
Kumba and Kambili: A Tale from Mali

Retold by Suzanne I. Barchers

Illustrated by Keith D. Shepherd

Overview

When the village is threatened by a lion, the hunter Kambili wishes to track down the beast. But his wife Kumba steps in to warn that the lion is an evil wizard. The brave Kumba and Kambili prove no match for the lion-man.

Themes: bravery, ingenuity

Before Reading

- Show students the cover of the book, identifying Kumba as the woman on the left. Ask: *What does this illustration tell you about Kumba and Kambili?* Accept reasonable answers drawing out the powerful stances and the implications of their weapons (why they might need a knife and spear).
- Read about Mali on page 32 and locate it on a globe or world map.

During Reading

- Read through page 17. Ask: *Do you think the plan is a good one? Can you think of any other ideas to trap the lion-man?* (Accept reasonable answers.)
- Read the rest of the story. Ask the questions on page 31. Then ask: *Do you think either of them could have succeeded alone? Why or why not?*

After Reading

- Have students review the illustrations in the story. Have students identify how the illustrator showed emotions through facial expressions and stance.
- Reread pages 18 and 19. Then ask: *How did the writer use words to ‘paint a picture’ for readers?* Discuss phrases such as *hazy blue to a blushing pink, soft black of night, stars shimmered*, etc. Then ask: *How did the artist use color to enhance the writer’s words and create mood throughout the story?* (Accept reasonable answers.)

Word Work

The writer wrote on page 19 that the stars *shimmered*. Brainstorm synonyms such as *sparkled, glistened, shined, glittered, gleamed, flickered, twinkled*. Discuss why the writer might have chosen *shimmered* by reading the phrase with other options: *As the stars sparkled; As the stars gleamed*; etc. Discuss the value of reading one’s writing aloud when creating mood and developing ‘voice’ for a story.

ELL Tip

Practice listening skills. Tell students you are going to read aloud the story with mistakes. They should listen carefully, follow along with the text in the book, and raise their hands when you make a mistake in your reading.

Extension: Mud Cloth

In the story, patterns shown on the clothing are typical of Mali mud cloth (or bogolan). Have students reproduce a pattern from the book using paint or markers. To learn more and create a virtual mud cloth online, visit the Smithsonian’s website: Discovering Mud Cloth at www.mnh.si.edu/africanvoices/mudcloth/index_flash.html

Worksheet Note

Answers may vary. But be sure students’ explanations of why a sense was most important or least important follows the context of the story.

Common Core State Standards

ELA-Literacy: RL.2.1; RL.2.2; RL.2.3; RL.2.5; RL.2.6; RL.2.7

Recount stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determine central message, lesson, or moral and explain how it’s conveyed through key details in the text.

Name _____






ALL YOUR SENSES



Review the story and illustrations.

List things that you could **see, hear, feel, taste,** and **smell** if you were Kumba or Kambili.

Write at least three things in each row.

	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

Which sense was most important? _____

Why was it most important? _____

Which sense was least important? _____

Why was it least important? _____