

**Minnesota Storytime
Reading Guide**

Title: *Throw Your Tooth on the Roof:
Tooth Traditions from Around the World*

Author: Selby B. Beeler

Illustrator: G. Brian Karas

**Publisher and
Copyright Date:** Houghton Mifflin, 1998

**Connection to
Minnesota:** Minnesota author

Summary: This is a book about an experience shared by all: losing a tooth. It shares “tooth traditions” that have been collected from all over the world. The various traditions show how cultures are the same and how they are different.

Suggested ages: 4-6, 7-10, all ages

Tips for Reading:

- Begin by reading the tooth traditions that match the ethnic backgrounds of the children in your group.
- Read traditions that are similar and some that are different to compare and contrast. Make guesses about why those traditions might be the same or not the same.
- Refer to the material at the back of the book about the parts of a tooth and the teeth in an adult mouth.

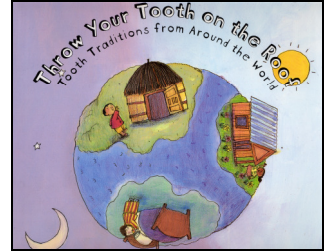
Questions before reading:

- What do you do when your baby teeth fall out? If your teeth haven't fallen out yet, do you have a friend or an older brother or sister who has lost their baby teeth? What did they do?
- Does the tooth fairy visit your house?

To Introduce this story say: Let's look at a book that will show us that maybe the Tooth Fairy doesn't visit every country. Sometimes something different happens when someone loses a tooth...

Questions After Reading:

- Why do you think some children throw their teeth on the roof? Could you throw your tooth that high? Would you ask someone else to do it for you? Would you tie something to your tooth to make sure it went that high? What would you use?
- Would you like to try a tooth tradition from another country? Which one?
- Why do you think mice carry old teeth away in so many of the tooth traditions from around the world?
- If you moved here from another country, will you follow your country's tooth traditions or look for the Tooth Fairy or both?



RELATED ACTIVITIES

Art:

- Make a drawing of a tooth's journey once it leaves your mouth. Where does your tooth go? And who takes it there?

Writing:

- Write a letter to the Tooth Fairy or Tooth Mouse or Tooth Blackbird that would explain what should happen to your tooth.
- Conduct a survey within your program. Ask both adults and children what they did with their baby teeth when they fell out. Include individuals who were born in a country outside of the USA.
- Write a letter to a child in another country, explaining your tooth tradition and asking what they do with the baby teeth that fall out of their mouths.

Suggestions for English Language Learners:

- Act out one or two tooth traditions after reading to show the children the meaning.
- Use a flannel board to depict what happens in different traditions.
- Have the children interview their family members about tooth traditions in their home country.
- Discuss the names for different teeth in different languages. What do those names mean? Is there a story behind the names? (e.g., canine teeth, eye teeth, wisdom teeth)

Related Books:

- ***Open Wide: Tooth School Inside*** by Laurie Keller (Henry Holt, 2003)
- ***What Do the Fairies Do With All Those Teeth?*** By Michael Luppens, illustrated by Phillipe Beha (Scholastic, 1991)
- ***How Many Teeth?*** by Paul Showers, illustrated by True Kelley (HarperCollins, 1984)
- ***Tooth Fairy*** by Audrey Wood (Childs Play, 1990)
- ***Arthur's Tooth*** by Marc Brown (Little, Brown Children's Books, 1985)
- ***Nice Try, Tooth Fairy*** by Mary W. Olson, illustrated by Katherine Tillotson (Simon & Schuster, 2000)



Minnesota Storytime is a collaboration of many Minnesota-based organizations.

To see a full list of supporters, or for more information, please visit www.minnesotastorytime.org.