



My Family Tree and Me

By *Dušan Petricić*

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My Family Tree and Me By Dušan Petricić

This one-of-a-kind picture book provides a beautifully simple introduction to the concept of family ancestry. It uses two stories in one to explore a small boy's family tree: the boy tells the family story of his father's side starting from the front of the book, and that of his mother's side starting from the back of the book. Four previous generations are introduced for each, from his great-great-grandparents to his parents. The grand finale in the center of the book reveals the boy's entire extended family, shown in one drawing with all the members from both sides identified by their relationship to him. Of particular interest is the cultural diversity of the boy's family, which includes European and Asian ancestors, and readers can visually interpret the family members' physical characteristics as they get passed on through the generations.

Award-winning illustrator Dušan Petrić's classic artwork contains thoughtfully selected details with a touch of play and humor. And, since most of the story is told in the art, this is a wonderful tool for enhancing children's visual literacy as they spend time making connections and looking for clues. This book makes a great springboard for lessons on describing and sharing family histories and naming family relationships. Applicable in-class activities could include having children build their own family trees or imagine and draw portraits of their ancestors featuring period and cultural details. This title also lends itself to discussions on multiculturalism in families and in the larger community.

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

PreS-Gr 2—As this unique book so ably displays, one's family tree may have unusual branches from far-reaching places and different traditions. The story pulls readers in with its front and back covers of family members perched on their part of the family tree. Multigenerations of a boy's family start on one side with his father's close relatives and on the other side with his mother's family, beginning with his great-great-grandparents and converging in a current family portrait at the book's center. Lightly inked and washed with watercolor, each small family grouping forms the background portrait of a succeeding generation—figures in the clothing of their day with detailed surroundings that hint of their history. Small hand-drawn arrows in the page corners and instructions along the edges direct readers to the next page, and the next, or advise them of the best way to view the other side of the family. Children may even spot family features within this diverse group: the final portrait of multi-ethnic and non-traditional family members includes a wide range of ages (from newborn to grandparents), parents, aunts, uncles, siblings, partners, the family dogs, and the boy's neighborhood friend. Brief text follows a pattern and adds humor. **VERDICT** This is a must-have title with an emphasis on the diversity and the love that binds families together.—Mary Elam, Learning Media Services, Plano ISD, TX

Review

... his globe-spanning family tree ... All are drawn with live-wire lines and witty, humanizing details ... Both sides lead to the showstopping centerpiece. *New York Times*

What a wonderful way to have a discussion with a child about his roots! ... this could spark a sharing of one's background and fostering a sense of pride in how our families make each one of us special. *CM Magazine*

This is a must-have title with an emphasis on the diversity and the love that binds families together. *School Library Journal*

Petric? presents a scavenger hunt, urging readers to seek out connections in their own family trees. *National Post*

It's a strong, warm visual representation of all that goes in to making a family. *Publishers Weekly*

Children's thinking about their own extended families will appreciate this clever picture book. *Booklist*

Cartoonist Petric?'s gift for caricature is put to joyful use here, showing one family in all its variations and particular beauty. *The Horn Book Magazine, Starred review*

Budding genealogists will enjoy poring over this illustrated family history. *Kirkus Reviews*

... this is vivacious, comic and wonderfully characterful. *Toronto Star*

About the Author

Du'an Petric? is an award-winning children's book designer and illustrator whose books include *The Enormous Potato* and *Lickety-Split*. He lives in Toronto, Ontario.

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Donna Miller:

In this 21st millennium, people become competitive in each and every way. By being competitive now, people have to do something to make themselves survive, being in the middle of often the crowded place and notice by simply surrounding. One thing that oftentimes many people have underestimated that for a while is reading. Yep, by reading a publication your ability to survive improves then having a chance to stand out than others is high. For yourself who want to start reading the book, we give you this specific My Family Tree and Me book as a beginning and daily reading guide. Why, because this book is usually more than just a book.

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Hattie Robb:

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Juan Jensen:

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