



HEAR THE POUNDING DRUMS,

see the bright costumes, and watch the swaying trees and flowers on this exciting trip to Zimbabwe. In a small village live Mufaro and his daughters Manyara and Nyasha, who are both beautiful but not at all alike. When the king requests that the most worthy and attractive daughters in the land come to the city, where one will become his queen, each daughter makes a different choice and takes a strange journey. Come along to see who gets to be queen . . .

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DO YOU KNOW THIS STORY?

Cinder Edna is poor but happy, and she makes the most of what she has. Instead of crying because she can't afford to eat in an expensive restaurant, she learns how to make tuna casserole 17 different ways. Instead of moaning because she can't go to fancy parties, she teaches herself to tell jokes. Instead of feeling sorry for herself because she can't buy fashionable clothes, she mows the lawn or rakes leaves for her neighbors to save up for a pretty dress. Sure, she'd never been to a fancy party . . . but you never know what your future holds. And then one day two princes announce that they're having a huge ball, and all of the women in the area are invited.

Cinder Edna takes out her new dress, but she doesn't have any high heels to wear with it. She decides that the shoes don't really matter, since her toes would hurt in those things anyway. She grabs her loafers and takes the bus to the ball. Inside the ballroom, she first sees the handsome prince. He seems really full of himself—always talking about his huge palace and how beautiful his future wife must be and how he's so good looking. He seems so boring that Cinder Edna walks away. She then meets his brother, Rupert, who isn't handsome at all but is interested in the environment, rescues orphaned kittens, and likes

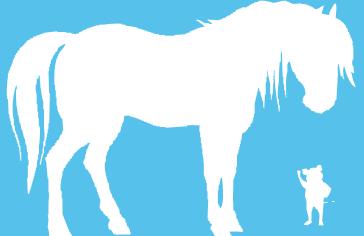
to tell jokes. She tells him a few herself, and they dance together all night.

Just as midnight chimes, Cinder Edna realizes that she has to leave so that she can catch the last bus home. She runs out without telling Rupert her name, and when she gets outside, she realizes that she's somehow lost her shoe . . .

Does this story sound familiar? What does it remind you of?

What do you think happens to Cinder Edna at the end of the story?





ON SAFARI

Let's take a trip to Zimbabwe with Mufaro, Nyasha, and Manyara and then write home about the colorful animals and birds we've seen. An easy way to travel is to imagine that you are living inside the play—or by looking at the book.

Start by thinking about the scenery and characters in the play—how many different animals and birds do you remember seeing? You can also examine the covers of the book and then look at every page. How many different animals and birds can you find?

Pick out five animals or birds—or both!—that you want to tell your friends back home about. Maybe you like the pink flamingoes or the horns on the impala or the funny feathers on the head of the crowned crane. You can also use books and magazines in your class or a computer to get more information about the other animals, birds, fish, and insects that live in Zimbabwe.

Your friends will love to get postcards with pictures of your animals and fun facts about them. You can either draw your birds and animals—be sure to look carefully at the pictures so that you get the colors of the fur

and the shapes of the bodies
just right—cut pictures
out of magazines,
or download
photos and print
them out. On your
postcards, be sure
to include what your
animal or bird eats,
how big each
one grows,

how long it lives, and where it likes to sleep. You can also write down anything unusual you uncover—like how the squirrel-sized bush baby can leap 20 feet or that warthogs live in other animals' shelters. Amaze your family and friends with your expert safari skills!

WHAT'S YOUR WISH?

What other fairy tales do you know? These can be stories you've read (like Cinderella and Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters), movies you've seen (like Snow White and the Seven Dwarves or Shrek), or how about a play or ballet (The Frog Bride or Sleeping Beauty). Write down a few.

Write down a few.		

What do all of these stories have in common? Think about the following things:

- · When do they take place?
- · What kinds of characters are in them?
- · What kinds of things happen in them?
- How many times does the same kind of thing happen?
- · How do they end?
- · What kinds of things do you learn from them?

Now if you had to write your own fairy tale, what would it be like? If you set it in your own town, what would the people be wearing? Where would they go and what would they do? What if you were Cinderella—would you go to a ball or somewhere else, like the movies or a soccer game?

Use your imagination to travel to a new place or a different time or just tell an old tale in a new





WHERE IN THE WORLD ARE WE?

If someone from another country came to your town, what would they learn about you just by looking around? Do you wear bulky jackets and gloves? Then the weather must get cold during the winter. Do you have kneepads in your backpack—or how about a flute case? Then you're probably on a soccer team or in a band. Do you have a recycling bin at your house? Then you must be interested in saving resources and protecting the environment.

We can tell a lot about the history of Zimbabwe just by looking carefully at the scenery and costumes (or the illustrations in the book) for *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters*.

- · How are your clothes different from the ones that Mufaro, Nyasha, and Manyara wear?
- · What food do you think you would eat if you lived in Mufaro's village?
- · How are the animals you see every day different from the ones in Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters?
- \cdot Think about where Mufaro lives with his daughters. How is your house or apartment the same?

Write a few sentences about what a day in Mufaro's village would be like.



MAKE A ...





THUMB PIANO!

Many people in Zimbabwe love to play on the mbira—often called a thumb piano because guess what you play the keys with?—and most of these instruments are homemade from gourds, pieces of scrap wood, and leftover bits of metal. You can make your own!

You'll need:

- · 1 small square piece of wood
- · 4 large popsicle sticks
- · 2 large bobby pins (you can use more if you want more keys on your piano)
- · 2 large rubber bands
- · Glue
- · Tape
- · Push pins or nails



- Glue two popsicle sticks next to each other on top of the wood.
- 2. Wrap one rubber band around the ends of the popsicle sticks and then around the

wood, so that the sticks will stay in place.

3. While the glue dries, paint the wood, add stickers, or wrap colored masking tape around the wood for decorations. Make it look like other mbiras or make it look like something you've never seen before.



- 4. Have an adult break the bobby pins so that they are slightly different lengths. Each bobby pin should be broken into two pieces.
- 5. Tape one end of each bobby pin onto the popsicle sticks so that it hangs over the piece of wood. These bobby pin pieces will be the keys of your mbira.

Organize them however you want but make sure they're not too close together so that you can pluck them to make sounds.



6. Glue the other two popsicle sticks on top of the bobby pins. They should fit right over the first two popsicle sticks.

7. Wrap the other rubber band around the sticks to hold them in place.

8. With the help of an adult, take the push pins and stick them through the popsicle sticks and down into the wood. If the bobby pins are held down tightly, you'll get a clear

9. After the glue has

sound.

dried, carefully bend the bobby pins up so

that you can push down on the keys to make sounds.

Experiment with holding the thumb piano in your lap, setting it on a table, or putting it down on a hard floor to see what makes the best sound—or maybe your desk will work great. Try attaching the metal tabs from soda cans with other push pins so that you can spin them. Many mbira makers add bottle caps or other small pieces of metal that will rattle or buzz. You can try playing songs you already know or make up your own. If your class gets together, you can jam during your own Zimbabwean music concert.

If you have access to the Internet, you can play a mbira online, listen to some songs, or even record your own music. Just type the following link into your browser and get ready to become a mbira master: http://pbskids.org/africa/piano.



WHAT'S IN A NAME?

The characters in *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters* have special names that come from the Shona language, which is spoken in Zimbabwe. Can you guess which definition goes with which name?

Mufaro Snake Nyasha Ashamed Manyara Happy Man Nyoka Mercy

Many names have particular meanings that come from ordinary words (like the names Charity or Victor in English). Akira means "intelligent," Raja stands for "hope," and Latifah refers to someone who is gentle or kind. John means "gracious," but did you know that Juan, Sean, Gianni, Jens, and Ivan are all the name "John" in different cultures?

Does your name have a story to tell too? Some people are named after relatives maybe you have the same name as a favorite aunt or your father. Some people have place names, like Madison or Brooklyn, or share names with flowers, like Jasmine or Lily. And how about names like Apple or Calico? Those first names are words for objects. Maybe you—or someone you know—got your name because of a funny story (do you have an embarrassing nickname or did your pet get its name because of its weird behavior?).

Last names have stories too. People named Smith were originally called that because they worked as blacksmiths making horseshoes, swords, and other metal objects. Centuries ago, people who were shepherds were often named Schafer (because "Schafer" is the German word for "shepherd"). People named Zhu originally lived in an area by that name in China.

Pick an interesting name—yours, your cousin's, your favorite comic book hero's, the name of someone you're studying in science class, anyone's!—and find out its story. Amaze your classmates with what they never knew—but now do—about names.



Vreaking Aews

URBANA-CHAMPAIGN, THURSDAY-FRIDAY, APRIL 30-MAY 1, 2009

THE KING INVITES YOU!

MOST WORTHY AND BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTERS TO ATTEND HIS COURT

Imagine that you're living in Mufaro's village and the king has just invited all of the most worthy and beautiful daughters to his court. This is a big story that will be reported on the local news. Think about who would be interviewed—the king, Mufaro, Manyara, and Nyasha for sure, but who else might be in the story? Who would you interview if you were the reporter?

Now volunteer to be the reporter. Who would you want to interview? What would you want to know?

Next, volunteer to be one of the main characters. What would you want the people watching your interview to know?

Imagine that you are someone else involved in the story. What would you want to say?

Remember to think like the character you're playing—it's your chance to be an actor!







TOP: Manyara and Nyasha dream of what life may be like with the king. **BOTTOM LEFT:** Mufaro is proud of his beautiful daughters. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** Everyone is excited and joyous.