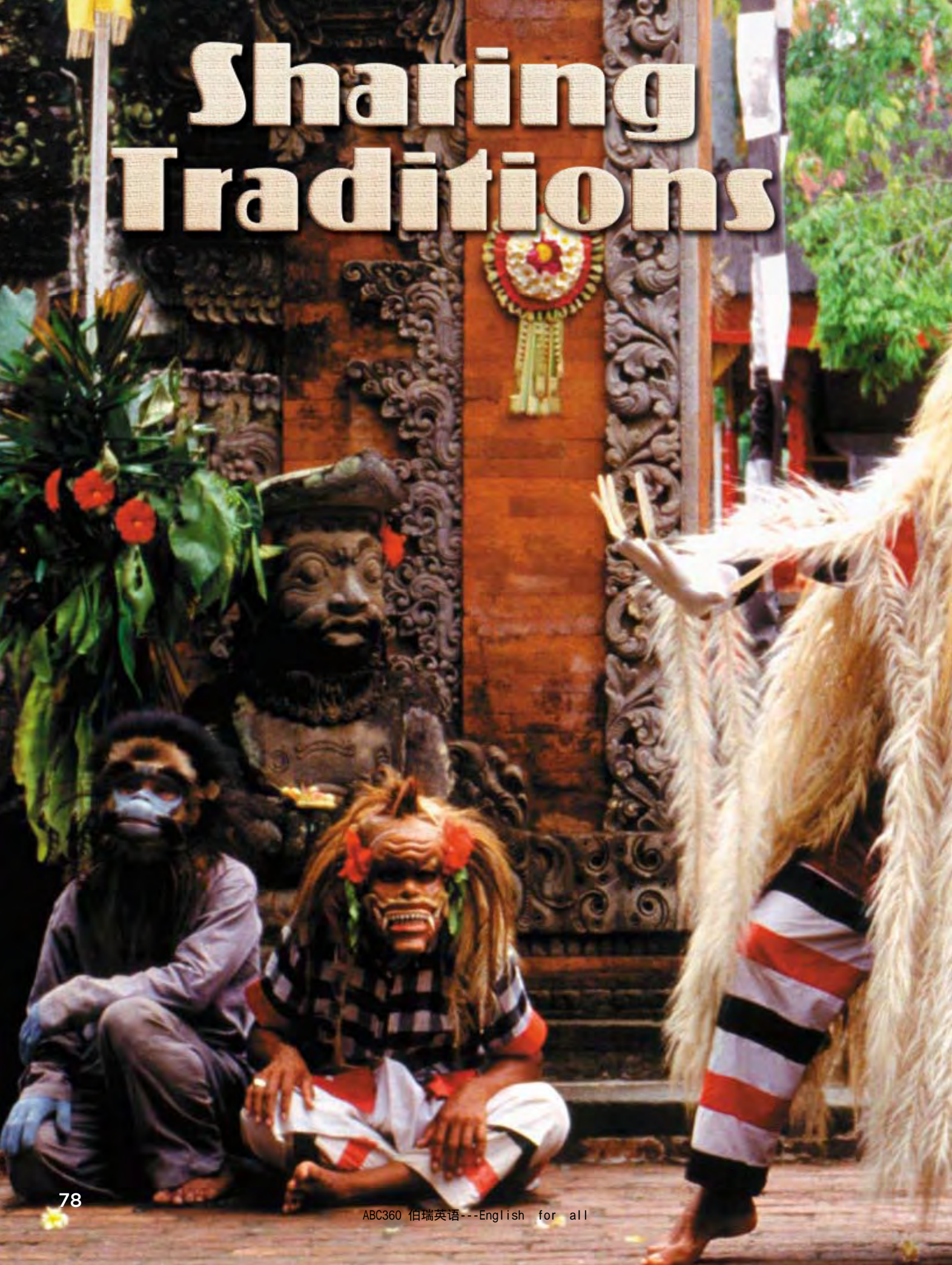


Sharing Traditions





Talk About It

Story telling is entertaining. Why do you think traditional stories are important to a culture?



Find out more about sharing traditions at www.macmillanmh.com



Vocabulary

rummaged	pathetic
undetected	ricocheting
chameleon	famine
generosity	scrounging

Context Clues

Context Clues provide hints to help readers figure out the meaning of an unfamiliar word. Restatement is a kind of context clue that gives a definition of the unfamiliar word.

“Her great-grandmother left her village because of a famine, a time of extreme scarcity of food.”

Keira's Magical Moment

by Leonora Halvi

As Keira climbed into bed, she thought about tomorrow's field trip. Her class was going to a presentation by a West African traditional storyteller. Keira was excited because she was of West African descent. Her great-grandmother had come to the United States from Senegal. Until now, Keira hadn't thought much about her roots.

When her alarm went off, Keira **rummaged** through her closet. She was looking for something that showed her West African roots. She dug through every drawer, but she couldn't find anything that really stood out. Finally, she put on a white shirt and jeans. Despite her plain clothes, she hoped that her interest in her heritage would not go **undetected**.

At the community center, Keira was lucky enough to get a front-row seat. The first speaker talked about African writers and how they often use traditional stories with traditional characters, such as the Tortoise and the Spider. The speaker mentioned writers her mother and grandmother liked! Also, Tortoise was a favorite character in Keira's bedtime stories. Finally, the speaker mentioned Doudou N'Diaye Rose. He was Keira's favorite drummer. He was from Senegal. She began to realize just how much her West African heritage influenced her American life.

Finally, the griot, or storyteller, took the stage. He told a story that explained how the **chameleon**, a small lizard, changed its colors. Then he introduced the tricksters Spider and Tortoise. They were known to fake **generosity** while actually looking for a handout. Some of the stories made these characters seem **pathetic** as they fought for every last scrap. However, they were simply naughty. They certainly did learn their lessons!

Keira couldn't keep her mind from **ricocheting** through all the different stories her mother had told. Her memory was bouncing around like a ball! She knew about everything the griot said.

After the presentation, the class talked to the griot. Keira told about how her great-grandmother had moved to the United States from Senegal. Her great-grandmother left her village because of a **famine**, a time of extreme scarcity of food. She had explained to Keira's grandmother that the villagers spent days **scrounging** for food. Her great-grandmother eventually came to the United States. Keira told the griot about the familiar bedtime stories.

When Keira was finished, the griot pointed out that she had just taken on his job. She had described her family and the stories they told. Keira could hardly wait to tell her mother and grandmother the news!



Reread for Comprehension



Make Inferences and Analyze

Cause and Effect

In a story, the actions of the characters often cause a series of events to unfold. Making inferences about a character's actions can help you identify cause-and-effect relationships between events in the story.

Use your Cause-and-Effect Chart to record important causes of events as you reread "Keira's Magical Moment."

Cause	→	Effect
	→	
	→	
	→	
	→	