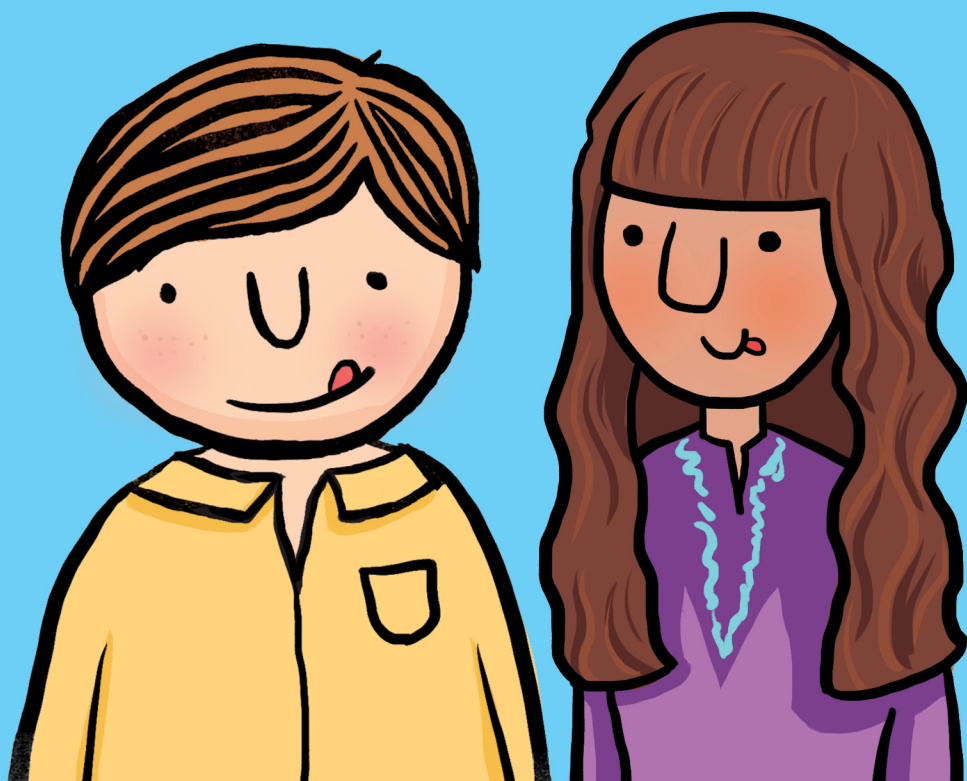


Understanding Singaporeans

WHY DO EURASIANS LOVE SUGEE CAKE?

and Other Questions



Understanding Singaporeans

Why Do Eurasians Love Sugee Cake?

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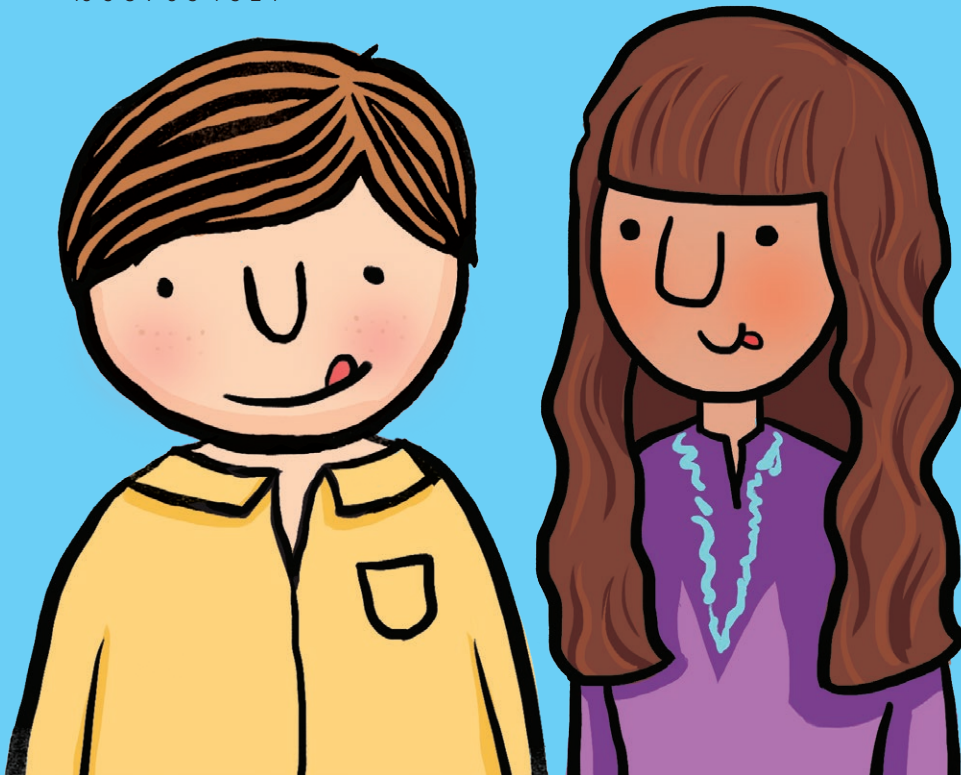
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EDMUND WEE

ILLUSTRATED BY CHEE JIA YI



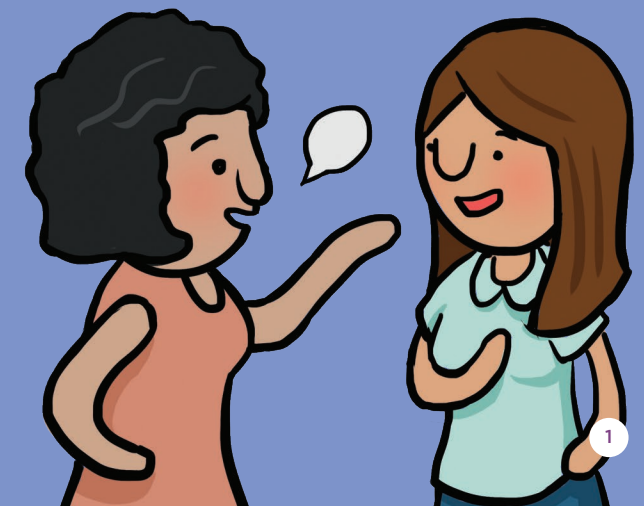
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INTRODUCTION

The Eurasians are one of the four main races in Singapore. The others are the Chinese, Malays and Indians.

Among the Eurasians, there are mixed heritages from Europe and Asia, such as Portugal, the Netherlands, Britain, Malacca, India and China. The Eurasians are quite diverse, but they do have some common practices.

This book answers twenty questions a young Singaporean might ask about Eurasian traditions, beliefs and festivals.



THE 20 QUESTIONS



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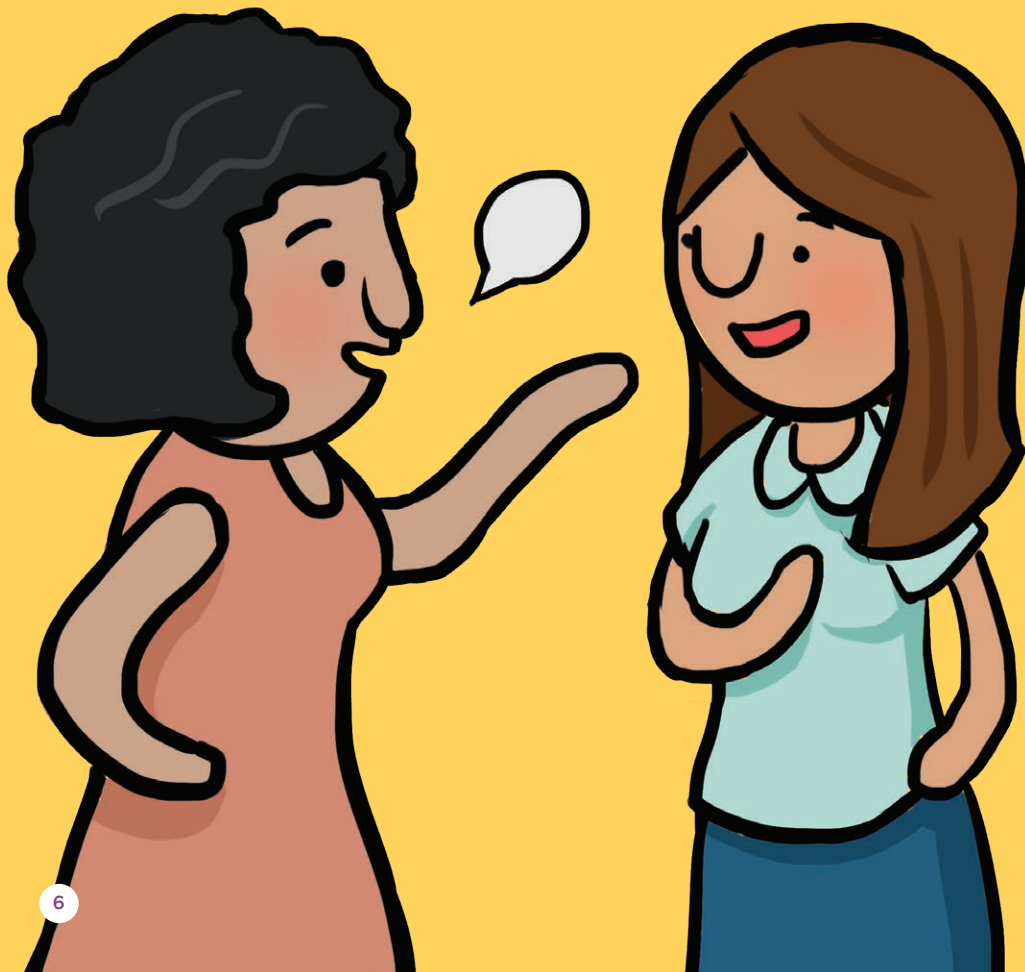
WHO ARE THE EURASIANS?

Eurasians have Asian and European roots. That could mean one parent is Asian, and the other is European. Or maybe their ancestors are Eurasians.

Long ago, many Europeans who lived in Malacca and other places in Asia were spice traders from Portugal, the Netherlands and Britain. Later they married locals, and the families moved to Singapore. Their children are known as Eurasians.



WHAT LANGUAGES DO EURASIANS SPEAK?



Eurasians mainly speak English. Depending on their culture, Eurasians also know other languages, such as Malay and Chinese dialects.

Some Eurasians can speak Kristang, a mix of Malay and Portuguese. The language started in Malacca, after the Portuguese settled there in 1511.

DID YOU KNOW?

“How are you?” in Kristang is
“Teng bong?”

IS THERE A MAIN RELIGION FOR EURASIANS?

Many Eurasians are Christians, because their European ancestors were Christian. Most Eurasians are Catholic, and some are Protestant.

Many Christian Eurasians celebrate religious festivals such as Christmas and Easter.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Church of the Holy Family in Katong was founded by four Eurasian families. It was an important place for Catholic Eurasians in the 1930s.



WHY IS CHRISTMAS IMPORTANT TO EURASIANS?



Christmas is a wonderful time of the year for Christians. The festival falls on December 25, which is when families celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ and reunite for a feast. Some Eurasians also go to church for a service.

For some Eurasian families, Christmas is a rare treat because many traditional dishes are cooked. Devil curry, smore, feng, fruit cake, Christmas pie and suguee cake might appear. Eurasians might add pineapple tarts and foods from other cultures.

The home might also have a Christmas tree with presents underneath!

WHAT DO EGGS HAVE TO DO WITH EASTER?



Christians believe Jesus Christ rose from the dead, and they celebrate this miracle on Easter Day. Easter, a festival of sacrifice and new beginnings, is celebrated with eggs because they are a symbol of new life.

Christians might go to church and have an Easter lunch or dinner. Children are given chocolate eggs wrapped in bright tin foil. Shiok!

HOW ARE EURASIAN WEDDINGS CELEBRATED?

Christian Eurasians hold their weddings at churches. A couple will say their vows in front of family and friends.

A wedding breakfast or tea comes after. Fruit or suguee cake might be served as the wedding cake. Usually a live band plays, and wedding guests dance.

DID YOU KNOW?

The bride's veil from the wedding is later reused as a Christening robe for the couple's baby. It is a Christian tradition.



WHAT DOES ... MEAN?

Baju panjang	traditional dress worn by some Eurasian women
Christmas	festival celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ
Devil curry	leftovers stew
Feng	spiced stew of pork, liver and heart
Kaya	coconut jam; means “rich” in Malay
Kristang	language started in Malacca; mixes Malay and Portuguese
Marzipan	sweet paste made from almond and sugar or honey
Sambal belacan	chilli shrimp paste
Smore	thick beef stew
Srikaya	coconut jam
Sugee	semolina; comes from the Hindi word for the grain
Sugee cake	cake made from semolina flour, ground almonds, egg and brandy

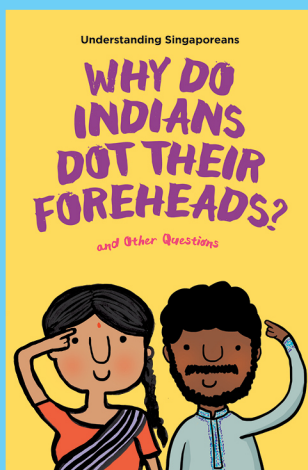
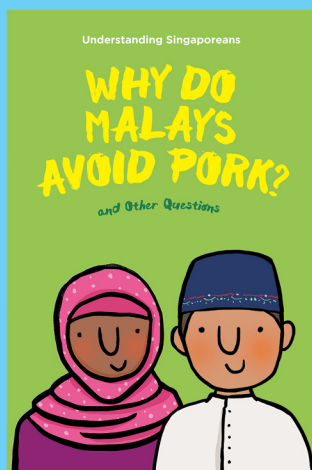
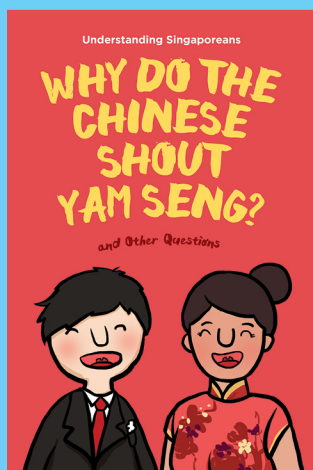
How can you tell if someone is Eurasian?

What is Eurasian food? Is kaya a “Eurasian jam”?

We provide the answers—and useful tips—to some of the most-asked questions young Singaporeans might have about the Eurasians.

This book is part of a fun series about the Chinese, Malays, Indians and Eurasians. Each handbook uses twenty questions to highlight diversity and promote understanding of the different races in Singapore.

Understanding Singaporeans Series



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