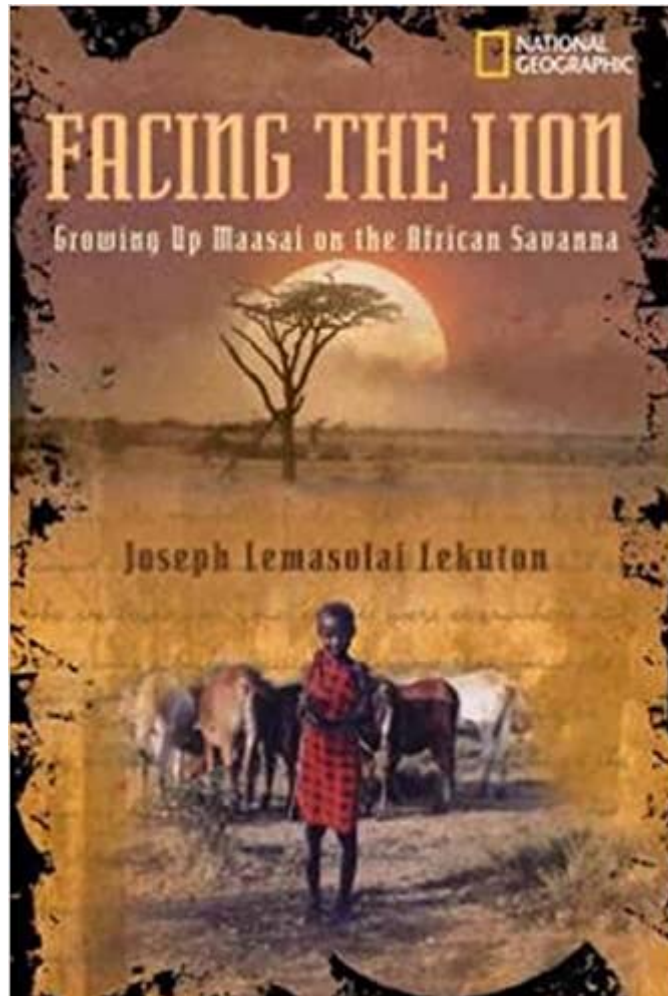




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# Facing The Lion: Growing Up Maasai On The African Savanna (Biography)



## Synopsis

Joseph Lemasolai Lekuton gives American kids a firsthand look at growing up in Kenya as a member of a tribe of nomads whose livelihood centers on the raising and grazing of cattle. Readers share Lekuton's first encounter with a lion, the epitome of bravery in the warrior tradition. They follow his mischievous antics as a young Maasai cattle herder, coming-of-age initiation, boarding school escapades, soccer success, and journey to America for college. Lekuton's riveting text combines exotic details of nomadic life with the universal experience and emotions of a growing boy.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 0720 (What's this?)

Series: Biography

Paperback: 128 pages

Publisher: National Geographic Children's Books; Reprint edition (October 11, 2005)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0792272978

ISBN-13: 978-0792272977

Product Dimensions: 5.2 x 0.4 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 5.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 107 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #54,380 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #19 in [African Books > Teens >](#)

[Biographies > Cultural Heritage](#) #38 in [African Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures >](#)

[Explore the World > Africa](#) #114 in [African Books > Children's Books > Biographies > Multicultural](#)

Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

## Customer Reviews

Gr. 5-12. This simple memoir is the extraordinary story of a poor nomadic boy in Kenya who literally travels across the world but never abandons home. Lekuton grew up in Kenya's poorest tribe, herding cows and playing in trees and hyena holes before he entered a missionary boarding school and went to college in the U.S. Now he teaches in Virginia, but he has never lost his Maasai roots, and he returns home to help his people several months a year. Looking back without romanticism or self-pity, he remembers how it was: the joy and excitement, the constant hunger and moving, and the traditions, including the circumcision ceremony that made him a man. The Cinderella theme

begins in Kenya where he's the shabby kid accepted at a fancy Nairobi high school. Later he travels to his college interview in a cattle truck with the cows. What gives this short, readable book its power is Lekuton's authoritative, intimate view of now and then. Hazel Rochman Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

"Every home should have this book." --"The Baltimore Afro-American"

Facing The Lions is a wonderful book and a MUST READ if you want to understand how Massai people think!!!! read it to my kids (11,9,7,4) while we were in Kenya. (Though they could have read it by themselves- I did not want to miss it!!!)Joseph is a boy that grew up in a Massai tribe and explains his world so well that you start to understand their way of thinking.The book has short chapters. It would be an easy read for a reluctant reader.If you study about Africa, Kenya or Massai, it is a must!Your students will love it and beg for just ONE more chapter!!!! love the message that education is important. How hard some students have to fight to reach their goal. What a different world it is to be brought up in a tribe that does not acknowledge education.Note: I did skip one chapter (of the last chapters) which talks about Josephs experience about circumcision (because of my 7 and 4 year old) while the older ones read it by themselves.

I recently visited Tanzania and this book was on a recommended reading list. While there, I had the rare opportunity to visit a Maasai tribe that had little history of visits from "outsiders." This book gave me a good knowledge base for understanding this tribe and I was so glad that I had read it. It was an interesting and fast read and I enjoyed reading it.

Having recently visited a Maasai village in Tanzania I wanted to know more about their culture. The author's life is amazing and I learned more about their culture. This would have been good to read prior to my trip.

I really enjoyed this book. I had hoped to be able to use it with my third grade students as part of our Africa unit. Unfortunately, there was a long chapter on the boy's circumcision which isn't appropriate for my age students. Otherwise an insightful look into the Masai life.

Having been to Kenya several times and meeting the Massai people and the Saburu and Pokot people has been the best experience of my lifetime. Being out in the bush and sleeping outdoors

with elephants and lions is a feeling that goes to your very soul. I could relate to the beauty of Joseph's life and the different worlds he so valiantly managed to live in. I would recommend this book to anyone who has been there and anyone who has not because the book truly shows you how you can overcome anything if you put your mind to it.

We in America have everything. Even the poor and welfare recipients have more in terms of comforts than the Massai. But no one, even the wealthy, could have a childhood as rich or have an outlook as positive as those who live truly free. My prayers are that modern society remembers and holds dear the traditions and lives of nomadic people such as the Massai. Thank you Joseph for a truly inspiring story and life.

Interesting story of this young man growing up and overcoming all odds of living in Africa.

Book arrived in new condition and very quick. Loved the story too

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