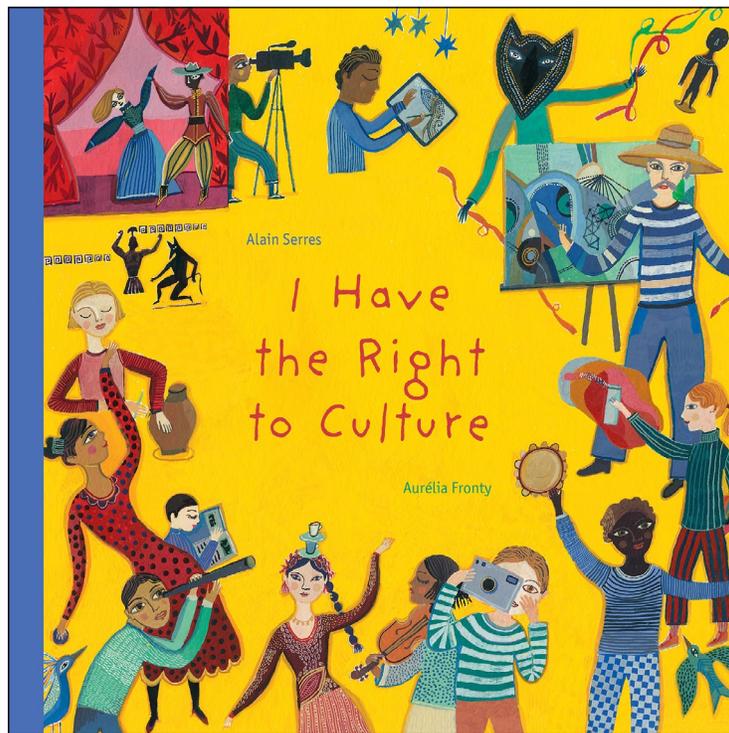




# GROUNDWOOD STUDY GUIDES

## I Have the Right to Culture

*Written by Alain Serres*  
*Illustrated by Aurélia Fronty*



The third book in the award-winning I Have the Right series explores a child's right to culture, including music, art, dance and much more.

### **CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS**

Ages 3 to 6 / Grades PreK to 1

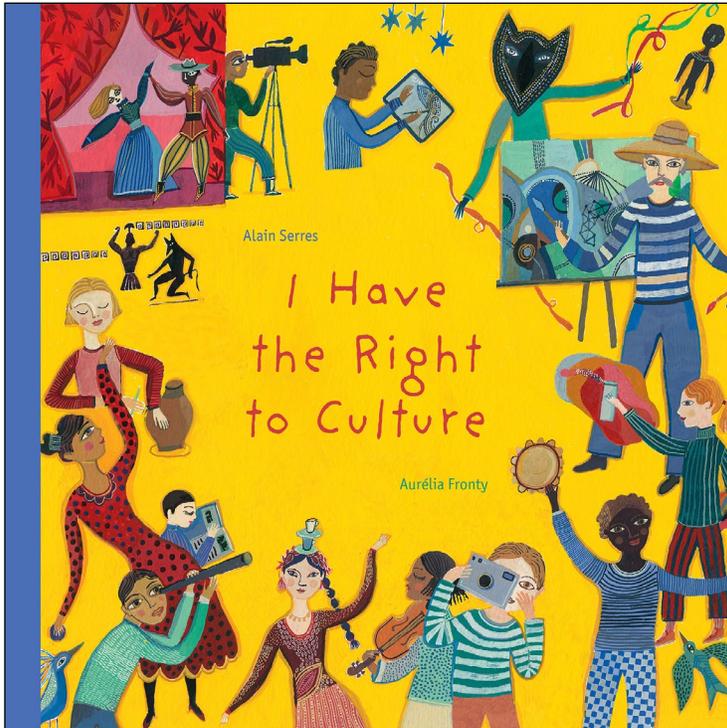
JUVENILE NONFICTION / Social Activism & Volunteering / People & Places / General

Full-color illustrations / 10 x 10 / 48 pages

Hardcover with jacket / \$19.99 / 978-1-77306-490-1

Ebook / 978-1-77306-491-8

[groundwoodbooks.com](http://groundwoodbooks.com)



## BOOK DESCRIPTION

Finding beauty in the world is a child’s right. Can I learn about inventions around the world? Can I listen to the music of my country? And can I, too, dress up and perform on a stage? Yes! I have the right to do all these things because it is proclaimed in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

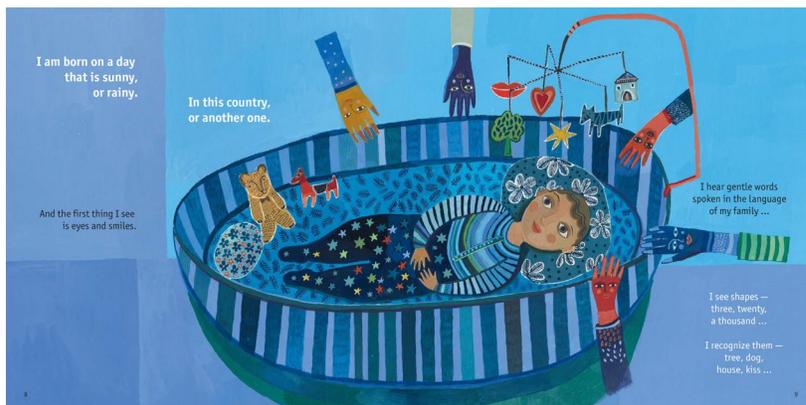
The third book in the bestselling I Have the Right series, *I Have the Right to Culture*, explores art and cultural forms through the lens of social justice. See what it means to be a child who has the right to be curious and to experience all of humanity’s shared knowledge, including music, art, dance and more!

## PRE-READING

### INTRODUCE THE BOOK

Before reading the story, discuss the cover and the title. Use some of the following prompts to facilitate your discussion:

- What do you notice about the illustration on the front cover? Look closely at the children. How are they alike? How are they different? Do you think they both have some of the same needs and wants? What are they?
- Make a prediction of what you think the book will be about.
- Explain what the title of the book means: *I Have a Right to Culture*. Ask: What is a right? Record student responses on chart paper.
- Explain to students what a right is and how children’s rights came in to being. Say: *A long time ago, people from all over the world got together to talk about children. They all thought that children were special. They thought that it didn’t matter if children were big or little. It didn’t matter what a child’s language and culture was. It didn’t matter what things a child liked or what things they didn’t like. They recognized that ALL children were special. They wrote down a list of rules to make sure that children everywhere could be safe, happy and healthy. These people decided that every child in the world should have these things — and they called them “rights.”*
- Why do you think the illustrator might have chosen to show many kids on the cover instead of showing just one child on the cover?
- Take students on a picture walk through the book as you explain what “culture” is. Show students many examples of culture throughout the book.
- Ask students to share one or two cultural experiences they have had.



## POST-READING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

After reading the story, discuss the meaning of the title again. What do you think that the author means when he says, “I have a right to culture”?

As a class, discuss what is happening on each page. Ask students to think about if they have had any of the same experiences. Ask students to discuss cultural things that they would like to experience. Ask students why this is important to them. Ask students how that experience could help them in life.

Turn to page 25 in the book. Read the text aloud:

*The child who never knew about any of this, who never walked around a sculpture, never made black brush strokes on soft paper ...*

*would be as sad as a thousand birds who never learned how to fly.*

Ask students to discuss what the author meant when writing this page. Ask students if they agree with the author. Why or why not?

Turn to page 29. Read the following text aloud:

*When their family has no money, when their school is too far away for their small feet to walk, they grow poorly, like plants without fresh water.*

Ask what the author is saying here. Do you agree? Why or why not?

Encourage students to think of other rights that children should have. Discuss why children’s rights are important.

Discuss with students the commonalities of kids around the world, the differences, and what kids can learn about each other and their cultures.

Discuss how the details in the illustrations help convey the meaning of the story. Have students explain how the illustrations tell the story, citing specific places in the book.

## EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

### WHAT MAKES YOU HAPPY?

Give each group of students a set of cards displaying statements relating to culture, which could include some or all of the following:

- Learning a different language
- Performing in a play
- Visiting other parts of the world
- Going to an art museum
- Reading lots of books
- Listening to all kinds of music
- Taking dance lessons
- Hearing stories from parents and grandparents about their culture and tradition
- Taking art classes
- Singing
- Eating foods from around the world
- Learning to play an instrument
- Attending a circus
- Attending a play or musical

Ask the students to look at the statements on the cards and discuss them. As a group, they should agree which card describes the most important thing they can do themselves to ensure that they learn about various cultures and arts. They should then pick the two cards which are next important and so on, until they are left with the one they consider the least important. Involve pupils in a class discussion to see if the groups agree and what kind of actions pupils themselves can take to learn about the arts and culture of the world.

## WHO DO YOU LEARN FROM?

Ask students to make a list of who / what they learn from. The list may look something like this:

*I learn from: teachers, school, friends, parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, brothers, sisters, pets, nature, books, television, internet, going places and local events.*

Next, ask students to write or draw about one thing that they have learned recently. This could be a new dance, how to cook something, playing an instrument, etc. Have students to share about their newly learned experience.

## 8 QUESTIONS FOR YOUR ELDERS

In order for children to learn about themselves from their elders, ask students to find an elder from their family or community and ask the following questions. When they come back to class ask them to tell the class one thing they learned.

1. Where was I born?
2. What is my full name? Do I have a nickname? What does my name mean?
3. What languages does my family speak? Teach me how to say hello and goodbye in another language.
4. Does our culture have any unique dances? Can you teach me?
5. What are some foods from our culture? Teach me to make one dish.
6. Where did our family come from? How did we get here?
7. Can you teach me how to sing a song that your mom or dad taught you?
8. What are some stories that have been passed down from our culture?



## DO WE WANT IT OR DO WE NEED IT?

- Work in pairs to have a class discussion around wants and needs. Demonstrate that claiming rights is not the same as being able to do what you, as an individual, want. Have student pairs complete the following sentence: “What I’d really like to have/do is ...”
- Repeat three or four times to get a range of responses.
- As a class, share examples. Discuss whether what has been chosen is essential for everyone.
- Ask, Is it something that everybody wants? Should it be the right of everyone to have this?
- What would happen if everyone had this? Would anyone be harmed or suffer as a result?

## RIGHTS COME WITH RESPONSIBILITIES

Refer to the children’s rights listed on page 42 of the text. Copy each right on an index card. Give each student a “right” card. In turn, give the students the opportunity to share their right, and then, in groups, think of one or two responsibilities that correspond to that right. The students can then be encouraged to list the responsibilities in order of priority. What is the ultimate responsibility attached to that particular right?

## WE ALL HAVE RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Help students to develop a class charter that they all agree to respect and uphold. This could be displayed in the classroom and include statements concerning behavior and conduct, relationships, responsibilities, participation, protection, etc. Have each student sign the charter. Refer to the charter when needed to remind students of their rights and responsibilities.

## AUTHOR AND ILLUSTRATOR BIOGRAPHIES



**ALAIN SERRES** was once a kindergarten teacher who was inspired by his young students to write children’s books. He has since published more than one hundred titles for children of all ages, many of which have been translated into other languages. Alain founded the highly regarded French publishing house Rue du Monde, whose mission is to provide children with books that allow them to question and imagine the world.



**AURÉLIA FRONTY** studied textile design at l’école Duperré in Paris before she began to illustrate children’s books. Her colorful, naïve-style art is inspired by her Catalan roots as well as her travels in Africa and Asia. She has illustrated more than forty titles, which have been published around the world. She has also exhibited her art in France and in the United Kingdom.