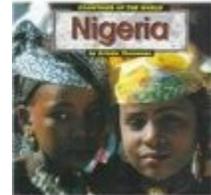


# H-Net Reviews

in the Humanities & Social Sciences

Kristin Thoennes. *Nigeria*. Mankato: Bridgestone Books, 1999. 24 pp. \$14.60 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-7368-0154-6.

Reviewed by Toyin Falola (University of Texas at Austin)  
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This is a good informative book for kids who want to learn about Nigeria. It could easily be read by a child under the age of nine, and is a good resource book for a small project on Nigeria. The book provides several passages on general viewpoints about various aspects of Nigeria.

Easy to read, the even pages contain a variety of photographs to aid the description and the odd pages provide information on the country and essential, up-to date facts on various issues. A chapter entitled "Fast Facts" opens the book, with basic information and pictures of the flag and the meaning of the colors, green and white, in the Nigerian flag; the currency and its equivalent to the dollar; and a map of the country, showing Lagos, the former capital, and Abuja, the present one. Other facts touch upon the country's size, population, languages, religions and crops. Then follows a discussion on "The Land," with data on the location of the country, vegetation and the two seasons of rainy and dry weather. The children are told that rain falls from April to September, and the dry season is for the rest of the year.

The third issue relates to the people, and the author focuses on the Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa-Fulani. She rightly indicates that there are other groups, each with its own language. The next chapter on the school system is valuable, although she fails to explain what she means by a "bush school." The photograph used to illustrate the school system seems inappropriate as it does not show a school setting. The fourth aspect is food, and the author

provides examples of the staples, tuwo, gari, yams and vegetables. She calls kola nuts the popular "snack," but I would not recommend them to children as they contain caffeine. Other issues cover clothing, animals, sports and games, and celebrations. Among the good points of the book are its balance of information on men and women, and the attractive pictures. The ending is good. The author gives an example of a Nigerian game, which should engage the attention of children. It also teaches some words in Yoruba. There is no inaccurate information, no biased terms, and no offensive phrases or words. The children will not be misled into ascribing superstitions or any other primitive notions associated with so-called developing countries to Nigeria.

The book would benefit from some changes in a revised edition. Such words as "many" and "some" convey a sense of generalization. Yoruba, a people and a language, is misspelled as Yoruban. The most popular way to spell Igbo is not Ibo, as in the book. There is little or nothing on technology and on the traditional religion of the people. Historical background information on Nigeria is also essential.

I recommend this book, provided it is supplemented with other materials and the problems noted above are pointed out to students.

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