

Desina Verlag

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Storybooks for Reading Aloud

Adventure Stories with Insights into Traditional Chinese Culture



For Children Aged 5 and Up

This read-aloud book series presents captivating stories about the adventures of beloved animals. The author skillfully intertwines her cultural heritage, offering young readers enchanting glimpses into Chinese traditions. The exquisite watercolors by renowned illustrator Christa Unzner spark children's imaginations and bring their stories to life.

These books will also appeal to adults who seek authentic insights into China or who have an appreciation for artistically illustrated works.

Author Anna Xiulan Zeeck
 Illustrator Christa Unzner
 Titel Kuku, König der Tierkreiszeichen
 English title Kuku, King of the Signs of the Zodiac
 2010
 80 pages, bound, full coloured
 size 26,5 x 21
 For Children Aged 5 and Up
 world rights available



Er fühlte sich wie in einer Wiege, als das Pferd langsamen Schrittes durch den Bach ging. Unter sich hörte er das Rauschen des Wassers und das Platschen der Pferdehufe. Ein leichter Wind umfächelte sein Gesicht. Er wünschte sich, der Bach wäre noch breiter und es ginge lange so weiter.



Der alte Weise

Kuku folgte auf der anderen Talseite einem kleinen, kaum erkennbaren Pfad, der ihn immer höher hinauf in die Berge führte. Zwischen den Steinen links und rechts des Weges sah er zarte Blumen und Kräuter hervorschauen. Um manche Blüten summten dicke Hummeln, Ameisen liefen geschäftig herum.

Seine Begegnung mit dem freundlichen Pferd lag schon eine Weile zurück. Die Sonne stand zwar nicht mehr hoch, spendete aber immer noch angenehme Wärme in der Frische der Berge.

Das Meckern von Ziegen drang an sein Ohr. Ein Stück den Hang hinauf sah er sie grasen. Vielleicht gehörten sie dem alten Weisen? Dann konnte es nicht mehr weit zu ihm sein. Mit freudig klopfendem Herzen beschleunigte Kuku seinen Lauf.

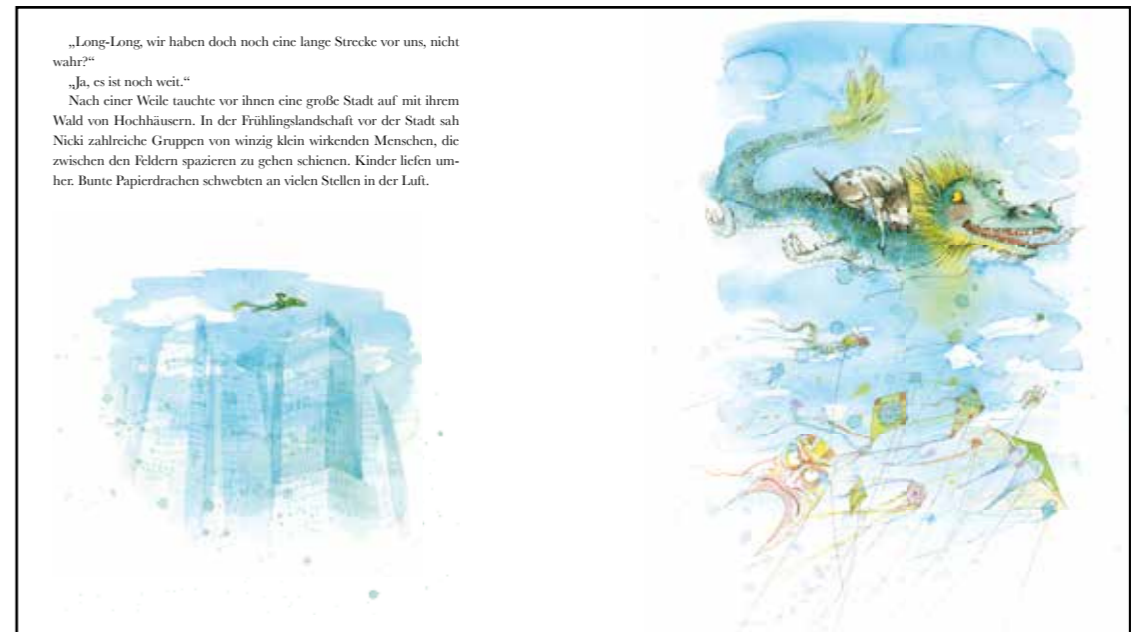
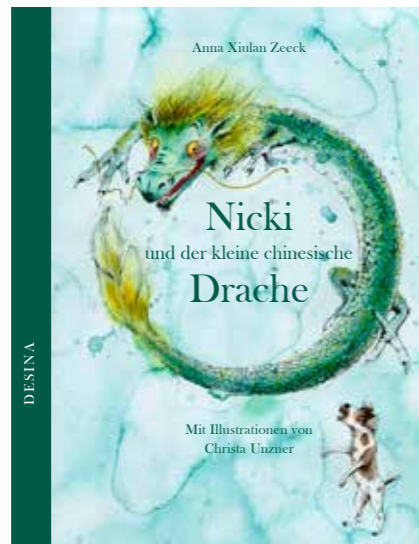
Doch der Weg zog sich hin. Besorgt beobachtete er, wie die sinkende Sonne sich allmählich den Berggipfeln näherte. Hoffentlich würde er noch rechtzeitig vor Einbruch der Dunkelheit bei dem Weisen eintreffen.

Als er unter einer seltsam gekrümmten Kiefer hindurchlief, die sich über seinen Weg beugte, krachte plötzlich ein Kieferzapfen direkt vor ihm auf den Boden. Er stockte und schaute nach oben.

Über ihm saß ein Affe auf einem Ast. Der blinzelte ihm lustig zu, warf einen zweiten Zapfen nach ihm und verschwand dann geschickt weiter nach oben ins Geäst der Kiefer.

In a moonlit night the little mouse Kuku begins his long journey to the old wise man who lives in a lonely cave deep in the mountains. He got the task by the young princess Shasha to ask the wise man how to simplify the complicated chinese counting of the years. On his way he goes through many adventures. When crossing the Yellow River he is caught by a thunderstorm and nearly drowned. Later he is threatened by a tiger and a cunning snake. But also a mysterious dragon and a good-natured buffalo accompany part of his way... In this story the author lets the reader understand why the chinese signs of zodiac were once really devised.

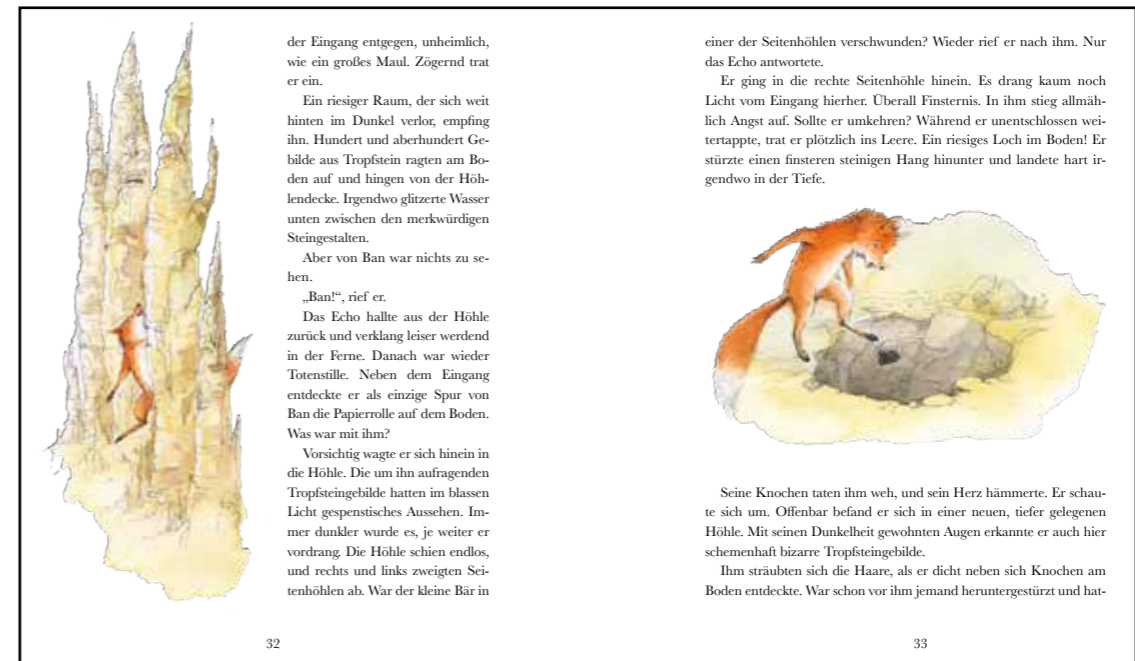
Author Anna Xiulan Zeeck
 Illustrator Christa Unzner
 Titel Nicki und der kleine chinesische Drache
 English title Nicki and the Little Chinese Dragon
 2011
 48 pages, bound, full coloured
 size 26,5 x 21
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The little dog Nicki spends his Easter holidays with his family in China. During an evening walk near the bank of the Yellow River he detects a strange creature soaring from the water and coming to him. It is a blue and green glimmering little dragon. By the European prejudice, that dragons are dangerous, Nicki runs away in panic fear. In dense fog during the night he gets in a desperate situation. Again the little dragon appears. What does the mysterious creature want from him?

With fine dashes the author outlines the development of a friendship between a German dog and a Chinese dragon.

Author Anna Xiulan Zeeck
 Illustrator Christa Unzner
 Titel Geheimnisvolle Zeichen
 English title Secretive Symbols
 2011
 48 pages, bound, full coloured
 size 26,5 x 21
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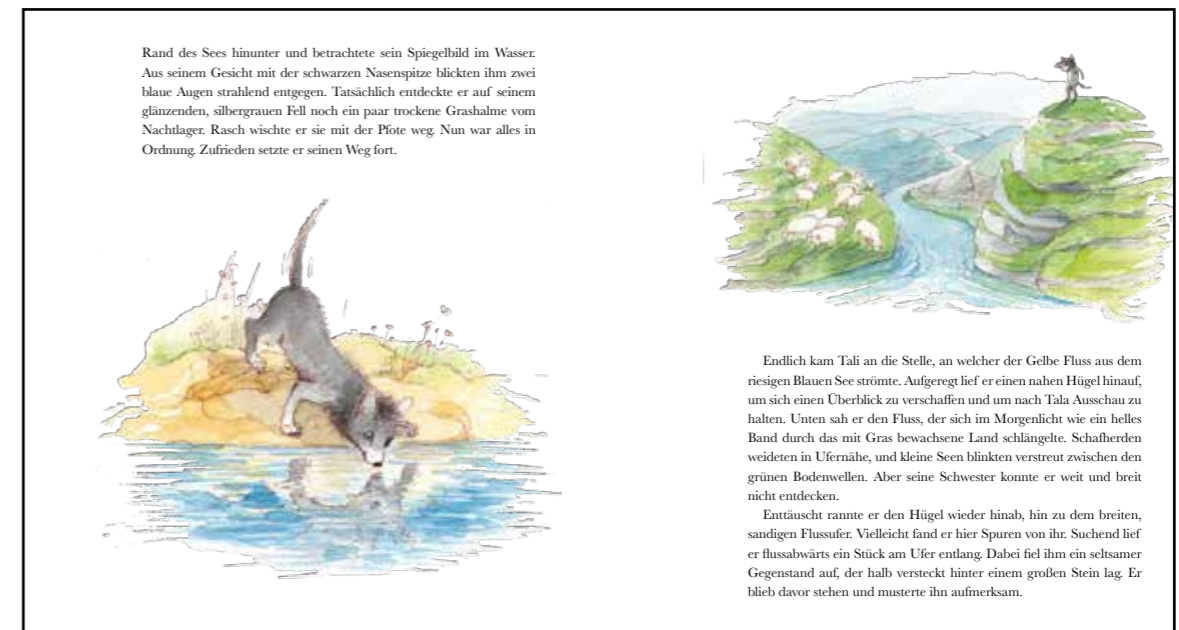
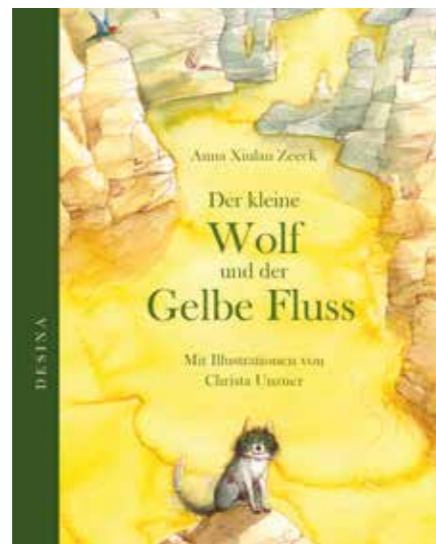


The little fox Huan is running for his life, with the angry little bear hot on his heels. All Huan did was play a harmless prank on the bear, so why is he so furious? ... The initial hostility between them slowly transforms into mutual understanding. Together, they embark on a journey to uncover a great mystery.

The story portrays a tale of reconciliation and the blossoming of an unexpected friendship. Through this adventure, readers are also introduced to the pictorial nature of Chinese characters, which often appear mysterious and incomprehensible to us.

Author Anna Xiulan Zeeck
 Illustrator Christa Unzner
 Titel Der kleine Wolf und der Gelbe Fluss
 English title The Little Wolf and the Yellow River
 2012
 48 pages, bound, full coloured
 size 26,5 x 21
 For Children Aged 5 and Up

world rights available



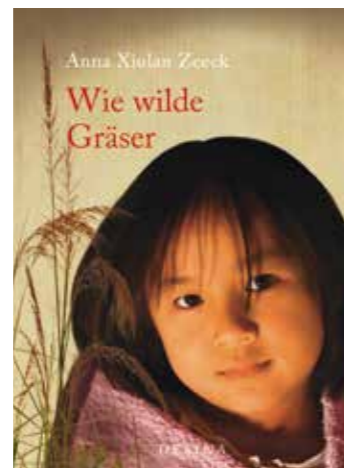
Late at night, the little wolf Tali lies sleepless in his den, yearning for the return of his missing sister. Suddenly, a mysterious boy emerges in the silvery moonlight and advises him to search for her along the banks of the Yellow River. Tali hesitates—could this challenge be too great for him?

This story demonstrates how courage and determination can lead to achieving one's goals, while also vividly depicting the majestic Yellow River, the mother river of China.



Novels

Encounters with Contemporary Chinese Youth



For Children Aged 10 and Up

These moving novels provide young readers with authentic insights into the lives of contemporary Chinese youth. With sensitivity and nuance, they explore the thoughts and emotions of their main characters, touching the hearts of readers. Both girls and boys will find relatable role models in the protagonists.

Author Anna Xiulan Zeeck
 Titel Das Mädchen am Rande der Stadt
 English title The Girl at the Edge of the City
 2011
 127 pages, bound
 size 14,8 x 21 cm
 For Children Aged 10 and Up

 world rights available



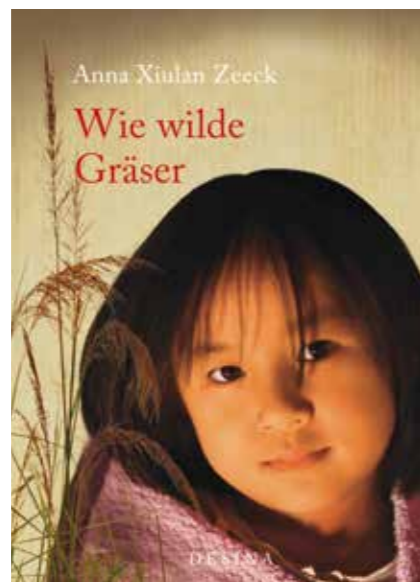
8th Edition

The 12-year-old girl Hanli leaves her home village in the mountains and travels to Beijing, where her parents work as migrant laborers. She dreams of attending a good school and becoming a city dweller... A moving story of dreams and disappointments, of the powerful and the weak, and also of courage and friendship. It reflects the lives of millions of young people who left their rural homes and came to the cities.

Background of the Novel

For decades, China has witnessed a vast migration of its rural population. According to statistics, 240 million people have left their rural homes to work as migrant laborers in the cities. Unfortunately, most have been unable to bring their children with them, and only a small minority have managed to reunite with their children in the city after years of separation. Official figures indicate that around 14 million young people have followed their parents to urban areas. These rural children face significant inequalities compared to city children, particularly when it comes to accessing education. They can only attend public schools in the city if they can provide difficult-to-obtain documents. As a result, the majority are forced to rely on private schools, which are often illegally established, poorly equipped, and charge prohibitively high tuition fees. Consequently, 9.3% of these school-age children are left without access to education, finding themselves on the streets. The novel's narrative is set against this contemporary and pressing backdrop.

Author Anna Xiulan Zeeck
 Titel Wie wilde Gräser
 English title As Wild Grasses
 2014
 187 pages, bound,
 size 14,8 x 21 cm
 For Children Aged 10 and Up
 world rights available



2th Edition

This story, inspired by true events, follows the life of a 13-year-old girl. Years ago, her parents left their village to work in Beijing, unable to take her with them. She now lives with her elderly grandmother, facing the challenges of life on her own. The novel explores her experiences, thoughts, and emotions, as well as her deep bond with a childhood friend and classmate, who tenderly supports her through every hardship.

Background of the Novel

According to statistics, 240 million workers have migrated to cities as part of China's vast migrant labor force. However, many of them have been unable to bring their children with them. The number of abandoned youth now stands at 58 million, with 23 million of them under the age of 14. These children are often referred to as the „left-behind children.“

A significant issue for these children is the lack of protection and care they need at their age. Often, they live with grandparents who are elderly and in need of assistance themselves, unable to provide adequate care. Other relatives may view them as more of a burden than a welcome presence. Under these conditions, these youth are frequently vulnerable to exploitation by criminals. Many girls face abuse, while some boys fall into delinquency. A distressing number of these young people end up taking their own lives. After years of societal neglect, this tragic situation is now recognized as the „pain of the century“ in China.

The novel delves into the lives of these young people within this harsh reality, focusing on their resilience, youthful dreams, friendships, and the mutual support that helps them overcome their challenges and navigate life with hope.

Author Anna Xiulan Zeck
 Titel Jener Sommer
 English title That Summer
 2017
 137 pages, bound,
 size 14,8 x 21 cm
 fFor Children Aged 10 and Up
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In the softly lit schoolyard at dusk, 12-year-old Shuya waits for her classmate Wenhua, who is retrieving math practice materials from his dormitory for her. As they spend time together, they fall in love and aspire to attend the same high school in the future.

This poignant story captures life in modern Chinese schools, giving young readers a glimpse into the profound influence of this educational system and offering insight into the people they may one day meet.

Background of the Novel

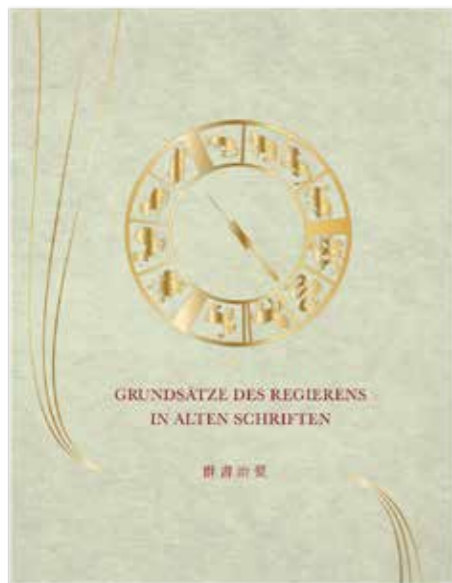
Due to a significant shortage of government funding for education, China introduced the policy of „educational industrialization“ at the end of the last century. Schools were urged to generate their own financial resources through various initiatives. However, in the pursuit of necessary financial support, better-performing schools have a distinct advantage over less successful ones. The difference between good and less successful schools is often measured solely by their students' performance in „Municipal Central Examinations for High Schools“ or „National University Entrance Examinations.“ Consequently, the primary educational goal across all schools has become the achievement of high scores in these exams.

This „exam-oriented education“ has sparked widespread debate in recent times. Supporters argue that it promotes equal opportunities for all students by subjecting everyone to the same exams and using test scores as the sole criterion for admission to high schools and universities. However, critics argue that this approach reduces students to mere test-taking machines. The intense focus on achieving high scores compels students to concentrate exclusively on exam techniques, stifling independent thought and creativity. Additionally, anything not directly related to exams is increasingly excluded from the curriculum, particularly traditional cultural values. As a result, today's students often lack any guiding principles beyond self-interest. Critics warn that schools are producing a generation of self-centered individuals.

The novel is set against this backdrop, offering young readers a glimpse into the profound effects of this educational system and helping them understand the types of people they may encounter in the future.

Nonfiction Books

Translations of Classical Chinese Texts



For Readers Aged 13 and Up

The nonfiction books published by our company are translations of Chinese classics, aimed at providing German-speaking readers with authentic insights into traditional Chinese culture. The book „**Principles of Rulership in Ancient Texts 360**“ is derived from the original work „Principles of Rulership in Ancient Texts,“ which was developed over nearly 1,400 years and is based on 14,000 books and 89,000 scrolls dating from approximately 2600 BCE to 420 CE. „**Wisdom from Ancient Chinese Texts**“ is derived from „Principles of Rulership in Ancient Texts 360“ and is specially designed as a gift book. It is remarkable how accurately and inspiringly these ancient wisdoms can be applied to our lives today.



Übersetzt von Anna Xiulan Zeeck und Liya Fette
Illustriert von Christa Unzner
Titel Grundsätze des Regieren in alten Schriften 360
English title Principles of Governance in Ancient Texts 360
2018
496 pages, bound
size 26 x 20 cm

for Children Aged 12 and Up



This book is an excerpt from the original work „Principles of Rulership in Ancient Texts,“ one of China’s most significant classical works. When the second emperor of the Tang Dynasty (618–907 AD) ascended the throne at the age of 27, he realized that his knowledge of governance was insufficient. Therefore, he tasked his scholars with collecting important books and scrolls. However, the collection became too vast, totaling 200,000 volumes, so the emperor instructed the scholars to summarize the most important principles. This led to the creation of the collection „Principles of Rulership in Ancient Texts,“ consisting of 65 volumes with 500,000 Chinese characters.

At the end of 2010, Professor Dr. Chin Kung from the University of Queensland developed the idea of selecting passages from the work and translating them into modern Chinese and other languages. This resulted in „Principles of Rulership in Ancient Texts 360,“ comprising 10 volumes. In 2018, the first volume was translated into German and published by Desina Verlag, commissioned by the Association of Master Chin Kung’s Friends at UNESCO.



Übersetzt von Anna Xiulan Zeeck und Liya Fette
Illustriert von Hannes Klement
Titel Weisheiten aus alten chinesischen Schriften
English title Wisdom from Ancient Chinese Texts 2024
64 pages, bound
size 13,7 x 18,7 cm

for Children Aged 10 and Up

world rights available



This book is derived from „Principles of Rulership in Ancient Texts 360.“ It is specifically designed as a gift book. Readers can detach individual quotes, frame them, and give them as special gifts to friends and family. It is impressive how accurately and inspiringly these ancient wisdoms can be applied to our lives today.

Ansprechpartner

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