
Mankato: Captstone Press, 2008. Print.

Alexander, Heather. *A Children's Introduction to The World*.  
Illus. Meredith Hamilton. New York: Black Dog & Leventhal Publishers, 2010. Print.

Spinelli, Jerry. *I Can Be Anything*.  
Illus. Jimmy Liao. New York: Little, Brown & Company, 2010. Print.

Hollyer, Beatrice. *Let's Eat! What Children Eat Around the World*.  
New York: Henry Holt & Company, 2003. Print.

Russell, Henry. *Countries of the World: Russia*.  
Washington, D.C.: National Geographic Society, 2008. Print.

Adler, David A. *Time Zones*.  
Illus. Edward Miller. New York: Holiday House, 2010. Print.

Hibbert, Clare. *A World of Food: China*.  
Minneapolis: Clara House Books, 2010. Print.

Barker, Geoff. *A World of Food: Mexico*.  
Minneapolis: Clara House Books, 2010. Print.



# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

## Friends and Family

Without your continued love and support I could have never made it to this point. I am so thankful for each and everyone of you.

## Advisors

Thank you for pushing me week after week to turn my ideas into reality. Without Dave Gottwald's help and support my thesis would not be where it is today.

To Sheryl Hardin for taking the time to answer my questions and for providing feedback from an educator's point of view. I could not have done it without you and your awesome first grade class.

Thank you Patricia Toth for spending hours reviewing and editing copy as well as advising me along this entire journey. Your insights were invaluable to my thesis.

To Demah Alsinan for providing me with your wisdom and guidance. Without your Sunday design sessions in the final weeks this would not have come together so seamlessly. Shoukran.

