



Henriette Wich (Author), Marie Braner (Illustrator)

Komm mit auf Vorlese-reise: Unterwegs in Europa

Come on a Reading Journey: Let's Visit Europe

Read aloud | Recommended age: 5+ | ISBN: 978-3-7707-0231-2 | Pages: 128

First Published: January 2021 | © ellermann im Dressler Verlag, Hamburg

All rights available | English translation by Helena Kirkby

From Elks to the Eiffel Tower: have fun discovering Europe

Hanna and Jakob go travelling through Europe with their favourite aunt. They meet Swedish elks, Swiss mountain rescue dogs, and Spanish footballers. In Poland they encounter a fire-breathing dragon; in France, they climb the Eiffel Tower; and in Russia they catch the Trans-Siberian Express. Over the course of their adventures, they get to know all kinds of children from the various different countries. It's incredible, how much Europe has to offer!

- Powerful and important topic: understanding Europe
- Unique book for this age group
- A fun way to get to know other countries and cultures

For license inquiries please contact: rights@verlagsgruppe-oetinger.de

Contents

A Parcel from Aunt Mondo

At Home

Whose Present is the Best?

Greece

Pure Nature

Sweden

The Emperor's New Clothes

Austria

An Exciting Mystery

Holland

Tiki-Taka and Olé!

Spain

Rescue Missions

France

The Ghost Train

Russia

Max and Moritz

Ireland

A Town Without Cars

Italy

Singing Your Way to Confidence

Latvia

Danger - Dragon!

Poland

Who's Collecting Us?

Switzerland

Good Luck!

Bulgaria

Aunt Mondo and the Queen

Great Britain

The Enchanted Apple Tree

Belgium

Nice and Cosy

Denmark

A Hilarious Robber

The Czech Republic

My Friend Lajos

Hungary

What Should We Bring?

Macedonia

Secrets

Ukraine

A Trip to Berlin

Germany

The Great Puzzle

At Home

A Parcel from Aunt Mondo

At Home

The day began quite harmlessly. Jakob was awoken by bright sunlight streaming into his room. The birds outside his window were singing, and Dad was clattering around in the kitchen with the plates and cups.

All very homely, Jakob thought, snuggling back under the covers.

BANG! It came from the next room. There was a rustling and a crashing and a squeaking. Then Jakob's door flew open.

"Wake up, sleepy-head!" Hanna bellowed. "I want to go to the zoo!"

Jakob screwed his eyes up tightly. His sister sometimes fell for that one. Not today, unfortunately. She threw his bedcovers off and giggled. "Do you want me to tickle your toes? You love that."

"No - wait!" Jakob jumped out of bed and raced after his sister. He chased her down the hallway until he eventually caught her.

Hanna grinned at him. She looked like a pirate with the gap between her teeth. "You're a pretty fast runner, for someone who's only six," she said.

He stuck his tongue out at her. "And you're a pain, for someone who's already eight."

"Idiot!" ... "Muppet!" ... "Nerd!" ... "Spoon!"

They paused for breath, stared at one another, and then burst out laughing. Then they went into the kitchen together.

Dad was standing at the cooker, frying some eggs. "Ah - so you're both up." He kissed the tips of their noses. "So - what do you want to do today?"

"Go to the zoo!" Hanna cried.

"Set up the marble run," Jakob said.

Dad laughed. "We'd better have breakfast first. Then we can have a chat with Mum."

"Excellent idea." Mum appeared in her dressing gown. "Who wants hot chocolate?"

"Me!" exclaimed both children.

After breakfast, Hanna started going on about the zoo again. "Can we go now? Shall I go and get my scooter?"

Mum sighed. She pointed at the lilac bush just beyond the window and smiled at Dad.

He nodded. "Oh! Yes, right. I know."

Jakob found it irritating when his parents started talking in their secret language. "Marble run?" he said hopefully.

They both sighed and Mum took a deep breath. "Another day. And the zoo is going to have to wait, too. Today is the first day of spring. There's so much to do in the garden."

"Yes," said Dad. "Clearing away all last year's leaves. Weeding. I've got an exciting job for you: you can sow some carrot seeds."

Hanna pouted. "Oh great. Can't wait."

"I don't want to plant carrots," Jakob groaned.

But Mum and Dad refused to budge. And so all four of them went out into the garden. Mum made a channel in the vegetable patch, and Hanna and Jakob scattered the carrot seeds.

"Ding-dong!" It was the doorbell. Hanna and Jakob looked and saw the post van standing in the road outside. They dropped their gardening gloves.

"We'll get it!" Hanna cried. She raced off, with Jakob hot on her heels.

The postman was holding a large package. "Good timing, kids. This is for you. One of you needs to sign for it."

Hanna was so excited that she could barely write her name. They said goodbye and carried the package indoors, where they carefully laid it on the kitchen table.

"It's from Aunt Mondo!" Hanna said.

Mondo was their favourite aunt. Her name was actually Monika, but all the family called her Mondo as she spent so much time travelling around the world - Mondo being the Italian word for 'world'.

Jakob scratched his head, puzzled. "But it's neither of our birthdays, and it's ages until Christmas."

Hanna laughed. "Never mind. Come on - let's open it!"

They tore off the brown paper, to reveal a postcard and a cardboard box.

"A jigsaw!" said Jakob delightedly.

Hanna frowned. "What's it of? The picture looks like a patchwork quilt."

Jakob spelled out the title: "Europe".

Hanna nudged her brother excitedly. "I get it! Those coloured patches are all countries which are part of Europe - you know, the continent. We did this at school. The names of all the countries are on the jigsaw pieces. Look - this one says Italy. And this is us: Germany!" She tapped the red patch.

Jakob looked more closely at the jigsaw. "There are loads of pieces. It'll be a tricky one. Just right for me."

"It's great that you like doing jigsaws," Hanna said. "But we ought to read Aunt Mondo's postcard first. I can't wait to see what she says."

The front of the card consisted of a photo of Aunt Mondo. She was sitting in her red armchair in her sitting room, drinking tea, and knitting a scarf with a zig-zag pattern. On the table in front of her was a pile of jigsaws and books of spells which she had devised herself.

Hanna read what their aunt had written on the reverse side.

Dear Hanna and Jakob,

I hope you enjoyed receiving my surprise parcel.

You're probably wondering why I'm sending you a jigsaw.

Well... as you know, I've visited lots of faraway countries. I don't want to go that far afield nowadays, so I'd like to visit Europe instead. There are so many wonderful countries close to home. Would you like to visit Europe too?

Then hop on board the train!

Ciao!

Aunt Mondo.

P.S. I'm going to visit Greece first, in case you wondered.

Jakob rummaged around in the packaging. "But there aren't any train tickets here!"

"I don't get it." Baffled, Hanna put the postcard on the kitchen table. Why had Aunt Mondo forgotten to include the most important thing of all?

Jakob was disappointed. He had been very excited by the prospect of his first ever long-distance train journey.

"Never mind," Hanna said kindly. "We can still do the jigsaw. Or would you rather help Mum and Dad in the garden?"

Jakob pulled a face as if he had bitten into a lemon. Then he grabbed the box and shook the jigsaw pieces out onto the kitchen table. They were easy to sort out, being different colours. The picture on the box was helpful, too.

"Done!" Jakob cried half an hour later, proudly inserting the final piece.

"Oh no you're not," Hanna groaned. "There are loads of pieces missing."

She was right: the jigsaw had as many holes in it as a Swiss cheese.

Jakob suddenly sprang off his chair. "I've found the train! Top right-hand corner!" He took the piece out.

Hanna clapped her hands together delightedly. "You're brilliant!"

Jakob turned the piece round. On the back, Aunt Mondo had written something. Hanna read it out loud.

Touch me!

Shut your eyes and think of a country that's missing from the jigsaw.

Bon voyage!

But which countries were missing? Hanna looked more closely at the picture on the box and took a picture of it with her phone. Jakob had gone over to the window. Mum and Dad were busily pulling up weeds. There were *loads* of weeds in the vegetable patches.

“Shall we?” Hanna whispered.

“Now?” Jakob whispered back.

Hanna nodded firmly. “Greece, here we come! Aunt Mondo will have got there first.”

Jakob put the postcard in his trouser pocket. Hanna quickly fetched their rucksacks. Then she solemnly laid her right hand on the train, and Jakob laid his left hand next to it. They shut their eyes and thought of Greece. At first, nothing happened - and then everything suddenly started to happen at once. They felt weightless - and then they were floating! And before they knew it, they were being swirled away, faster and faster...

Copyrighted material