

## If You Were Me and Lived in... Hungary: A Child's Introduction to Culture Around the World

**Carole P. Roman**

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*A solid and entertaining choice for parents and teachers who want to bring Hungary a little closer to home.*

Using an appealing and diverse array of facts and illustrations, Carole P. Roman offers an accessible alternative for young students of global studies everywhere. *If You Were Me and Lived in... Hungary: A Child's Introduction to Culture Around the World* is the latest in her series of award-winning *If You Were Me and Lived in...* books, and it does not disappoint. Touching briefly on culture, history, geography, and family, Roman presents a slice of Hungarian life that would make even *nagy* (grandma) proud.

Following an unnamed girl and bespectacled boy from the capital city of Budapest to the Caves of Aggtelek, on a shopping excursion and to a celebration of Saint István's Day, children can imagine what they could, would, or might do, eat, study, buy, cook, play with, visit, and enjoy if they lived in Hungary.

Roman's simple and straightforward writing, accompanied by simple and straightforward color illustrations, is a welcome break from the often wordy or too-sophisticated geography texts available for primary students. Perhaps drawing from her own experiences and requirements as a social studies teacher, Roman incorporates hard facts with topics relevant and entertaining for young audiences, as when using a Hungarian florin to buy a *baba*, or doll, "for your little sister."

The large font style and short paragraphs are ideal for beginning readers. However, the impact of Roman's lyrical journey is often dulled by conditional verb tense errors. A pronunciation guide is provided at the end, highlighting new words, names, and places, ideal for listing new vocabulary words. Its usefulness for actually assisting in pronunciation is questionable, though. *Nagy*, for example, is followed by "(Na-dge)," which seems less intuitive and more confusing for children.

Nevertheless, *If You Were Me and Lived in... Hungary* is sure to please, a solid choice for teachers, students, parents, and families wanting to bring the world a little closer to home.

PALLAS GATES MCCORQUODALE (March 2, 2015)

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