



LEVELED BOOK • P

# A Trip to Rio

**Multi  
level  
J•M•P**

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Illustrated by Penny Weber

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## Focus Question

How does Julia's attitude change during the story?



Julia thought Brazil would feel just like home, but she was wrong. Rio de Janeiro was nothing like New York City. There actually seemed to be *more* people here. Julia's family squeezed through the crowd, inching toward Maracanã (MAR-uh-cuh-NUH) **Stadium**.

"It's because of the **Olympics**," Gabriela said. "It was much quieter during your last visit. Don't you remember?"

"We were only five," Julia said.





The families finally got inside the stadium and located their seats. All around her, Julia heard different languages—Chinese, Spanish, and Russian. Julia and Gabriela’s parents spoke **Portuguese** so rapidly that she couldn’t understand. She felt **nervous** and alone.

## Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Rio de Janeiro is the second-largest city in the country of Brazil. It is known for its food, music, beaches, and lively celebrations.





With a sudden rush of music, the opening **ceremonies** for the Olympic Games began. A Brazilian pop singer appeared, and Gabriela screamed with joy. Julia wanted to be excited, too, but their seats were so far away that they could hardly see the performers. Cameras flashed from all sides. People screamed and blew horns. By the time the fireworks started, Julia had a headache.

Julia had been waiting for this trip to Rio for months. It was a rare chance to see her cousins and other family members. Now, all she wanted to do was return home.



The next morning began quietly. Julia's family was staying in Gabriela's building, in the apartment next door. The owners had left Rio to avoid the Olympic Games. Julia understood why. From her high window, she watched traffic fill the highway.

Suddenly, Gabriela burst into the apartment, followed by Chaz, her little brother. "We're going to another Olympic event today!" she said. The thought of going to another crowded and noisy place made Julia's head hurt again, but she smiled and got ready.

The families walked beneath green trees, through the shady streets of Gabriela's Flamengo neighborhood. The block ended at a park. Gabriela grabbed Julia's hand and dashed through an opening in the trees. They came out on a broad golden beach.

Julia stopped and stared at the tall white buildings that lined the water. Steep dome-shaped mountains rose behind them. She didn't know a city could look so wild and beautiful.

"That's Sugarloaf Mountain," Gabriela said. The beach was full but relaxed. They found a spot to unpack a picnic. The white sails of an Olympic boat race danced across the blue bay. Watching them, Julia realized her headache was gone.

## Rio's Mountains

Rio is surrounded by dome-shaped mountains. Sugarloaf is the steepest. Corcovado Mountain is the tallest. A 125-foot (38.1-meter) statue called *Christ the Redeemer* stands at its top.



The next day, it was Julia who ran into Gabriela's apartment. "We're going up Sugarloaf Mountain!"

They rode a **cable car** that hung high above the city. Gabriela closed her eyes and squeezed Julia tight, but Julia stared calmly out the window. The mountain was a gray stone tower. The forest behind it was lime green, and the bay shone turquoise blue. The city was white and peach and pink.



They went to a big market. It had the sweetest, juiciest **mangoes** Julia ever tasted.

“This is what they’re supposed to be like,” her father said in Portuguese. He often spoke English to Julia in New York, but here, speaking Portuguese felt natural.



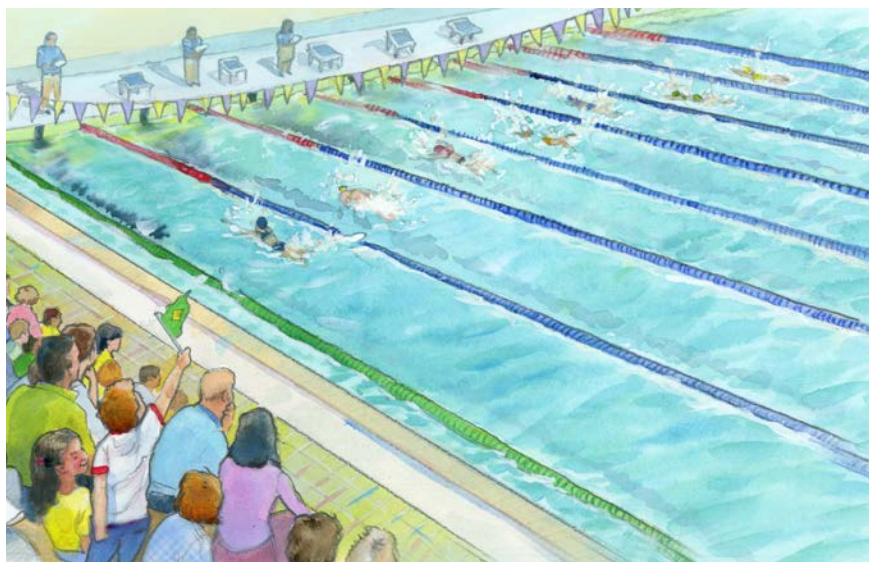
They went to the Olympic pool to watch a swimming race. The loud, echoing walls made Julia flinch, but the crowd was small.

Chaz kept shouting, "Go Brazil! Go Brazil!"

"Brazil is not in this event!" Gabriela finally said.

"Oh," he said, then grinned at Julia.  
*"Go America!"*

Julia laughed.



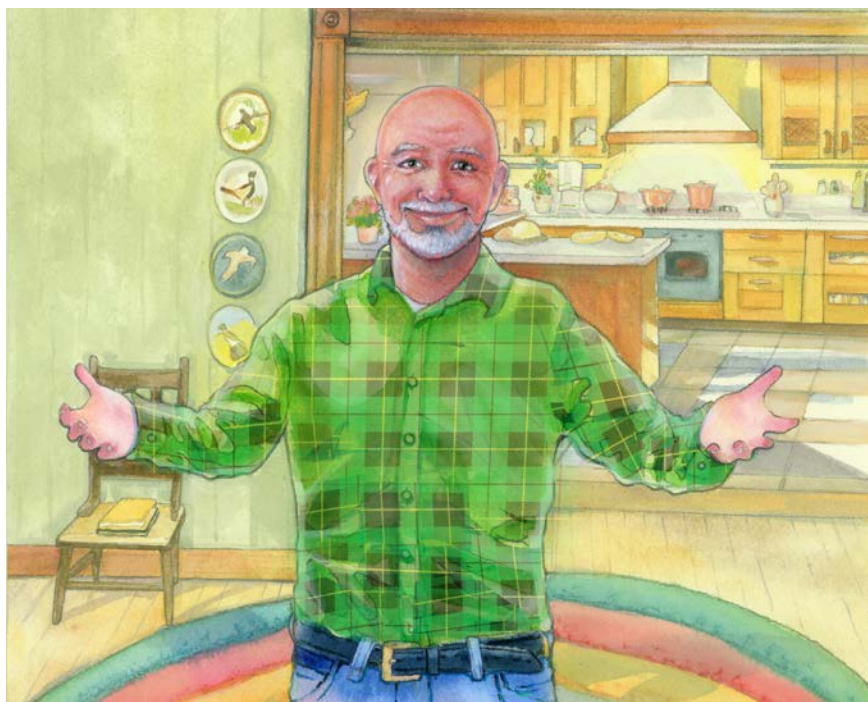


On their last day in Rio, Gabriela announced, “We’re going to Grandma and Grandpa’s to eat *feijoada* (fayzh-WAH-duh). Then we will go to an Olympic football game.”

Julia felt a cold rush. Rio had been so fun, except for that first night. She did not want to go back to Maracanã Stadium.

## Feijoada

*Feijoada* is a traditional bean stew with pork and spicy sausages. Considered the national dish of Brazil, it cooks for many hours and is usually saved for special family celebrations.



Grandma and Grandpa lived on a steep hill in the neighborhood of Santa Teresa. When Grandpa opened the door, everything was suddenly familiar. Julia remembered visiting this house when she was five. Grandpa taught her to **samba** by letting her stand on his feet. They had laughed and laughed.

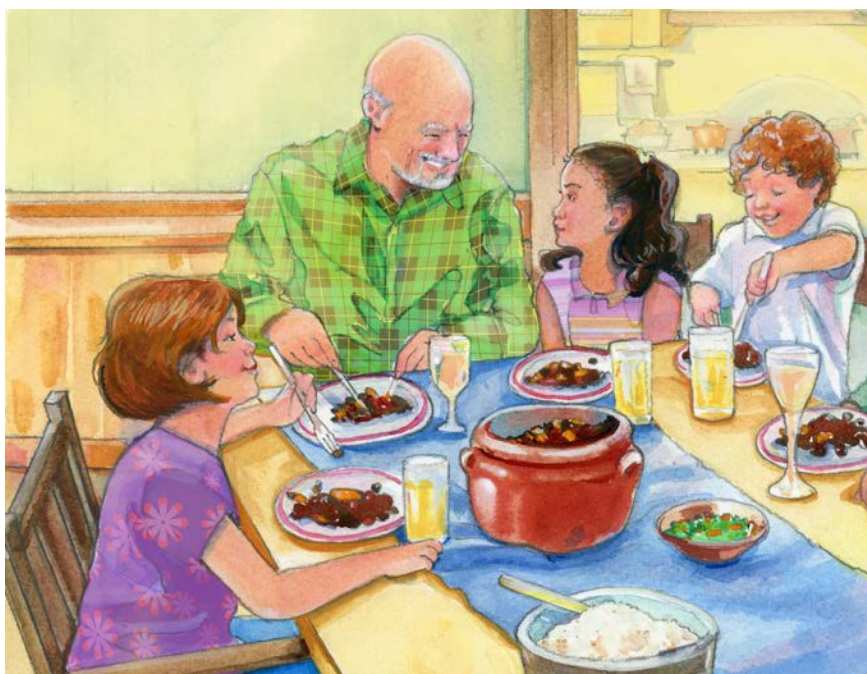
The families sat down to Grandma's spicy, meaty *feijoada*. Julia sat between Gabriela and Grandpa.



“How do you like Rio?” Grandpa asked.

“It’s beautiful, and I’ve had a wonderful time, but . . .” Julia paused, and Grandpa leaned close. “The opening ceremonies were too much! It was such a big crowd, so loud. I hear football games can be rowdy, too. I’m scared.”

“Don’t worry, my Julia,” Grandpa said. “At football games, Brazilians are one big family.”

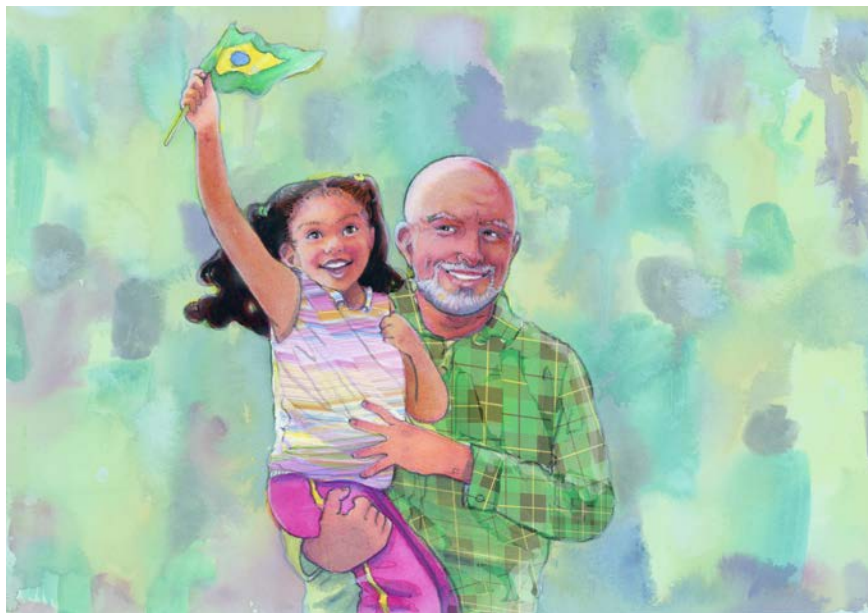




Julia clutched Gabriela's and Grandpa's hands as they entered the stadium. The crowd seemed even louder than before. When Brazil took a shot, everyone gasped. When the referee blew the whistle, everyone yelled. When Brazil went up the field, everyone cheered.

## Brazilian Football

Football, or soccer, is the national sport of Brazil. Brazilian players are among the best in the world. Brazil is also known for its passionate fans. They have many songs and chants to support their teams.



The crowd's feelings swept over Julia like a warm wave. Caught up in the moment, she lifted her arms and cheered, too. It was exciting. It was wonderful.

Then, Brazil scored a goal. Julia had never heard so many people shout at once. She would never forget the roaring sound.

Grandpa lifted Julia in the air. Together with the crowd, they joined in a traditional football **chant**: "*Eu sou brasileiro!*" "I am Brazilian!"

## Glossary

- cable car** (*n.*) a vehicle that is pulled along tracks or through the air by a cable (p. 8)
- ceremonies** (*n.*) formal events that take place on a special occasion (p. 5)
- chant** (*n.*) words spoken or sung in a repeated, rhythmic way, usually by a group (p. 15)
- mangoes** (*n.*) sweet, juicy fruits that have yellow and red skins and grow in warm climates (p. 9)
- nervous** (*adj.*) edgy or tense; afraid (p. 4)
- Olympics** (*n.*) an international contest and festival that involves many kinds of sports (p. 3)
- Portuguese** (*n.*) the main language of Portugal and Brazil (p. 4)
- samba** (*v.*) to do a rhythmic, Brazilian dance of African origin (p. 12)
- stadium** (*n.*) a place with many seats where people watch sports or other activities (p. 3)



## Words to Know

cable car

ceremonies

chant

mangoes

nervous

Olympics

Portuguese

samba

stadium

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Level P Leveled Book

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### Correlation

LEVEL P	
Fountas & Pinnell	M
Reading Recovery	28
DRA	28

# A Trip to Rio

*A Reading A-Z Level P Leveled Book*

*Word Count: 848*

## Connections

### Writing

Imagine you are Julia and are visiting Rio de Janeiro for the Olympic Games. Write a postcard home to your teacher. Tell about what you saw and what you did there.

### Social Studies and Art

Make a poster about Brazil. Include a map and information about the country. Present your poster to your class.



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