

# WALNUT STREET THEATRE

Touring Outreach Company

Study Guide



## The Princess Who Lost Her Hair

A Play by Jeremy Kisling

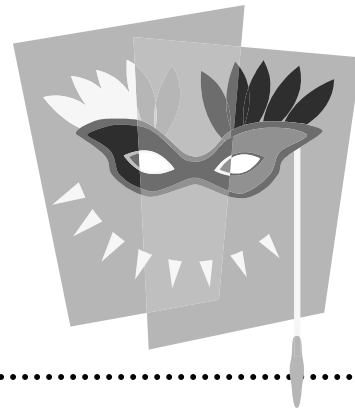
Based on the book Tololwa M. Mollel

### Act it out!

Using paper plates create masks just like the actors wore in the play, which portray the different friends Muoma makes on his journey on Mt. Kenya! Some students can make an ant mask, others a mouse, bird, or a flower mask.

### One step further . . .

Break the students up into pairs and have them write dialogue and perform a scene between Muoma and the character they chose.



### Show Synopsis

Follow us to Kenya and hear the story of Muoma a beggar boy as he searches for a magical bird who cursed the princess after she refused to lend him some of her hair for his nest. A drought has come to the village making all the leaves fall to the ground along with the princess's hair. On Muoma's journey he runs into a colony of ants that need food and he gives them all his beans. He then meets a flower that needs water, and he waters it from his tin. Lastly he meets a mouse who has lost her children, and he helps search for them throughout the night. His desire to put others needs before his own leads him to the bird, who gives him a seed that will grow into a beautiful tree. By teaching the princess to care for the tree and put others before herself, Muoma can not only save his village but also help the princess get her hair back.



# CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

## Before the Show

### Questions to think about

Was there ever a time you needed help?

Did someone help you?

How did that make you feel?

What are some ways you can help people in your community?

Who do you go to for help?

### What is Theatre?

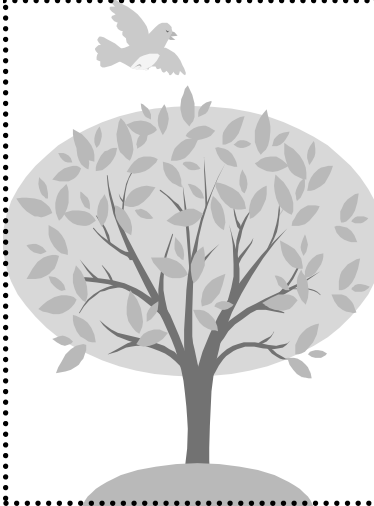
Theatre is different from television or movies because the actors are there in the same room as the audience, and can see and hear everything you say or do.

Explain theater etiquette to the students.

- Stay in your seat until the end.
- Save questions until the end.
- Laugh and clap when appropriate.  
Especially at the end of the show.
- Stay quiet, and enjoy the show!

### Where is The Akamba Village?

Have the students identify where Kenya is on a map. Akamba is south of Mt. Kenya (where the story takes place), and is made up of mountains, valleys, and dessert. What are the differences between the three areas? What are some other unique parts of Kenya's geography?



## After the Show

### What is a fable

A Fable is a story created to teach a moral lesson.

What moral lessons do you think *The Princess Who Lost Her Hair* teaches?

Ask the students to think of their favorite thing (i.e. toy, t-shirt). What would they do if they were asked to give it up to help someone else?

How would giving up your favorite thing make you feel?



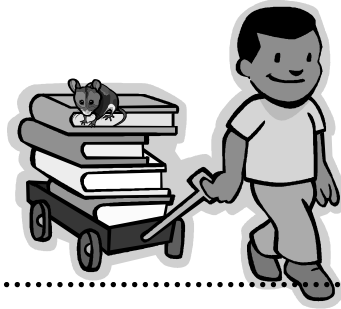
### Care for your own plant

Students can grow their own plant from a seed just like Muoma did. Students will learn the importance of water and how it helps plants grow. Each day they will see the progress of their work and can measure how much the plant has grown.



# Learning about Folktales

Other



Folk tales are the way ancient cultures preserved their history. These stories teach a moral lesson or explain something in nature. Many times these stories involve magical or spiritual influences represented in animals and plants.

In the past these stories were passed along orally. As a result there are multiple versions of many of these stories. In a traditional Akamba society stories are, told in the evenings after all of the chores are finished. Children are not allowed to tell stories during the day because they interrupt their work.

Folktales provide information to the reader about the culture it comes from. For example the Akamba do not trust wealth or material objects. *The Princess Who Lost Her Hair* is an example of this. Kalendi valued her beauty over others, and her vanity brought drought to the village.

There are many different folktales from many different places all over the world. Choose one from your favorite place and go on your own journey!

## BOOKS

### **The Princess who Lost her Hair**

*by Tololwa M. Mollel*

Troll Communications; 1st edition, 1998.

### **The Clever Monkey: A Folktale from West Africa**

*by: Rob Cleveland*

*Illustrations by: Baird Hoffmire*

August House, 2006.

### **How the Tiger got its Stripes: A folk Tale from Vietnam**

*By: Rob Cleveland*

*Illustrations by: Baird Hoffmire*

August House, 2006.

### **How the Chipmunk got its Stripes**

*By: James Bruchac and Jose Aruego*

Puffin, 2003.

### **The Tale of Rabbit and Coyote**

*By: Tony Johnston and Tomie dePaola*

Puffin, 1998.

### **They Dance in the Sky: Native American Star Myths**

*By: Ray M Williamson, Juan Guard Monroe,*

*Edgar Stewart*

Sandpiper, 2007.



# Build Your Own A Kenyan Game!

## Kigogo (Mancala)

Need:

Egg Carton

48 Dried beans/beads

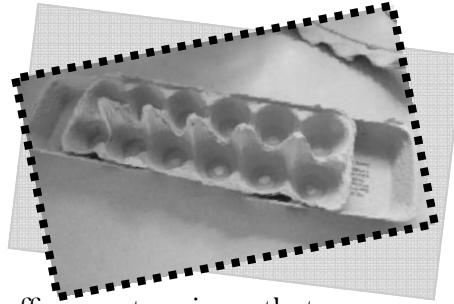
Scissors

Glue

Decorating supplies

### How to:

Cut your egg carton on the hinge. Cut off any extra pieces that are on your two pieces such as the front flap to keep the box shut. Cut the top of the carton in half and slide it under the bottom part, leaving an inch or two so that you can place your beans in the space. This is the "store" for your beans. Use glue to hold everything in place. Paint, color, and decorate the board however you may like.



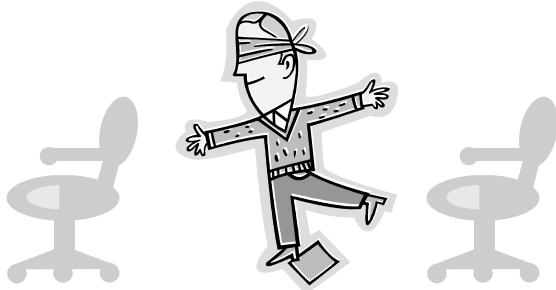
### How to play:

Players sit on opposing sides of the board, and choose one person to start. Each of the holes, besides the "stores" on the far ends should have beans in them. To play the first player picks up all the beans in one of the holes on their own side and drops a bean into every consecutive hole until they run out of beans. As they do this if the player runs into their own "store" they can drop one bean into it. If they run into their opponents "store" they skip it. If the player's last bean drops into their own "store" they get a second turn. If a player's last bean falls into an empty hole on their own side, they may collect the last bean and all of their opponent's beans in the directly opposite hole. The game ends when there are no beans on one side. Who ever has the most beans in their "store" wins!

## Help through a Maze . . .

Muoma knew the importance of helping others, as a result he could show the princess how to care for the tree. Show the students how they can help others by setting up a maze through the classroom. Have the students pair up. One person is blindfolded and the other has to help them through the maze by telling them which way to go. They are not allowed to guide them by holding their hand, only with words.

Afterwards ask them what the experience was like. Would they have been able to get through the maze on their own without help?



## Find Beauty on the Inside

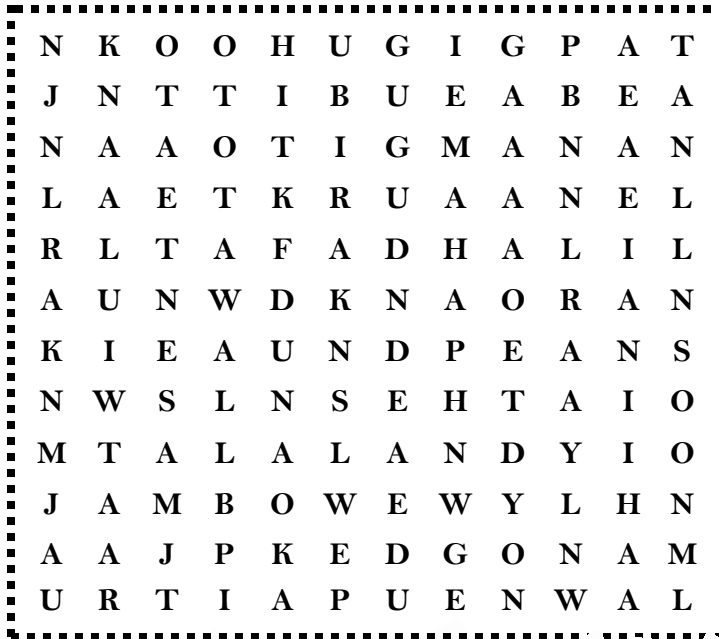
While Kalendi was very beautiful, she was very selfish and unkind to the bird and Muoma. Use this activity to display for the students that true beauty is on the inside.

Begin with three boxes and decorate each. The first one beautifully, the second plain, and the third should be ugly. Fill the ugly box with something desirable, the pretty box with dirt or rocks, and the plain box with nothing. Place the boxes in front of the class and explain to the students that they can choose any box they want as a class and keep what is inside. The moral is even though something is attractive on the outside it may not be inside.

# ON YOUR OWN

## Swahili Word Hunt

In *The Princess Who Lost Her Hair* the characters speak Swahili. Read the Swahili words with their English translation on the right. Then find the Swahili words in the word search below



- Asente-Thank you
- Gugu-Weed
- Jambo- Hello
- Karibu- Welcome
- Kula- eat
- Kwa heri- good bye
- Lala-Sleep
- Maji-water
- Nenda-go
- Nina Kiu- I'm thirsty
- Polepole- slowly
- Tafadhali- please
- Watoto-Children
- Ndyio-yes
- Salamu-greeting/salutation
- Kalendi- The Princess's name
- Mutu- The Princess' servant



## Our Helpers

Ask the students: Muoma helped the princess and his people when they were in a time of need. Who would Muoma be in your community? Have them draw a picture in the space below of their answer and present their pictures to the class.



# WEB RESOURCES



## **Folktale Through African Art**

**By Ellen M. DeMaio**

<http://www.yale.edu/ynhti/curriculum/units/1993/2/93.02.04.x.html>

## **Akamba of Kenya:**

**Traditional Beliefs and Practices**

<http://www.machakos.org/religion.htm>

## **Kamba Fables and Legends**

<http://www.bluegecko.org/kenya/tribes/kamba/stories.htm>

## **Make your own Mancala game!**

<http://www.sinasohn.com/crafts/mancala.htm>

## **About the Playwright**

*Jeremy Kisling* is the Education Director at Lexington Children's Theater. He studied at the University of Northern Iowa where he received an undergraduate's degree and at University of Texas in Austin where he received his Masters of Fine Arts in Drama and Theater for Youth. Mr. Kisling directs up to three plays every year, along with assisting in creating original works at LCT. He also serves as the Playwright Network chair for the American Alliance in Theatre Education, and he is on the board for the Kentucky Theater Association.

***This production was directed by José Avilés***

## **Walnut Street Theatre Education Department Staff**

Director of Education .....*Thomas Quinn*  
Outreach Coordinator .....*Caroline Leipf*  
Theatre School Coordinator .....*José Avilés*  
Residency Coordinator .....*Ashley Kerns*  
Education Apprentice .....*Luraine Armandt*  
Dorothy Haas Acting Apprentices.....*Lauren Fitzgerald*  
.....*Nate Golden*  
.....*Samantha Joy Pearlman*  
.....*Dominic Santos*



# WALNUT STREET THEATRE



Walnut Street Theatre has the unique distinction of being the oldest, continuously operating theatre in the English-speaking world, having served Philadelphia audiences for over 200 years! It is also the Official State Theatre of Pennsylvania, and a National Historic Landmark.

Today, under the direction of Producing Artistic Director Bernard Havard, Walnut Street Theatre is in its 30th season as a self-producing, non-profit theatre. Walnut Street Theatre continues to entertain and enlighten diverse audiences with high quality theatrical programming. With more than 56,000 subscribers, the Walnut is also the most subscribed theatre company in the world!

The Walnut Street Theatre is celebrating over 25 years of bringing high-quality professional theatre to schools across the Delaware Valley. Our multi-cultural Touring Outreach Company introduces students to the world of theatre through age-appropriate, curriculum-based pieces, that are socially relevant, entertaining, and exciting. Last season, 111,464 children and adults were impacted by the Walnut's Education Programs.

## **Touring Actors**

Each season, Walnut Street Theatre holds a nation-wide search to recruit accomplished young professionals for Dorothy Haas Acting Apprenticeships. These actors form our Touring Outreach Company. Nearly 350 candidates are considered each year for these four positions.

## **The Walnut Street Theatre Educational Programs gratefully acknowledge support from the following:**

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