

Helen Crocker Russell Library of Horticulture
Selections from the Children's Book Collection:
Folktales and Legends

North America

The First Strawberries: A Cherokee Story. Bruchac, Joseph.

New York : Dial Books for Young Readers, c1993.

A quarrel between the first man and the first woman is reconciled when the Sun causes strawberries to grow out of the earth. Early readers. (J) SB385 .B83 1993

The Golden Flower: A Taino Myth from Puerto Rico. Jaffe, Nina.

New York: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 1996.

Retelling of the Puerto Rican Taino Indian creation myth about a child who plants seeds which develop into a forest; in the forest a pumpkin grows and breaks open releasing the ocean and its creatures. Early readers. (J)SB347 .J18 1996

Dragonfly's Tale. Rodanas, Kristina. New York : Clarion Books, c1991.

After a poor corn harvest two children regain the Corn Maidens' blessings for their people with the aid of a cornstalk toy, the dragonfly. Early readers. (J)SB191.M2 R611 1991

Asia

Grandfather Cherry Blossom. McCarthy, Ralph F.

Tokyo; New York: Kodansha International, 1993.

This is a version of a Japanese folk fable illustrating greed and unselfishness in the natures of two neighbors. Early readers. (J)SB366 .M127 1993

Mangoes & Bananas. Scott, Nathan Kumar. United Kingdom : Tara, c2006.

An Indonesian folktale about how a hungry monkey who loves bananas is tricked by mouse deer who loves mangoes. Story is followed by a detailed explanation of the illustrations in the traditional Indian textile art style called Kalamkari. Early readers. (J)SB379.A1 Sc85 2006

Judge Rabbit and the Tree Spirit: A Folktale from Cambodia. Wall, Lina Mao.

San Francisco, CA: Children's Book Press, c1991.

A Cambodian folk tale about a rabbit that solves the problem of a mischievous tree spirit who has taken on human form. Early readers. (J)QK83 .Sp13 1991

Africa

Nama Kwa's Garden. Clanahan, Mary. Cape Town: Struik, 2005.

This folktale, inspired by the magical transformation of Namaqualand each spring from near desert to fairyland flower carpets, tells the story of villagers' creation of a surprise garden as a gift for their chief. Advanced readers. (J)QK396 .C529 2005

Anansi and the Magic Stick. Kimmel, Eric A. New York : Holiday House, c2001.

Anansi the Spider steals Hyena's magic stick so he won't have to do gardening chores, but when the stick's magic won't stop, he gets more than he bargained for.

Early readers. (J)SB453 .K571 2001

Anansi and the Magic Yams: A West African Folk Tale. Troughton, Joanna.

London: Blackie Children's Books, 1994.

A retelling of the Ashanti folktale about a trickster spider who greedily takes the special magic yams from the Spirits' garden. Early readers. (J)SB211.Y3 T757 1994

Europe

The Green Mist. Sewall, Marcia. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1999.

A retelling of a Lincolnshire, England folktale, in which a dying child is made well by the spring rituals intended to placate the mischievous beings hiding in the earth.

Early readers. (J)S519 .Se86 1999

Slop! A Welsh Folktale. MacDonald, Margaret Read. Golden, CO: Fulcrum Kids, c1997.

To appease their tiny neighbors, an old couple tidily compost their food scraps. Early readers. (J)S654 .M144 1997

The Enormous Potato. Davis, Aubrey. Buffalo, N. Y. : Kids Can Press, c1998.

In this adaptation of a Russian folktale, entitled The Turnip, a farmer's potato grows to such an enormous size that he needs the help of his wife, his daughter, and a host of animals to harvest it. Early readers. (J) SB211.P8 D29 1998

General

Earth Tales from Around the World. Caduto, Michael J. Golden, CO: Fulcrum Pub., 1997.

A collection of traditional folktales from over 40 different countries. Advanced readers.

(J) QK83 .C115 1997

Updated November 2023. Books are listed alphabetically by the author's last name. For more educational resources, please ask a librarian.