Have a great summer of discovery and fun!

One Country, Many Cultures

Hola! Bonjour! Ciao! Hello!

The United States has always been thought of as a “Melting Pot.” Everyone who lives here has their roots in another country. Where are your ancestors from? Do you know anything about those countries? Do you know what life was like when they were growing up? What language did they speak?

This summer will provide an ideal opportunity to learn a bit about cultures of other countries during our 2011 Children’s Summer Reading Program, “One World, Many Stories.” The many programs and activities we have planned will let you travel around the world, without leaving town! We’ll have African drumming, Native American dancing, a giant map, GPS tracking, animals and bugs from around the world, stories from the British Isles, and much more. Kids age 7 and up can also visit Mexico, Australia, and India with our school-age programs.

The back page of this issue of Homeschool Connections includes some great ideas for taking a “virtual trip” to other lands. CultureGrams Online is a great place to learn about other countries, and don’t forget to check out the booklist we’ve included. There you’ll find some great stories set in other cultures. We also have a couple of fun outdoor games from other countries to enjoy with your kids in the summer sunshine.

If you want to dig even more into your family’s roots, take a look at the genealogy resources available through PPLD’s website at ppld.org. From our home page, look to your left, under Research, and click on Genealogy. From there, click on the Databases and Websites tabs to find more resources than you can imagine. Many of the databases can be accessed from home. Each website heading includes links to librarian-chosen sites to entice you. Just click on any subject and enjoy!
Pikes Peak Library District Summer Reading Programs for Children and Teens

Registration begins on June 1 and can be done online at ppld.org or in person at your nearest library. Keep track of your reading and earn prizes! Check with your local library for fun events happening all summer long.

Library Elf is Here!
Does your family have five library cards? Is it impossible to keep your checkouts straight? Does it take you half an hour just to check your accounts online? Do you cringe every time you step through library doors just knowing you've accrued daunting fines? Have no fear! Library Elf is here!

Visit the ppld.org homepage and scroll all the way to the bottom. See the row of icons beneath the PPLD mailing address? Click on the blue and white paw-print icon, the one second from the right. Click on the “Go to Library Elf” link (this will take you away from the PPLD website). This free service tracks overdue books, your list of checkouts from multiple cards, your lists of holds and when they become available, even what number you are in the holds list, all in one convenient location without having to remember a ton of library card numbers and passwords. Your first step is to click the “Sign Up” button on the left of the page and create your account. Next, add your library card. PPLD (Pikes Peak Library District) is in the drop-down list of libraries, so select that when adding your card and PIN number. The PIN number should be the one you use on your PPLD account. Your next step is to add the rest of the cards for your family. You need all their numbers and pin numbers in order to make this work. There isn’t a limit to how many card numbers you use! How often do you want to be reminded of overdue items? Once, every day, or never? It’s your choice. You can also choose if you want the reminder on the due date, three days before, a week before, or on a specific day like Monday or Thursday. You can also be reminded of holds, either once or every day. Nothing slips past Library Elf!

To check the status of items on your cards, log into Library Elf and click “Check My Cards.” This loads all your cards and their items onto one page. The items are separated into “What’s Due,” “Not Due Yet,” “Available Holds,” and “Unavailable Holds” sections. Due dates are conveniently listed chronologically, putting everybody’s library cards into one list. Your holds are listed according to your number in line, starting with the ones coming soonest. Library Elf saves families a ton of time when dealing with their library cards, with an added bonus of moms and dads being aware of due dates and overdue items. Add Library Elf to your favorites and put the superhero of library patrons to good use!