



Lesson Plans Digital Booklet

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Introduction

Exploring Africa is a comprehensive curriculum designed to educate about Africa in a true, objective way. Each unit is designed with a theme in mind: *Why Study Africa?*, *Studying Africa through the Social Studies*, *Studying Africa through the Humanities*, *Regional Perspectives*, and *Country Case Studies*. Using these themes allows Exploring Africa to provide a well-rounded, interdisciplinary, and holistic approach to learning about Africa. Within each unit, there are modules constructed in a more specific thematic organization, which creates an even more accessible format for learning in a systematic way. Finally, within each module there are activities designed to help students comprehend the lessons they just learned. Each of these activities is aligned to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). It is here in this Exploring Africa Lesson Plan Digital Booklet that we offer lesson plans designed for the physical classroom space, to be used and implemented in your own classroom, and adjusted in any way you see fit to meet your individual classroom's needs. It is highly recommended that these lesson plans for activities are supplemental to the lessons in the modules in Exploring Africa. These lesson plans are for the activities only, and not the lessons for which they are designed.

Unit Three

Studying Africa through the Humanities

Module Eleven: African Literature

African Literature will introduce students to the beauty and diversity of African literature. The lesson will allow students to read works of literature from Southern, West, East, North, and Central Africa. Students will also be exposed to the different genres of African literature. Poems by Zimbabwean author Charles Mungoshi make up the first activity that focuses on Southern Africa. From the West African countries of Niger and Nigeria, students will be asked to read and listen to folk tales in the second activity. An excerpt from a novel by Kenyan author Ngugi wa Thiong'o is included as an example of East African literature in the third activity. A short story from Sudan is discussed in Activity Four, and in Activity Five students will read excerpts from an autobiography by Moroccan author Fatima Mernissi. Finally, students will read part of a play from Tanzania.

Module Eleven

Reading African Poetry

African Folktales

African Novels

African Short Stories

African Autobiography

African Drama

Reading African Poetry

Time Needed	Approximately 30 minutes
Prior Knowledge	Reading comprehension strategies
Lesson Assessment	Formative: participation, answers on worksheet
Standards	<p>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.2 <i>Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.</i></p> <p>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.6.4 <i>Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone</i></p>
Materials Needed	Projector/smartboard/document camera to show poem in front of the room, African Poetry worksheets ¹

Objectives

Students will be able to...

- Work and collaborate with peers
- Deepen their appreciation of culturally diverse poetry
- Analyze various elements of different genres of poetry such as diction, tone, imagery, etc.

Time	Learning Task	Methods or Procedures
7 Min.	Show the poem <i>The Trees</i> on the front board and ask the students to read it silently to themselves. After, ask them to listen as you read the poems aloud and practice visualizing the images described. Ask the class, <i>Why do the winter trees laugh at humans? What does the author mean by the phrase, 'past seasons'?</i>	Whole class discussion; teacher reads the poem and asks the questions aloud; teacher should avoid giving the answers and prompt further student discussion. Write student responses on the board.
8 Min.	Hand out the poem <i>Saturday</i> to half of the class and the poem <i>Little Rich Boy</i> to the other half of the class. Handout the worksheet African Poetry to every student. Students read the poem to themselves and answers the questions on the worksheet corresponding to the poem they read.	Individual student work; teacher passes out handouts and gives students instructions to complete the questions given, and indicate when they are finished so you can move on to the next task.

¹ Handouts and Worksheets, pg. 19-23

15 Min.	Students pair up with a student who had a different poem than them (a student who read <i>Saturday</i> partners with a student who read <i>Little Rich Boy</i>). Each student takes turns reading aloud to their partner the poem they read, and then explaining the different answers they gave to the questions on the worksheet, and why they gave that answer. Students may discuss whether these answers are correct, and write down any new insights or ideas they gain from the discussion.	Partner work; teacher asks students to partner up based on the poem they read, and students discuss the poems together. Teacher facilitates discussions while walking around the room, and prompting further discussion as needed. Students should turn in their questions worksheet when they have finished.
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African Folktales

Time Needed	3 days
Prior Knowledge	Reading comprehension strategies, general knowledge of folktales
Lesson Assessment	Formative: observations of group work and participation Summative: Small group presentations
Standards	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.6.2 <i>Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.</i>
Materials Needed	<i>Gizo and the Lizard</i> handout ² , <i>The Man and the Lioness</i> handout ³ , African Folktales Project handout ⁴ , coloring utensils

Objectives

Students will be able to...

- Collaborate with peers
- Appreciate diverse cultures through folktales
- Demonstrate understanding of the main idea of a text and important plot points

Time	Learning Task	Methods or Procedures
Day One		
10 Min.	Intro to project: divide students into four groups. Two groups will be assigned the folktale <i>Gizo and the Lizard</i> and two groups will be assigned the folktale <i>The Man and the Lioness</i> , and explain the assignment.	Teacher hands out assignment sheet to each student. Then teacher assigns groups and hands out the assigned folktale to each group. Explain to the students that they will be reading the folktales and then sharing them with the class in a visual presentation, and then reads through the assignment sheet aloud with the class. Give the groups a few minutes to go over the assignment sheet together and figure out if they have any questions, and then address any questions asked.
15 Min.	Students read their assigned folktale individually, and then discuss the story with their groups –What was the lesson trying to be taught? What were the important events of the story?	Teacher monitors and observes, assisting when needed. Students may move on to group planning when they have completed this.
15 Min.	Group Planning: Groups plan on how	Teacher observes and monitors, answering

² Handouts and Worksheets, pg. 25

³ Handouts and Worksheets, pg. 26

⁴ Handouts and Worksheets, pg. 24

	they want to present their project, and decide on the different roles of each group member. Groups can start mapping out a timeline of events, sketching picture ideas, or otherwise putting their project together.	questions when needed, and moving between groups to make sure that each group has a clear idea of what they are doing. Instruct students to bring any extra materials they may need (that aren't provided in the classroom) to class the next day (e.g. poster board).
Day Two		
5 Min.	Set Up: Students get together in their groups, organize their materials, and begin to construct their presentation	Teacher facilitates and directs to promote a productive working environment
25 Min.	Production time: Students work on their presentations in their groups	Teacher monitors and answers questions as needed
10 Min.	Presentation Prep Time: Students get organized for giving their presentation, assign speaking roles, practice.	Teacher monitors and answers questions as needed.
Day Three		
30 Min.	Presentation Day: Each group takes turns giving a 5 minute presentation on their folktale. They then answer any questions the class has for them for 2 minutes after their presentation, totaling 7 minutes per group.	Teacher watches, takes notes, and lets students "run the show"
10 Min.	Wrap-up: Students turn in finished projects, and then write the answers to the following questions: <i>How are the two folktales we read today different from other folk tales you have read? What lessons did you learn from these folk tales?</i>	Teacher collects finished projects, and writes the prompt on the board, instructing students to keep writing.

African Novels

Time Needed	Approx. 42 Min
Prior Knowledge	Reading comprehension strategies
Lesson Assessment	Formative: participation, written responses
Standards	<p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.6.2 <i>Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.</i></p> <p>CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.3.E <i>Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.</i></p>
Materials Needed	Excerpt from <i>Weep Not Child</i> handouts ⁵ , glossary for <i>Weep Not Child</i> handout ⁶ , pencil, paper

Objectives

Students will be able to...

- Use strategies before, during, and after reading to construct meaning
- Dialogue with peers about text
- Predict in writing the ending of a story, by drawing from details of the novel

Time	Learning Task	Methods or Procedures
2 Min.	Teacher passes out the handouts Excerpt from <i>Weep Not Child</i> and Glossary for <i>Weep Not Child</i> , and gives instructions.	Teacher instructs students to read the full passage, while annotating it, by highlighting and writing any thoughts, ideas, or questions they may have in the margins. Also explain that any bolded words in the story can be found with a definition in the glossary handout.
10 Min.	Students read and annotate <i>Weep Not Child</i> .	Teacher monitors student work.
15 Min.	Discuss the excerpt as a class, allowing students to ask any questions they may have, or share their thoughts on the story.	Whole class, student led discussion; teacher facilitates discussion and provides further prompt if needed to keep the conversation flowing, but does not answer the questions asked, allowing other students to do so instead.
10 Min.	Students answer the writing prompt given by the teacher.	Individual writing activity; teacher gives the following prompt: <i>This passage is taken from a longer novel; since we have not read the novel we are left without the ending to the story. Write</i>

⁵ Handouts and Worksheets, pg. 27-29

⁶ Handouts and Worksheets, pg. 30

		<i>how you believe the story will end, answering questions such as whether or not Mr. Howlands will return the land to Ngotho. Try to write in the style of the author, and give a lot of details!</i>
5 Min.	Students swap stories with another student and read their partner's ending, comparing it to their own. Students turn in their written responses when finished.	Partner work; teacher asks students to share their story ending with the person next to them, and then quickly compare how their endings differed. Teacher collects written responses at the end.

African Short Stories

Time Needed	Approximately 47 Minutes
Prior Knowledge	Reading comprehension strategies
Lesson Assessment	Formative: written student work, class discussion and participation
Standards	<p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.3 <i>Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.</i></p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.6.6 <i>Explain how an author develops the point of view of the narrator or speaker in a text.</i></p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.2 <i>Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.</i></p>
Materials Needed	Pencil, paper, <i>A Handful of Dates</i> handout ⁷

Objectives

Students will be able to...

- Draw upon personal experiences to deepen understand of text
- Use strategies before, during, and after reading to construct meaning
- Engage in peer dialogue

Time	Learning Task	Methods or Procedures
5 Min	Write about someone (that you know personally) that you look up to in life as a role model. Explain why you look up to them, and give an example of something they did that you admire.	Student independent work. Teacher prompts students to write for a full 5 minutes.
2 Min.	Teacher passes out the handout <i>A Handful of Dates</i> and gives instructions.	Teacher instructs students to read the short story, informing them that there is a glossary of terms on the last page for any bolded words in the story. Students should practice their annotation skills by highlighting and writing questions, thoughts, or important ideas in the margin.
10 Min.	Students read and annotate <i>A Handful of Dates</i> .	Teacher monitors student work

20 Min.	Whole class discussion on the following questions: <i>Who are the characters of this story? Which one is the narrator? How does the young boy feel about his grandfather at the beginning of the story? How does he feel about his grandfather at the end of the story? Why have his feelings changed?</i>	Teacher led questioning, student led answering/discussion. Teacher does not provide answers; s/he allows students respond to the questions. Prompt further discussion about each student response with “do you agree” or “What do you think about that?” and ask for examples from the text, until the class discussion dies down. Then move to the next question.
10 Min.	Students go back to their original writing on their role model, and now write a response to the following prompt: <i>Write about a time that your role model did something you disagreed with. How did you react?</i>	Independent student writing exercise. Teacher prompts students to keep writing for the full 10 minutes.

African Autobiography

Time Needed	Approx. 30 minutes
Prior Knowledge	An understanding of what an autobiography is, basic knowledge of World War II, reading comprehension strategies, and completion of previous activity
Lesson Assessment	Formative: class discussion and participation, written response
Standards	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.3 <i>Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.</i> CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.6 <i>Analyze a particular point of view or cultural experience reflected in a work of literature from outside the United States, drawing on a wide reading of world literature.</i>
Materials Needed	Excerpt from <i>Dreams of Trespass</i> handouts, paper, pencil, whiteboard

Objectives

Students will be able to...

- Make meaningful connections between two different types of texts
- Compare a cultural experience from a different country to their own cultural experiences

Time	Learning Task	Methods or Procedures
3 Min.	Teacher passes out handout Excerpt from <i>Dreams of Trespass</i> and gives instructions. Explain that this is an autobiography by an author from Tunisia, and this passage focuses on a part of her childhood.	Teacher instructs students to read the autobiography, informing them that there is a glossary of terms on the last page for any bolded words in the story. Students should practice their annotation skills by highlighting and writing questions, thoughts, or important ideas in the margin.
7 Min.	Students read and annotate <i>Dreams of Trespass</i>	Teacher monitors student work
10 Min.	Class discussion: ask students to recall the short story <i>A Handful of Dates</i> . Teacher makes a T-chart on the board with <i>A Handful of Dates</i> on one side and <i>Dreams of Trespass</i> on the other. Teacher asks <i>how are the experiences of the little boy in A Handful of Dates</i>	Teacher guides class in a discussion comparing the two different stories, writing the answers given on the appropriate sides of the T-chart.

	<i>different from the ones described by Mernissi about growing up in Tunisia?</i>	
10 Min.	Students write a response to the prompt: <i>Write a short paragraph describing an incident from your childhood, using Mernissi's autobiography as an example. What types of play did you enjoy, who did you spend your time with, what were the adults in your home doing, what clothing did you wear?</i>	Teacher monitors student work and prompts students to continue writing for the full 10 minutes.

African Drama

Time Needed	Approx. 45 minutes
Prior Knowledge	Reading comprehension strategies, knowledge of reading play scripts
Lesson Assessment	Formative: participation, writing activity
Standards	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.6.1 <i>Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</i>
Materials Needed	Whiteboard, paper, pencil, Kinjeketile handout ⁹

Objectives

Students will be able to...

- Read and comprehend drama of an African country
- Make inferences based on the text to predict the outcome of a story
- Collaborate with peers

Time	Learning Task	Methods or Procedures
5 Min.	Teacher passes out the handout Kinjeketile and split students into groups of 5 students per group (some groups need have to have 6 students depending on class size) and gives instructions.	Teacher assigns groups and gives instructions; within each group each student will pick a character from the play to read the part of (in cases of groups of 6, one person will be the narrator and read all of the <i>italicized</i> lines of the play, including the stage directions). Groups will spread out around the room, and read the play aloud, with each student reading their own role. After they will answer the questions on the last page of the handout and then respond to the prompt that will be written on the board.
20 Min.	Students read the play aloud within their groups, and then work together to answer the questions on the last page. One student should record the answers on a separate sheet of paper for the whole group. When finished, they may move on to the prompt written on the board.	Group work: teacher monitors and observes while the students work. While students are working, teacher may write the next prompt on the board.
20 Min.	Students respond to the following prompt within their group: <i>work together to write another scene of the play</i>	Group work: teacher monitors and assists/answers questions when needed. All students should work together in the group to

Kinjeketile. Use what you have learned about Africa and what you learned from reading the play to create a new scene where Kitunda tries again to convince the men to go to war. What will he say and how will they respond? Try to imitate the format used in the play. Don't forget stage directions!

write a new scene, but only one student has to record it on a piece of paper that will be handed in, with all the names of the group members. Teacher collects both the answers to the questions in the handout, and the new scene from each group.

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The Trees

In their nakedness
the winter trees laugh
at our inability
to shed the clothes
of our past seasons.

Saturday

This is Saturday afternoon –
thunder in the air,
banana leaves rustling against the wall
the muted sounds of the children
playing ragball out on the streets.

I have done my laundry,
washed up the pots, pans and plates.

My room is clean.

I have just taken a bath;
I am sitting by the window.

Far, far across the cocoa-coloured fields
across the river at the foot of those hills –
cars, like matchbox toys, hurtle
towards their weekend destinations.

I know I shall watch them
crawl back again on Sunday evening.

I know it: they can never escape
their destiny which is so deeply-etched
somewhere inside me.

This is Saturday afternoon
with nothing to do
thunder in the air,
banana leaves rustling against the wall
the muted sounds of children
playing ragball somewhere in the streets.

I have done my laundry,
washed up the pots, pans and plates.

I have just had a bath
everything is clean, inside and outside.

I am sitting by the window
and all the world is here.

Where could anyone, or anything
possibly wish to escape to?

Little Rich Boy

The little boy wants me to give him
something his rich parents cannot give him.

He stands outside my door
at six every morning and every evening.
Every day since I came to live here three months ago.
And I, locked inside my room, wondering:
what do you give the children of rich parents
who have everything you don't have?

He is always there outside my door at six
when his very rich father drives up
in his shiny black Benz and toots the car horn
and waits to see his little boy running
for what he knows Daddy has brought him
but won't give him unless he claps his hands
and says: "Thank you, father."
But it seems now the little boy has got tired
of sucking and chewing little childish bubbly things;
seems he wants to get his teeth into
something more solid,
something more – substantial.

So he comes and hangs outside my door
and waits for me to hear his implicit cough
and footshuffle; to come out and give him
something that his rich father doesn't seem to realize
he now needs.

And I, behind my locked door, thinking desperately:
what do you give little sons of rich parents
who have everything that you don't have?
Finally, I have to open the door: Want to learn
the twist?"

"No. Is it some kind of cane, or whip or belt?"

"No, it goes something like this. Watch me now,
watch me!"

And since then, this little boy comes to my place
every day to learn that the twist isn't a kind of
cane, or whip or belt, nor shumba – a kind of
growling monster – crouching in some thicket
ready to spring and pounce on little rich boys,
nor is it all precious breakable china

and sparkling glass that all rich people drink
from ...

** Do you know what the twist is? It is an American dance, and song, made famous by an American musician, Chubby Checker. The twist was very popular and was played and danced in countries all over the world.*

Reading African Poetry

Saturday

Describe, in your own words, what Saturday is like for the Zimbabwean speaker in the poem.

When the poet says he is watching cars “like matchbox toys hurtle to their weekend destinations,” he seems to say that many cars are driving very fast to get out of the city and into the countryside, where they will spend the weekend relaxing. Why do the cars “crawl back again on Sunday evening” ?

What are the children in the poem described as doing on this Saturday afternoon?

Is the speaker in the poem content? How do you know?

Little Rich Boy.

Why does the little rich boy in the poem visit the speaker?

What does the boy’s rich father give to him everyday?

What does the speaker give to the boy?

At first the little boy does not want the twist; why? What is a shumba? The answer can be found in the poem.

African Folktale Project Handout

Names of people in my group: _____

Due Date: _____

Assignment: Your group will create a visual interpretation of your assigned folktale that illustrates the main events and ideas of the story.

Mode: This project can take many forms; it is up to the students to decide how it will best be visually represented, but it should help the class better understand the story. For example, you can create a collage, a comic strip, an illustrated children's book, act out your story, etc. If your group has another idea, ask your teacher for permission.

Audience: Your audience is a group of people who have not read this folktale before, so be sure that your visual representation includes all important elements of the story so that the audience understands what is happening.

Presentation Instructions:

You will present this project to the class, by retelling the story out loud while using/showing the visual that you created. Work cooperatively; each student should have a role in the group, e.g. one student can draw, while another writes captions, or all students act out a part, etc., and every student should have a speaking role when presenting to the class.

After you have retold your story with your visual interpretation, you will explain your answer to the following question to the class:

Consider the fact that folktales are often told to children to teach them lessons, and be prepared to share with the class what lesson you believe a listener might learn from your folktale.

Gizo and the Lizard

This tale is about Gizo and the Lizard. One day in an isolated town there lived a king who had a beautiful daughter. They tried and tried to find a suitable husband for her but failed. They could not find a man she liked.

One day she announced that she would marry the man who could go to the fields and work from morning until night without drinking the juice of the dimniya. This was a difficult task because the juice of the dimniya is sweet and irresistible.

People heard the news of the king's daughter, but all those who came failed to marry her. People even came from faraway towns but were unsuccessful in their attempts to marry her. There were several men from the town who went to the fields and worked all day. But just as they finished their work they drank the juice of the dimniya. When they returned to the town they said they had not drunk any. Then someone looked in their mouths and saw that they had drunk some.

One day Gizo heard the news of the king's daughter. If you know Gizo and that he heard about the king's daughter then you know how this tale will end. The quarrelsome and argumentative Gizo thought about how he could marry the king's daughter. He went home and prepared to go to the fields.

The next day Gizo went to the fields with a full water bottle and a stick and began to work. After he had worked for some time he went to the dimniya tree and picked some fruit. He drank and drank the juice until his thirst was quenched. Then he took his water bottle and rinsed his mouth out with water. He was careful to thoroughly rinse out his mouth. Then Gizo returned to town but forgot his water bottle in the fields. Although Gizo did not know, Lizard was watching everything he did.

When Gizo returned to town he went to the king's court and they looked carefully inside his mouth. They announced that he had not drunk any juice of the dimniya, and he was married to the king's beautiful daughter.

After the wedding the king's daughter was taken to Gizo's house. After some time Lizard came and said, "Gizo, Gizo, you forgot your water bottle at the place where you drank the juice of the dimniya." Gizo said, "Oh Lizard, I didn't know you were close by, Lizard you have ruined the celebration this year."

Then a man from the king's court came and said, "We've heard what Lizard said." Lizard repeated, "Gizo, Gizo, you forgot your water bottle at the place where you drank the juice of the dimniya." Gizo said, "Oh Lizard, I didn't know you were close by, Lizard you have ruined the celebration this year." The people went to the fields and saw that Gizo had indeed left his water bottle there. Then they returned home and the marriage was annulled

The Man and the Lioness

One day there was a hunter whose wife was about to give birth. The man said that if it was God's will, his wife would only give birth on a lion skin. The other men said, "You're lying," and they chatted for some time about it.

The man went home and lay down until the sun came up. Then he took his bow and quiver full of arrows and went into the bush. While in the bush he searched everywhere until he came to a place where Lioness had given birth and left her children to go and find food for them. The man grabbed one of Lioness's children, slaughtered it and left the flesh, taking the skin home.

As he arrived home, his wife went into labor. He dried the skin of the Lioness's cub, and a short time later his wife gave birth on it.

When she returned Lioness looked everywhere for her missing cub. She followed the man's footprints until she saw them leading into the town. Lioness transformed herself into a beautiful divorcee and stuck an arrow in her head.

Many men asked to marry her but she said, "I don't have a bride price. I'll marry the one who can pull this arrow out of my head." A man came forward and pulled with all his might, but the arrow did not budge. A man said, "Someone is going to pull her head off. That arrow is stuck."

Many men attempted and failed. When the hunter heard the news he said, "Let me try and see what happens." The man went and easily pulled the arrow out of her head and was married to the beautiful woman.

One day she said, "I heard you're the man whose wife only gives birth on a lioness's skin." "Yes, that's me," he replied, "I'm the one." She asked him, "If Lioness sees you in the bush what will you do?" "If she tries to catch me, I'll run around until I lose her," he told her. Lioness learned all of his secrets.

Time passed and one day she said, "There's something I want to do. I've seen your town, but you haven't seen mine. I want you to accompany me to visit my parents. After our visit we can return here." The hunter agreed to go.

They traveled and traveled when suddenly his wife turned back into a lioness and tried to catch him. The hunter repeatedly dodged her but could not escape. He did not know what was going to happen to him. She told him, "I'm the lioness whose cub you slaughtered." He begged her to let him go, but she refused. Then the man, who was in so much trouble, was saved by the grace of God and ran away.

Excerpt from *Weep Not Child*

Ngotho left early for work. He did not go through the fields as was his usual custom. Ngotho loved the rainy seasons when everything was green and the crops in flower, and the morning dew hung on the leaves. But the track where he had disturbed the plants and made the water run off made him feel as if, through his own fault, he had lost something. There was one time when he had felt a desire to touch the dewdrops or open one and see what it held inside. He had trembled like a child but, after he had touched the drops and they had quickly lost shape melting into wetness, he felt ashamed and moved on. At times he was thankful to Murungu for no apparent reason as he went through these cultivated fields all alone while the whole country had a tillness. Almost like the stillness of death.

This morning he walked along the road – the big tarmac road that was long and broad and had no beginning and no end except that it went into the city. Motor cars passed him. Men and women going to work, some in the settled area and some in the shoe factory, chattered along

He came to the Indian shops. Years ago, he had worked here. That was long before the **Second War**. He had worked for an Indian who had always owed him a month's pay. This was deliberate. It was meant to be a compelling device to keep Ngotho in the Indian's employment permanently. For if he left, he would lose a month's pay. In the end, he had to lose it. That was the time he went to work for Mr. Howlands – as a **shamba** boy. But at first he did everything from working in the tea plantations to cleaning the big house and carrying firewood. He passed through the African shops, near the barber's shop, and went on, on to the same place where he had now been for years, even before the second Big War took his two sons away to kill one and change the other.

Mr. Howlands was up. He never slept much. Not like Memsahib who sometimes remained in bed until ten o'clock. She had not much else to do. There was something in Howlands, almost a flicker of mystery, that Ngotho could never fathom.

"Good morning, Ngotho."

"Good monring, **Bwana**."

"Had a good night?"

"**Ndio Bwana**."

Ngotho was the only man Mr. Howlands greeted in this fashion – a fashion that never varied. He spoke in the usual abstract manner as if his mind was preoccupied with something big. It was at any rate something that took all his attention. His mind was always directed towards the shamba. His life and soul were in the shamba. Everything else with him counted only in so far as it was related to the shamba. Even his wife mattered only in so far as she made it possible for him to work in it more efficiently without a worry about home. For he left the management of home to her and knew nothing about what happened there. If he employed someone in the house, it was only because his wife has asked for an extra "boy." And if she later beat the "boy" and wanted him sacked, well, what did it matter? It was not just that the boys had black skins. The question of wanting to know more about his servants just never crossed his mind.

The only man he had resisted the efforts of his wife to have sacked was Ngotho. Not that Mr. Howlands stopped to analyze his feelings towards him. He just loved to see Ngotho working in the farm; the way the old man touched the soil, almost fondling, and the way he tended the young tea plants as if they were his own Ngotho was too much a part of the farm to be separated from it. Something else. He could manage the farm laborers as no other person could. Ngotho had come to him at a time when his money position was bad. But with the coming of Ngotho, things and his fortune improved. Mr. Howlands was tall, heavily built, with an oval-shaped face that ended in a double chin and a big stomach. In physical appearance at least, he was a typical Kenya settler. He was a product of the First World War. After years of security at home, he had been suddenly called to arms and he had gone to the war with the fire of youth that imagines war a glory. But after four years of blood and terrible destruction, like many other young men he was utterly disillusioned by the "peace." He had to escape. East Africa was a good place. Here was a big trace of wild country to conquer.

For a long time England remained a country far away. He did not want to go back because of what he remembered. But he found that he wanted a wife. He could not go about with the natives as some had done. He went back "home," a stranger, and picked the first woman he could get. Suzannah was a good girl – neither beautiful nor ugly. She too was bored with a life in England. But she had never known what she wanted to do. Africa sounded quite a nice place so she had willingly followed this man who would give her a change. But she had not known that Africa meant hardship and complete break with Europe. She again became bored. Mr. Howlands was oblivious of her boredom. He believed her when she had told him, out in England, that she could face the life in the bush.

But she soon had a woman's consolation. She had her first child, a son. She turned her attention to the child and the servants at home. She could now afford to stay there all the day long playing with the child and talking to him. She found sweet pleasure in scolding and beating the servants. The boy, Peter, was followed by a girl. For a time, the three – mother, daughter, and son – made home, the father only appearing in the evening. It was lucky that their home was near Nairobi. The children could go to school there. Her pride was in watching them grow together loving each other. They in their way loved her. But Peter soon took to his father. Mr. Howlands grew to like his son and the two walked through the fields together. Not that Mr. Howlands was demonstrative. But the thought that he would have someone to whom he could leave the shamba gave him a glow in his heart. Each day he became more and more of a family man and, as years went by, seemed even reconciled to that England from which he had run away. He sent both children back for studies. Then European civilization caught up with him again. His son had to go to war.

Mr. Howlands lost all faith – even the few shreds that had begun to return. He would again have destroyed himself, but again his god, land, came to the rescue. He turned all his efforts and energy into it. He seemed to worship the soil. At times he went on for days with nothing but a few cups of tea. His one pleasure was in contemplating and panning the land to which he had now given all his life. Suzannah was left alone. She beat and sacked servant after servant. But God was kind to her. She had another boy, Stephen. He was now an only son. The daughter had turned missionary after Peter's death in war. They went from place to place, a white man and a black man. Now and then they would stop here and there, examine a luxuriant green tea plant,

or pull out a weed. Both men admired this shamba. For Ngotho felt responsible for whatever happened to this land. He owed it to the dead, the living, and the unborn of his line to keep guard over this shamba. Mr. Howlands always felt a certain amount of victory whenever he walked through it all. He alone was responsible for taming this unoccupied wildness. They came to a raised piece of ground and stopped. The land sloped gently to rise again into the next ridge and the next. Beyond Ngotho could see the African Reserve.

"You like all this?" Mr. Howlands asked absentmindedly. He was absorbed in admiring the land before him.

"It is the best land in all the country," Ngotho said emphatically. He meant it. Mr. Howlands sighed. He was wondering if Stephen would ever manage it after him.

"I don't know who will manage it after me ..."

Ngotho's heart jumped. He too was thinking of his children. Would the prophecy be fulfilled soon?

"Kwa nini Bwana. Are you going back to-?"

"No," Mr. Howlands said, unnecessarily loudly.

"... Your home, home"

"My home is here!"

Ngotho was puzzled. Would these people never go? But has not the old Gikuyu seer said that they would eventually return the way they had come? And Mr. Howlands was thinking, Would Stephen really do? He was not like the other one. He felt the hurt and the pain and the loss.

"The war took him away."

Ngotho had never known where the other son had gone to. Now he understood. He wanted to tell of his own son: he longed to say, "You took him away from me." But he kept quiet. Only he thought Mr. Howlands should not complain. It had been his war.

Glossary for Weep Not Child

Bwana – “Sir.”

Gikuyu – peoples of southwestern Kenya. The language of the Gikuyu is Kikuyu.

Kwa nini Bwana – “Why, sir?”

Memsahib – a Kikuyu name that refers to Mr. Howlands wife

Murungu – Gikuyu diety or god, sometimes referred to as Ngai

Ndio Bwana – “Yes, sir.”

Second War – refers to World War Two

shamba – farm or garden

A Handful of Dates

A short story by Sudanese author El Tayeb Salih

I must have been very young at the time. While I don't remember exactly how old I was, I do remember that when people saw me with my grandfather they would pat me on the head and give my cheek a pinch – things they didn't do to my grandfather. The strange thing was that I never used to go out with my father, rather it was my grandfather who would take me with him wherever he went, except for the mornings, when I would go to the mosque to learn the Koran. The mosque, the river, and the fields – these were the landmarks in our life. While most of the children of my age grumbled at having to go to the mosque to learn the **Koran**, I used to love it. The reason was, no doubt, that I was quick at learning by heart and the Sheik always asked me to stand up and recite the *Chapter of the Merciful* whenever we had visitors, who would pat me on my head and cheek just as people did when they saw me with my grandfather.

Yes, I used to love the **mosque**, and I loved the river, too. Directly we finished our Koran reading in the morning I would throw down my wooden slate and dart off, quick as a genie, to my mother, hurriedly swallow down my breakfast, and run off for a plunge in the river. When tired of swimming about, I would sit on the bank and gaze at the strip of water that wound away eastwards, and hid behind a thick wood of acacia trees. I loved to give rein to my imagination and picture myself a tribe of giants living behind that wood, a people tall and thin with white beards and sharp noses, like my grandfather. Before my grandfather ever replied to my many questions, he would rub the tip of his nose with his forefinger; as for his beard, it was soft and luxuriant and as white as cotton wool – never in my life have I seen anything of a purer whiteness or greater beauty. My grandfather must also have been extremely tall, for I never saw anyone in the whole area address him without having him look up at him, nor did I see him enter a house without having to bend so low that I was put in mind of the way the river wound round behind the wood of acacia trees. I loved him and would imagine myself, when I grew to be a man, tall and slender like him, walking along with great strides.

I believe I was his favorite grandchild: no wonder, for my cousins were a stupid bunch and I – so they say – was an intelligent child. I used to know when my grandfather wanted me to laugh, when to be silent; also I would remember the times for his prayers and would bring him his prayer rug and fill the ewer for his **ablutions** without his having to ask me. When he had nothing else to do he enjoyed listening to me reciting to him from the Koran in a lilting voice, and I could tell from his face that he was moved.

One day I asked him about our neighbor Masood. I said to my grandfather: I fancy you don't like our neighbor Masood?

To which he answered, having rubbed the tip of his nose: He's an **indolent** man and I don't like such people.

I said to him: What's an **indolent** man?

My grandfather lowered his head for a moment; then, looking across the wide expanse of field, he said: Do you see it stretching out from the edge of the desert up to the Nile bank? A hundred **feddans**. Do you see all those date palms? And those trees – sant, acacia, and sayal? All this fell into Masood's lap, was inherited by him from his father.

Taking advantage of the silence that had descended on my grandfather, I turned my gaze from him to the vast area defined by words. I don't care, I told myself, who owns those date palms, those trees or this black, cracked earth – all I know is that it's the arena for my dreams and my playground.

My grandfather then continued: Yes, my boy, forty years ago all this belonged to Masood – two-thirds of it is now mine.

This was news for me, for I had imagined that the land had belonged to my grandfather ever since God's Creation.

I didn't own a single **feddan** when I first set foot in this village. Masood was then the owner of all these riches. The position had changed now, though, and I think that before Allah calls me to Him I shall have bought the remaining third as well."

I do not know why it was I felt fear at my grandfather's words – and pity for our neighbor Masood. How I wished my grandfather wouldn't do what he'd said! I remembered Masood's singing, his beautiful voice and powerful laugh that resembled the gurgling of water. My grandfather never laughed.

I asked my grandfather why Masood had sold his land.

Women, and from the way my grandfather pronounced the word I felt that women was something terrible. Masood, my boy, was a much-married man. Each time he married he sold me a **feddan** or two. I made the quick calculation that Masood must have married some ninety women. Then I remembered his three wives, his shabby appearance, his lame donkey and its dilapidated saddle, his **galabia** with the torn sleeves. I had all but rid my mind of the thoughts that jostled in it when I saw the man approaching us, and my grandfather and I exchanged glances.

We'll be harvesting the dates today, said Masood. Don't you want to be there?

I felt, though, that he did not really want my grandfather to attend. My grandfather, however, jumped to his feet and I saw that his eyes sparkled momentarily with an intense brightness. He pulled me by the hand and we went off to the harvesting of Masood's dates.

Someone brought my grandfather a stool covered with an oxhide, while I remained standing. There was a vast number of people there, but though I knew them all, I found myself for some reason watching Masood: aloof from that great gathering of people he stood as though it were no concern of his, despite the fact that the date palms to be harvested were his own. Sometimes his attention would be caught by the sound of a huge clump of dates crashing down from on high. Once he shouted up at the boy perched on the very summit of the date palm who had begun hacking at a clump with his long, sharp sickle: Be careful you don't cut the heart of the palm.

No one paid any attention to what he said and the boy seated at the very summit of the date palm continued, quickly and energetically, to work away at the branch with his sickle till the clump of dates began to drop like something descending from the heavens.

I, however, had begun to think about Masood's phrase, the heart of the palm. I pictured the palm tree as something with feeling, something possessed of a heart that throbbed. I remembered Masood's remark to me when he had once seen me playing with the branch of a young palm tree: Palm trees, my boy, like humans, experience joy and suffering. And I had felt an inward and unreasoned embarrassment.

When I again looked at the expanse of ground stretching before me I saw my young companions swarming like ants around the trunks of the palm trees, gathering up dates and eating most of them. The dates were collected into high mounds. I saw people coming along and weighing them into measuring bins and pouring them into sacks, of which I counted thirty. The crowd of people broke up, except for Hussein the merchant, Mousa the owner of the field next to ours on the east, and two men I'd never seen before.

I heard a low whistling sound and saw that my grandfather had fallen asleep. Then I noticed that Masood had not changed his stance, except that he had placed a stalk in his mouth and was munching at it like someone sated with food who doesn't know what to do with the mouthful he still has.

Suddenly my grandfather woke up, jumped to his feet, and walked toward the sacks of dates. He was followed by Hussein the merchant, Mousa the owner of the field next to ours and two strangers. I glanced at Masood and saw that he was making his way toward us with extreme slowness, like a man who wants to retreat but whose feet insist on going forward. They formed a circle around the sacks of dates and began examining them, some taking a date or two to eat. My grandfather gave me a fistful, which I began munching. I saw Masood filling the palms of both hands with dates and bringing them up close to his nose, then returning them.

Then I saw them dividing up the sacks between them. Hussein the merchant took ten; each of the strangers took five. Mousa the owner of the field next to ours on the on the eastern side took five, and my grandfather took five. Understanding nothing, I looked at Masood and saw that his eyes were darting to left and right like two mice that have lost their way home.

You're still fifty pounds in debt to me, said my grandfather to Masood. We'll talk about it later.

Hussein called his assistants and they brought along the donkeys, the two strangers produced camels, and the sacks of dates were loaded onto them. One of the donkeys let out a braying which set the camels frothing at the mouth and complaining noisily. I felt myself drawing close to Masood, felt my hand stretch out toward him as though I wanted to touch the hem of his garment. I heard him make a noise in his throat like the rasping of a sheep being slaughtered. For some unknown reason, I experienced a sharp sensation of pain in my chest.

I ran off into the distance. Hearing my grandfather call after me, I hesitated a little, then continued on my way. I felt at that moment that I hated him. Quickening my pace, it was as though I carried within me a secret I wanted to rid myself of. I reached the riverbank near the bend it made behind the wood of acacia trees. Then, without knowing why, I put my finger into my throat and spewed up the dates I'd eaten.

Glossary of Terms:

ablutions – the washing of the body that is part of a religious prayer or practice

feddans – a plot of land

galabia – a man's long, loose garment

indolent – lazy

Koran – the sacred book of the religion Islam

mosque – a house of worship used by practitioners of Islam

Excerpt from *Dreams of Trespass*

The problem with entertainment, fun, and foolishness at our house was that they could easily be missed. They were never planned in advance unless Cousin Chama or Aunt Habiba were in charge, and even then, they were subject to serious space constraints. Aunt Habiba's story-telling and Chama's theatre plays had to take place upstairs. You could never really have fun for long in the courtyard; it was too public. Just as you were starting to have a good time, the men would come in with their own projects, which often involved a great deal of discussion, such as going over business matters, or listening to the radio and debating the news, or card playing, and then you would have to move elsewhere. Good entertainment needs concentration and silence in order for the masters of ceremony, the storytellers and the actors to create their magic. You could not create magic in the courtyard, where dozens of people were constantly crossing from one salon to the other, popping in and out of the corner staircases, or talking back and forth to one another from one floor to the next. And you certainly could not create magic when the men were talking politics, that is, listening to the radio on the loudspeakers, or reading the local and international press.

The men's political discussions were always highly emotionally charged. If you listened carefully to what they were saying, you had the impression that the world was coming to an end. (Mother said that if you believed the radio and the men's comments, the planet would have disappeared a long time ago.) They talked about the Allemane, or Germans, a new breed of Christians who were giving a beating to the French and the British, and they talked about a bomb that the Americans across the sea had dropped on Japan, which was one of the Asian nations near China, thousands of kilometers east of Mecca. Not only had the bomb killed thousands and thousands of people and melted their bodies, it had shaved entire forests off the face of the earth as well. The news about that bomb plunged Father, Uncle 'Ali, and my cousins into deep despair, for if the Christians had thrown that bomb on the Asians who lived so far away, it was only a matter of time before they attacked the Arabs. "Sooner or later," Father said, "they will be tempted to burn the Arabs too."

Samir and I loved the men's political discussions, because then we were allowed into the crowded men's salon, where Uncle and Father, each dressed comfortably in a white **djellabas**, sat surrounded by the **chabab**, or the youth – that is, the dozen adolescent and unmarried men who lived in the house. Father often joked with the **chabab** about their uncomfortable, tight, Western dress, and said that now they would have to sit on chairs. But of course everyone hated chairs; sofas were much more comfortable.

I would climb up into my father's lap and Samir would climb up into Uncle's. Uncle would be sitting cross-legged in the middle of the highest sofa, wearing his spotless white **djellabas** and a white turban, with his son Samir perched on his lap in Prince of Wales shorts. I would nestle in my father's lap, neatly dressed in one of my very short French white dresses with satin ribbons at the waist. Mother always insisted on dressing me in the latest Western fashions- short fluffy lace dresses with colored ribbons and shiny black shoes. The only problem was that she would fly into a flurry if I dirtied the dress, or disarranged the ribbons, and so I would often beg her to let me wear my comfortable little **sarwal** (harem pants), or any traditional outfit, which required less attention. But only on religious

festival days, when father insisted, would she let me wear my **caftan**, so anxious was she to see me escape tradition. “Dress says so much about a woman’s designs,” she said. “If you plan to be modern, express it through what you wear, otherwise they will shove you behind the gates. **Caftans** may be of unparalleled beauty, but Western dress is about salaried work.” I therefore grew to associate caftans with lavish holidays, religious festivals, and the splendors of our ancestral past, and Western dress with pragmatic calculations and stern, professional, daily chores.

Glossary of Terms:

caftan – a full-length, loose-fitting garment with a sash at the waist

chabab – an Arabic word for “youth”

djellabas – a flowing garment worn by a man

sarwal – full length and loose-fitting pants

Kinjektile

The following is a scene taken from a play written by a Tanzanian author, Ebrahim N. Hussein. The play tells the story of the Maji-Maji rebellion in 1904-05 that was led by a leader called Kinjeketile Ngwale, in what was at the time called Southern Tanganyika. Today we refer to this country as Tanzania. In the play Kinjeketile tries to warn his people of the dangers of war, but the people do not listen, and they wage war against the Germans, who use guns, which the Maji-Maji do not have, to defeat them. In this scene, a group of men meet to make plans to wage a war against the German colonial settlers. They want their independence from the German settlers who have forced many of the men and women to work on their large farms with little pay, who whip and beat them, and who have brought great suffering and despair to the people. Ngulumbalyo, Kitunda, Mkichi, Mngindo are members of the Maji-Maji resistance group.

Parts: Ngulumbalyo Kitunda Mkichi Mngindo Old Man (Narrator)

Act II

Scene I

Night. Enter Ngulumbalyo, carrying a torch. He goes to Kitunda's house.

NGULUMBALYO: (*calling*) **Bwana** Kitunda!

KITUNDA: Coming. (*He comes out.*) Ready?

NGULUMBALYO: Ready. (*He raises his torch in a signal. From the opposite side a return signal is given, and from another side yet another signal. From each side emerges a delegate, and they all converge to the centre. The people with torches leave.*)

MKICHI: Where is Kinjektile?

KITUNDA: I don't think he will come today. I haven't spoken to him for many days, I only see him at a distance now and then. We had better start now.

MKICHI: From the day we held our first meeting until today, nothing has been done. There isn't a single thing we have done. The Red Earth is still our country. What's more, he has taken our country from us by force. And we, like women, just stare at him.

Now he has forced us to cultivate his cotton plantation for him. We just stare at him.

He has got us paying him taxes. We just stare at him. Is it for him to demand taxes from us? He should be paying us a tax, but oh no! We, like women, just meekly sit, watching him do what he wants with us, with our land.

How long are we going to remain meek and silent? Are we going to allow ourselves to be persecuted in our own country?

MNGINDO: I say, let us kick him out! Let us decide now. There is only one way – an armed struggle-a war! There is no other way.

KITUNDA: It is easy to speak, and we all want to get rid of the German. But how do we do it? He has weapons, we haven't. As our first duty, therefore, we must collect weapons. Steal guns from the askaris, seize them if need be, in short do everything to see that we've got guns. This will take time. Such preparation will have to be done with the utmost secrecy, for, as you all know, we have got enough spies, informers, and stooges to fill up a pot. You do one thing for today and tomorrow the askari, or even the overseer knows about it. We are a hungry people, and hunger drives us to betray one another. So you can see, we can't afford to rush into things, recklessly. We have enemies, even amongst our own people.

MNGINDO: So?

KITUNDA: Let us wait a while longer. Let us plan. We've been patient for a long time

AN OLD MAN: No, we must fight! There is only way – fight. Let us propitiate our ancestors, and the spirits. And **Hongo** will help us.

KITUNDA: **Hongo** is a powerful spirit, true, but he has no power over matters of life and death.

OLD MAN: (*standing up*) You blaspheme! Your words are dangerous! How dare you talk of **Hongo** in that manner?

KITUNDA: We did not come here to talk about **Hongo**. We came here to decide upon a plan of action.

MKICHI: And what have you to say?

KITUNDA: I have already said it. Let us wait until we have the arms.

MKICHI: That is a coward's point of view. But then, since when were the **Wamatumbi** warriors?

OLD MAN: We did not come here to quarrel over tribal issues.

KITUNDA: Let him say that again and I will make him sorry for the rest of his life.

MKICHI: I'll say it again: the **Wamatumbi** are cowards. You are nothing but women.

(*Kitunda pounces on Mkichi and they roll on the floor.*)

KITUNDA: I'll ...ah ... I'll ah ... show you who is a woman.

MKICHI: Kinoo's ... ah ... slave!

(*Mkichi reaches for a spear. Kitunda unsheathes his knife. They circle each other. Mgingo intervenes.*)

MNGINDO: We came from far, to unite with one another, not to fight. If we fight one another, tribe against tribe, how can we hope to fight the white man?

(Silence. They resume their earlier positions.)

What we must first do is unite.

MKICHI: What we must first do is fight.

OLD MAN: But to be able to go to war against the Red Earth we must be united. To go to war disunited, fighting one another, is impossible.

MNGINDO: Quiet. Please, let us have peace.

KITUNDA: I am ready to make peace with Mkichi. However, let us not fool ourselves that even if we manage to unite our people, we can go to war by ourselves. We must get the other tribes. Let us approach the **Wazaramo**.

MNGINDO: The **Wazaramo** made their stand a long time ago. If it is a question of fighting, they will fight alone, but they won't fight side-by-side with the **Wangindo**. They think they are superior – let's forget them. Who needs them, anyway?

KITUNDA: What about the Warufigi?

MKICHI: The Warufigi are ready. But we must start the war first.

KITUNDA: But that is silly. We don't start the war first, and then get united. We must first unite, then go to war. With the people we have we will be snuffed out in no time. I hear there is a big gun that kills many people at once.

MKICHI: Have you heard – or seen?

KITUNDA: I don't like what you are trying to imply.

(Mngindo and Mkichi exchange glances. Kitunda sees this.)

MNGINDO: He is just asking.

KITUNDA: If you have anything to say then say it openly.

MNGINDO: Mkichi asked you – whether you ... saw the gun, or ... heard about it.

KITUNDA: I heard about it.

(Pause)

MKICHI: We have heard that you went to **Kilwa**.

KITUNDA: I went to **Kilwa** to visit my brother. He was in trouble with the government.

MKICHI: And you were able to help him.

MNGINDO: People say that if one goes to **Kilwa** with the right kind of news, one is rewarded. The white man pays well to get valuable information.

KITUNDA: If I was one of them, would I have these?
(He reveals some scars on his back.)

MKICHI: Then why are you so hesitant about declaring war on the white man?

KITUNDA: The people who will die. I see thousands and thousands of our people dying.

MKICHI: But it is better to die than to live like this. We are made to work like beasts in the cotton plantation. We are forced to pay tax. We die of hunger because we cannot work on our **shambas**. I say death is better than this life.

KITUNDA: It's better to live like this than to go to war and lose thousands of our men. And the few who will survive will get the same treatment, or worse, as before.

(A long pause)

MNGINDO: So, what have we decided?

KITUNDA: *(quietly, almost to himself)* I see smoke ... and where there's smoke, there's fire. There will soon be fire.

MNGINDO: Yes, but a fire that is at a distance does not singe.

KITUNDA: *(aloud)* I don't know what to say. I can't think clearly. My head is full of fog.

(Ngulumbalyo comes in with a torch.)

NGULUMBALYO: Quick, the overseer is coming.

MNGINDO: What have we decided? Let's make up our minds quickly!

MKICHI: We can't say anything now. We must meet again.

KITUNDA: I will get in touch with you. Quick, they're coming. *(They disperse. Kitunda goes into his house.)*

Glossary of Terms:

askaris – the indigenous peoples who worked as policemen for the settlers

Bwana – a Swahili word for Mister

Hongo – in the spiritual beliefs of the Wamatumbi people, Hongo is a spirit who has healing powers. He is also a mediator between god and human beings.

Kilwa- a village in present-day Tanzania

shamba – a Swahili word for farm or garden

Wangindo, Warufiji, Wazaramo, Wamatumbi – groupings of people who identify as groups and who share a language and culture

Questions

1. Why do the men want to wage a rebellion against the German settlers? Look back at the play and locate the reasons that the men give for wanting to resist the settlers.
2. Does Kitunda agree that they should fight the settlers? Why or why not? Do you agree or disagree with Kitunda? Why or why not?
3. The people are not united in their resistance? Why is this a problem if they go to war?
4. Mkichi, one of the men at the meeting, argues that “it is better to die than live like this.” How are the people living? And what does Kitunda say in response to Mkichi? Who do you agree with? Why?

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Reading African Poetry

The poem *The Trees*

Why do the winter trees laugh at humans?

Answer: Humans cannot shed the past and become a new person as a tree does multiple times throughout the year. Each winter the tree sheds the burdens of the past while humans are unable to let their burdens go.

What does the author mean by the phrase 'past seasons'?

Answer: Past seasons are things that have passed such as previous years, burdens, or problems.

The poem *Saturday*

Describe, in your own words, what Saturday is like for the Zimbabwean speaker in the poem.

Answer: He stays in his home, completing his cleaning (taking a bath, doing the laundry and dishes) and then relaxes sitting by the window.

When the poet says he is watching cars "like matchbox toys hurtle to their weekend destinations," he seems to say that many cars are driving very fast to get out of the city and into the countryside, where they will spend the weekend relaxing. Why do the cars "crawl back again on Sunday evening" ?

Answer: They must return for their weekly working schedules that begin again on Monday.

What are the children in the poem described as doing on this Saturday afternoon?

Answer: Playing ragball on the streets.

Is the speaker in the poem content? How do you know?

Answer: Yes, he says that all the world is here where he is, and that he doesn't understand the wish to escape.

The poem *Little Rich Boy*.

Why does the little rich boy in the poem visit the speaker?

Answer: He is tired of the gifts his father continuously gives to him; he wants something more substantial, which the speaker can give to him and his father cannot.

What does the boy's rich father give to him every day?

Answer: Childish things that little boys love to suck and chew and blow out in balloons

What does the speaker give to the boy?

Answer: He teaches him a dance, the Twist.

At first the little boy does not want the twist; why? What is a shumba? The answer can be found in the poem.

Answer: He thinks it is something that he could be beaten with, like a cane, whip, or belt. A shumba is a kind of growling monster.

African Short Stories

Who are the main characters of this story?

Answer: The young boy, the grandfather, Masood

Which one is the narrator?

Answer: The young boy

How does the young boy feel about his grandfather at the beginning of the story?

Answer: He feels love and admiration for his grandfather.

How does he feel about his grandfather at the end of the story?

Answer: His feelings for his grandfather have diminished; he doesn't admire him as much anymore.

Why have his feelings changed?

Answer: The young boy has a moment of critical awareness when he witnesses the way his grandfather treats Masood

African Drama

Why do the men want to wage a rebellion against the German settlers? Look back at the play and locate the reasons that the men give for wanting to resist the settlers.

Answer: They took the country by force, forced them to work on his cotton plantation, and demanded taxes

Does Kitunda agree that they should fight the settlers? Why or why not? Do you agree or disagree with Kitunda? Why or why not?

Answer: No, because the settlers have weapons like guns, that they don't, and he doesn't want thousands of their people to die. Answers will vary.

The people are not united in their resistance? Why is this a problem if they go to war?

Answer: The people will end up fighting one another instead of fighting the Germans.

Mkichi, one of the men at the meeting, argues that "it is better to die than live like this." How are the people living? And what does Kitunda say in response to Mkichi? Who do you agree with? Why?

Answer: They are being forced into labor with minimum pay, suffering from beatings and whippings. Kitunda says that it is better to live than go to war, lose thousands of men, and lose the war, resulting in the same or worse treatment as before. Answers will vary.