

Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters: An African Tale

by John Steptoe

Rich story and picturesque illustrations retell this Zimbabwe African tale about two sisters, one kind, gentle and generous and the other, selfish, hot-tempered and greedy.



Read

Before:

Introduce the book and tell the children a little bit about it. Follow that with a comment or question that is related to the story such as, *What is one thing you like about yourself the most?* Encourage a discussion so the children can comment, ask questions, and express their feelings. Set the stage for listening by asking an "I wonder" statement based on the cover illustration.

- I wonder why this girl has her eyes closed?

During:

Encourage the children to comment on the illustrations, ask questions, and predict what will happen next in the story. Children gain confidence and a sense of achievement through being able to correctly predict how a story will end. Point out "rare words" (e.g., those words that are not commonly used in every day conversation) and help the children relate the meaning in a way that makes sense to them.

Rare Words in *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters: An African Tale*

- temper: tendency to get angry easily and suddenly
- servant: somebody who serves another
- clever: showing mental intelligence and creativity
- millet: the pale shiny grain of a cereal plant
- sunflowers: tall plant with yellow-rayed flowers and a brown center
- yams: same as sweet potato
- bountiful: in plentiful supply
- spoil: become rotten
- considerate: mindful of others' needs
- grieve: experience intense sorrow over a loss
- greed: strong desire for more than is actually needed
- silhouetted: shadowed contour or outline of somebody or something
- foretold: predicted before an event
- garments: clothing items
- interrupted: halt a speaker or to disturb somebody's work
- anxious: feeling nervous or eager about something
- destination: end of a trip
- transfixed: make somebody immobile with shock
- descended: to go down a staircase, hill, valley or other downward incline
- enclosure: an area of land surrounded by a fence, wall or other boundaries
- displeased: to annoy or dissatisfy somebody
- weavers: people who make cloth by interlacing strands or strips of any material

After:

Discuss the story. Ask questions...

- How many daughters did Mufaro have?
- What was the older sister like? The younger one?
- What was the younger sister's garden like?
- What animal came to visit her there every day?
- Why did the girls travel to the village?
- What happened to the older sister when she left in the middle of the night?
- Who did she meet?
- What did the younger sister give the boy to eat?
- Why did the older sister come out of the palace yelling and crying?
- Who did the younger sister see sitting on the throne?
- Who did the snake turn into?
- Which sister became the queen? The servant?



Do

Weaving

You will need: any type of weaving board or loom, small pieces of fabric, yarn or shoelaces

In a center or in a small group, demonstrate the weaving technique for the children. Allow them plenty of time to practice weaving on the looms or weaving boards. This center can be left out all week or month, depending on the interest level of the children. This project will increase the children's fine motor skills.