



Kellie McIntyre

AUTHOR OF
THE PASSPORT PROJECT

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Kellie (Flanagan) McIntyre

Short bio

Kellie McIntyre is a traveler, speaker, and author of *THE PASSPORT PROJECT*. Her quest for culture and adventure has taken her to 50 countries across seven continents. In 2013, Kellie and her family packed one suitcase each and embarked on a five-month journey around the world. Now, she challenges others to travel boldly. Kellie speaks to schools and groups about the impact of experiential travel on cultural intelligence (CQ). She shares tips for planning and surviving global family (mis)adventures—like being detained in a communist country—at 4WornPassports.com.

Medium bio

Kellie McIntyre is an author, speaker, and traveler. Her quest for culture and adventure has taken her to 50 countries across seven continents. In 2013, Kellie and her family packed one suitcase each and traded their suburban bubble for the world. Now, she challenges others to travel boldly.

Kellie's YA travel memoir, *THE PASSPORT PROJECT: TWO SISTERS DITCH MIDDLE SCHOOL FOR A LIFE-CHANGING JOURNEY AROUND THE WORLD*, is based on their five-month global "ed-venture." This family travelogue has a unique twist—it is written from her daughters' perspectives.

Sharing her family's personal experiences, Kellie speaks to groups and schools about the impact of experiential travel on cultural intelligence (CQ).

Kellie holds a BA and a Master of Public Health, but her worn passport has provided her most valuable education. Kellie shares her tips for planning and surviving global family (mis)adventures at 4WornPassports.com. She lives in Alabama. *THE PASSPORT PROJECT* is her first book.

Long bio

Kellie McIntyre is an author, speaker, and traveler. Her quest for culture and adventure has taken her to 50 countries across seven continents. In 2013, Kellie, her husband, and two daughters packed one suitcase each and embarked on a journey around the world. Now, she challenges others to travel boldly.

As a family travel advocate, Kellie believes three things: One, a global worldview is the greatest gift that parents can give their children. Two, extraordinary adventures can be created on an ordinary budget. And three, most of the world can be explored independently.

Their motto is: No trust fund. No tour group. No problem!

Her family's adventures include:

- Dancing with the long-neck women of Myanmar and dining with acid-attack survivors in India
- Camping in a snow hole in Antarctica and with a jungle tribe in Panama
- Paragliding over the Swiss Alps and bungee jumping in New Zealand
- Hiking Peru's Inca Trail and Namibia's epic dunes
- Scuba diving with giant mantas in the Maldives and snorkeling with giant seahorses in the Galapagos
- Meditating with a monk in Vietnam and observing cremations on the holy Ganges in India
- Being kicked out of a souvenir shop in Italy and kicked out of China

When their daughters were young, Kellie and her husband, Dale, set a goal to explore six continents together before the girls finished high school. This mission—to give their daughters a global education using the world as their classroom—led to two family sabbaticals.

Kellie's YA travel memoir, *THE PASSPORT PROJECT: TWO SISTERS DITCH MIDDLE SCHOOL FOR A LIFE-CHANGING JOURNEY AROUND THE WORLD*, is based on their five-month global "ed-venture." Uniquely written from her daughters' perspectives, this family travelogue shares what happens when two middle schoolers and two middle-agers trade their suburban bubble for the world—awkward moments, (pre)teenage anxiety, and all.

Sharing her family's personal experiences, Kellie speaks to groups and schools about the impact of experiential travel on cultural intelligence (CQ).

Kellie holds a BA from Western Kentucky University and a Master of Public Health from the University of Alabama at Birmingham, but her worn passport has provided her most valuable education. Kellie shares her tips for planning and surviving global family (mis)adventures at 4WornPassports.com.

THE PASSPORT PROJECT

Two Sisters Ditch Middle School for a Life-Changing Journey Around the World



"THANKS FOR RUINING MY LIFE!"

Delaney McIntyre's eighth-grade dreams crumble when her parents announce their "five-month family field trip." Despite her begging, bawling, and silent treatment, Delaney can't derail their obvious midlife crisis.

Seventh-grade Riley McIntyre is thrilled to ditch middle school for world school. The late bloomer dreams of bungee jumping in New Zealand *and* completing the Riley Reinvention Project during this global adventure.

What about school? Forget science and math. The only way to pass this class is to survive:

- Monster cockroaches in Panama
- Projectile puking in Indonesia
- Toilet catastrophes in Thailand
- Public nudity in Iceland
- Deadly jellies in Australia
- Scam artists in Italy

Each day is a real-life social studies class where the sisters must navigate new countries, cultures, and religions—while also navigating adolescence.

But when a flight mistake leads to the family's detention in a communist country, the sisters face the ultimate challenge. Will they fail the assignment? Or will they find their way home?

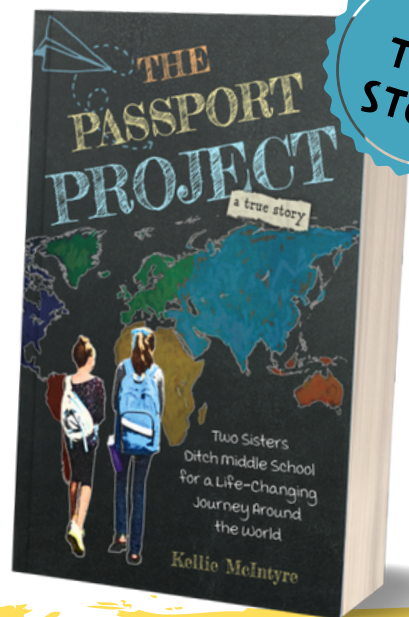
"A unique and engaging way for readers to learn about different countries, cultures, and points of view." —*School Library Journal*

"[S]cary, thrilling, and eye-opening ... richly detailed, educational ... An engaging and enlightening travel account ..." —*Kirkus Reviews*

"[B]rilliantly captures the awkward hilarity of teen/family travel while highlighting the gift of a global worldview."

—*Rachel Macy Stafford, NYT Best Selling Author and Teacher*

Kellie McIntyre is a Southern girl who has explored 50 countries across seven continents. In 2013, Kellie and her family packed one suitcase each and embarked on a journey around the world. In this thrilling and witty account, Kellie deftly weaves her own experiences with her daughters' blogs and personal journals into a one-of-a-kind travel memoir. Kellie shares tips for planning global family (mis)adventures at 4WornPassports.com. *The Passport Project* is her first book.



EAT PRAY LOVE meets Middle School in this Teen & YA travel memoir about a family's global journey and the lessons learned along the way.

FEATURES

100+ maps, illustrations, and photos. Discussion guide included.

Additional curriculum resources on:
TeachersPayTeachers.com
TeachingBooks.net

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978-1-7377438-0-4	ebook	\$ 9.99
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978-1-7377438-2-8	casebound	\$22.99

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Travel	68,000 words	10+
Geography & Cultures	346 pages	
Family & Siblings		

AVAILABILITY

RETAIL: Wherever most books are sold
DISTRIBUTION: Ingram, Mackin, & D2D



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Ask the Author

A Q&A on writing, parenting, and travel with
Kellie McIntyre, author of *The Passport Project*

What inspired you to write this book?

Like most everyone, I spent the Dumpster-fire summer of 2020 watching our nation and world implode. I felt called to create something that would unify people, rather than divide.

People always say to write what you know, and I know two things: One, there is no better way to develop an appreciation for freedom and diversity than through travel. And two, anyone who survives 24/7 family time while hopscotching across the globe with middle schoolers has a story to tell.

Why did you make travel a priority over sports and other extracurriculars?

We set a goal when Delaney and Riley were in elementary school to explore every continent except Antarctica before they finished high school. We weren't much of a "sporty" family, so we made travel our sport. Instead of collecting participation trophies, we collected passport stamps. We would generally take a big trip over the Christmas break as we worked toward our goal. But on one three-week trip to Thailand and Cambodia, we met a family who was carrying backpacks identical to ours—except they were traveling for a year! That moment planted the seed for our own family sabbatical.

What was the result of this goal?

In 2013, we packed one bag each and embarked on a family journey around the world. What started out as a family goal turned into a first-class education from economy seats. And that education has turned in *The Passport Project*.

Why did you decide to write *The Passport Project* from your middle-school daughters' perspectives?

If you put *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* (with female protagonists), *Nat Geo*, and *The Amazing Race* into a book blender, you'd get *The Passport Project*. You can take the kids out of middle school, but you can't take the middle school out of kids. Our daughters were dealing with all the normal issues of adolescence, while constantly navigating new customs and cultures. There is so much pressure in middle school to be like everyone else. Everybody wants to dress the same, look the same, be the same. Nobody wants to be different. But traveling reminds us that it is our differences that make the world so interesting. Besides, anything written from a middle schooler's perspective is bound to be entertaining.

The Passport Project fills the void of 'round-the-world travelogues for teens and tweens. Kids are curious about the world, but most have to not seen much of it. While not everyone has the opportunity to explore the far corners of our planet, everyone can travel by book.

Who is your target audience?

Our story is appropriate for ages 10 and up. Anyone who loves travel adventures, family stories, or learning about the world will enjoy it. Its 5-star reviews cross generational, gender, and racial lines. Educators and book clubs can use the discussion guide to spark meaningful conversations in the classroom or living room. And a fun fact for movie buffs: *The Passport Project* aces the Bechdel Test.

What is the setting for your story? Why is it significant?

Part one of our story, *The Bubble*, begins in the Birmingham, Alabama suburb of Vestavia Hills. In part two, *The World*, the reader travels to twelve countries across four continents. Each new passport stamp is a real-life social studies lesson in new customs, cultures, religions, and rules—resulting in so many awkward family moments.

Unfortunately, when people outside of the South think of Birmingham, "tolerance and diversity" are not the first words that come to mind. I hope to change that. Given Birmingham's tragic history, it is especially meaningful that a book celebrating racial and cultural differences begins there.

Why do you believe travel is as important as sports for youth?

Sports play a valuable role in our society. No doubt. But not every kid has the talent or interest in devoting their lives to a single activity. Travel creates shared family bonds and memories that will last a lifetime. And with travel, everyone is in the game. While there are countless life lessons that can only be learned as part of a team, there are just as many life lessons that can only be learned outside of your country and culture.

If you had to summarize the theme of your story in one sentence, what would it be?

Life is so much richer when we embrace the world beyond our bubbles.

What advice do you have for parents who are contemplating a similar adventure?

Stop talking about it, and do it! It's the best parenting decision *and* life decision you'll ever make. Your kids only have one childhood. Make it one to remember.

Family travel isn't cheap! What's your secret to affording these adventures?

Most of the world can be visited for much less than the glossy-travel-brochure prices. My whole deal is figuring out how to go on the most amazing adventures (think: African safaris, Galapagos Islands, luxurious Maldives) for a reasonable amount of money. Once I've cracked the nut, I share how we did it on our website so other families can do it too.

Why is travel the perfect gift?

Travel doesn't break or go out of style, and the memories last forever!

Where can readers find *The Passport Project*?

Readers can request it from their favorite bookstores or find it at the major online book retailers. It is currently available in paperback, hardback, and ebook. Bulk pricing is available for schools and organizations.

Early Reviews



EDITORIAL REVIEWS

"A unique and engaging way for readers to learn about different countries, cultures, and points of view." —**SCHOOL LIBRARY JOURNAL**

"[S]cary, thrilling, eye-opening . . . The richly detailed, educational work is a wonderful resource . . . An engaging and enlightening travel account about a family's global journey." —**KIRKUS REVIEWS**

"*The Passport Project* is an enticing global travelogue led by teenagers . . ." —**FOREWORD REVIEWS**

EDUCATOR REVIEWS

"[B]rilliantly captures the awkward hilarity of teen/family travel while highlighting the gift of a global worldview . . . sprinkled with humor, moments of discovery, and appreciation for diversity and cultural awareness." —**RACHEL MACY STAFFORD, NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR AND CERTIFIED SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER**

"This book changed my family's life." —**DR. ROBIN MAHLOW, FAMILY PHYSICIAN AND HOMESCHOOL MOM**

"THIS BOOK!! Inspiring. Fun. Educational. Page Turner. Memorable. VERY entertaining and relatable. . . . As a past teacher, I would have loved this book in my curriculum. [It] absolutely captures students' interests and also provides a vehicle for engaging dialogue. . . . [R]eaders are transported around the world, all from the comfort of our own homes and classrooms." —**C. WERTHEIMER, FORMER MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHER**

"[P]acked with harrowing travel tales and hilarious anecdotes . . . full of cultural information. [I]t's a very important read for middle grade children . . . that will inspire teens and tweens to see the world from a different perspective." —**C. WADDELL, SIXTH GRADE HISTORY TEACHER**



“I laughed. I cried. I was scared. As a history teacher, I like to think I know it all, but this book taught me so much. Geography, culture, religions, and customs I never knew existed.”

—**J. ISBELL, SIXTH GRADE HISTORY TEACHER**

“I am speechless. It should be required reading.”

M. HAYNIE, MIDDLE SCHOOL PARAEDUCATOR

“As a teacher, I am always looking for books to help students open their eyes to different points of view. . . . The narration through the sisters makes it as engaging as it is educational.”

—**A. COLBY, EIGHTH GRADE LANGUAGE ARTS TEACHER**

“[A] delightful read incorporating geography, social mores and insightful acceptance of various cultures through the eyes of two teen/tweens told with humor, sensitivity and realism.

—**JOHNNA CLIFT HORTON, MA, MASTERS IN COUNSELING WITH A SPECIALIZATION IN ADOLESCENTS**

“LOVED this book!!!! I want to go on a global family field trip now!!!”

—**A. ROMP, PEDIATRIC NURSE**

“[A] wonderful book of REAL adventures. . . . They immersed themselves in various cultures different from their own and, in the process, learned valuable lessons. [The author] does an excellent job conveying those stories in a way that young (and not so young) people can relate and learn. As a teacher, I highly recommend [it]!” —**K. PREWITT, HIGH SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TEACHER**

“Such a great story of family and life-changing adventures all told from the mind of a middle school girl. The Passport Project is beautifully written and includes so many fun maps and pictures . . .”

—**J. SINGLETARY, HIGH SCHOOL WORLD HISTORY TEACHER**

“I cannot recommend this book highly enough. It will be a book I reference often in my own class.”

—**T. PETERSON, HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH TEACHER**

Synopsis

A suburban 14-year-old's social life crumbles when her parents drag her on a trip around the world. While DELANEY blames her parents for ruining her life, her adventurous 12-year-old sister, RILEY, is thrilled to ditch middle school for another global adventure. But angsty Delaney refuses to miss the best year of middle school—eighth grade. So she uses her teenage girl weapons—tears, tantrums, and silent treatments—to convince her parents to cancel the reservations for this global family field trip.

Despite her dramatic attempts, Delaney's efforts fail. Teenage drama is no match against middle-age dreams. Before she can be a normal eighth grader, Delaney must spend five months with her family on a cultural odyssey. While Delaney struggles with missing eighth grade, late-bloomer Riley thinks the trip timing is perfect. Her Riley Reinvention Project (RRP) is moving slowly, and she can't wait to wow her classmates with a new-and-improved curvy Riley next spring.

The family packs one suitcase each and boards their first plane. Each flight (of 26) takes them farther from their suburban bubble. With each new country, continent, and culture, the sisters learn that life's most important lessons do not come from textbooks.

When they survive public nudity in Iceland, they learn that you can't actually die from embarrassment. The ease of traveling in England teaches them that while vacations are fun, travel is transformative. In Italy, they learn to fight like gladiators in the Roman Empire and to fight back against the scammers they interact with daily. Italy teaches them the importance of being a positive ambassador for their community.

In Sri Lanka, they feel the awkwardness and judgment that come with dressing differently. They want the women wearing saris and hijabs to understand they are not bad because they wear yoga pants. They vow to be more inclusive when they return home. In Thailand, Vietnam, Indonesia and Malaysia, they immerse themselves in new religions: meditating with a Buddhist monk, receiving Hindu blessings, learning about reincarnation, and discovering a sacred cave full of giant wooden weenies. When they visit a Christian church in a Muslim country, they learn that finding your people has nothing to do with skin color and everything to do with shared values.

After eight weeks of hop-scotching around Southeast Asia, Delaney and Riley take a detour. But they suffer from cultural whiplash when they arrive Down Under. They spent weeks mastering the skill of crossing the motorbike-packed roads of Vietnam, but when they apply the same skill in Australia, the locals are infuriated. The sisters are in a cultural pinball machine, bouncing between Eastern and Western cultures and the rules change with each one. Even the way they use the bathroom changes.

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They spend six weeks conquering fears in Australia and New Zealand. Despite the deadly stingers, Riley scuba dives for the first time on the Great Barrier Reef. And Delaney's bewildered parents want to know what happened to their risk-averse daughter when she begs to bungee jump in New Zealand. The sisters spend a month convincing their mom to let them jump off the famous bridge in Queenstown. But Riley's bungee-jumping dreams shatter when she is denied jumping due to her small size. To her despair, she hasn't added a single inch, ounce or curve since leaving home months ago. Riley breaks down, declaring the RRP a total failure and devastated that she will return home exactly the same.

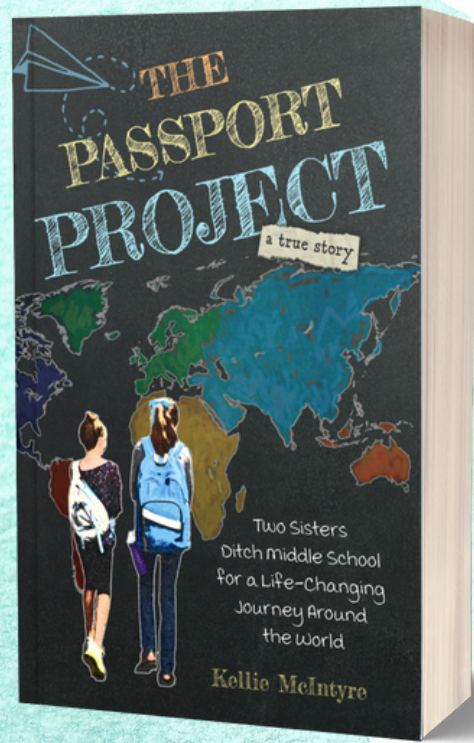
A few weeks later in Indonesia, Delaney and her dad develop a bad case of Bali belly. While Riley and her mom are searching the local grocery for Sprite and crackers, Riley has an epiphany. She realizes that after all the months of traveling and learning about different cultures, the RRP was not a complete failure. She may look the same on the outside, but she is not the same person at all.

Finally, the only barrier that remains between Delaney and eighth grade is the Great Wall of China. But when a visa debacle results in their terrifying detainment in this communist country, there's more at risk than middle school. The family's passports are confiscated and they are held for hours with three young Swedish men. The Swedes are eventually released, but the McIntyres are deported. This is when the sisters learn the most important lesson of their lives: Freedom is like oxygen. You don't realize how important it is, until it is gone.

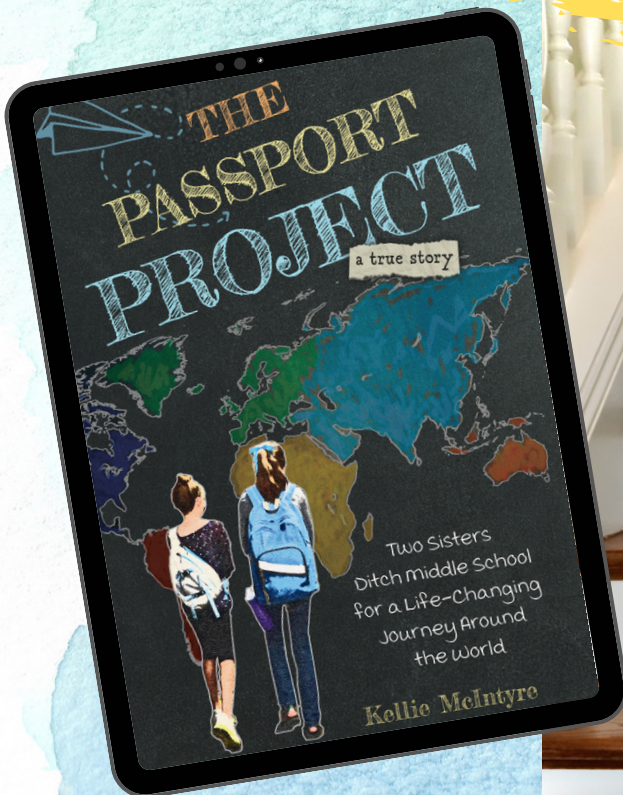
Although they were deported, the McIntyres must attempt to re-enter Beijing without any visa issues so they can catch their final one-way flight home. They are successful. The family is frustrated when their social media and personal website won't load. At first they blame the Wi-Fi, but then they learn the real reason—government prohibition. After learning what it's like to live in a country without freedom of speech, Delaney conquers the final obstacle of her 'round-the-world challenge: The Great Wall. As they are leaving this Wonder of the World, the family is shocked to reunite with their Swedish detention buddies.

Two days later, the family arrives safely home. Although their suburban bubble hasn't changed, they have. Two weeks later, Malaysia Airlines flight 370 disappears. The family is equal parts relieved (that they weren't on the flight) and distraught (for those who were). Four years later, 18-year-old Delaney returns to her former middle school as an International Day speaker. In a school-wide assembly—following former Secretary of State, Dr. Condoleezza Rice—Delaney shares the life-changing lessons of her 'round-the-world education.

And Riley hatches a plan for another global adventure.



High-resolution photos
available for download



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