

# MUFARO'S BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTERS

## MUFARO'S BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTERS

By John Steptoe (Lothrop)

Themes: African Culture, Relationships

Grade Level: 3-5

Running Time: 14 minutes

### SUMMARY

In a small African village lives a man named Mufaro and his two beautiful daughters, Manyara and Nyasha. Manyara, an ill-tempered girl, is jealous of Nyasha and vows to be queen and have Nyasha as her servant. Nyasha, on the other hand, is a gentle girl who works hard and is kind to animals and people alike. When the king orders that all the beautiful daughters appear so that he might select a queen, Manyara's selfish ways are revealed. Nyasha is chosen as queen and Manyara becomes a servant in the queen's household.

### OBJECTIVES

- Children will learn about African culture.
- Children will explore relationships between people.
- Children will investigate the outcomes of both positive and negative behaviors.

### BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Share the book MUFARO'S BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTERS with the class. Locate the continent of Africa on a map. Talk about the climate, vegetation and animal life. Ask:

- What can you tell from the illustrations about how

the people of this small African village live?

- How does life in this village seem different from ours?
- What would you like most/least about living in a village like this?

Ask children if they have ever heard languages other than their own spoken. Give them the opportunity to share with the class the other languages that they may know. Then emphasize that language is only one difference that may exist between people of different cultures.

Explore the relationship between Manyara and Nyasha. Ask children to describe the way Manyara feels about her sister. Ask:

- Why is Manyara jealous of her sister?
- What can Manyara do about her feelings?

Encourage children to discuss feelings of jealousy and anger that they may have had toward siblings or others. Have children share with the class things they may have done to resolve these feelings. Ask:

- Why do you think Nyasha was chosen as queen?
- What kind of queen would Manyara have been if she had been chosen instead?
- How do you think Manyara feels about being a servant to Nyasha?
- What do you think might have happened to Manyara if she had behaved differently?

### AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Supply children with a variety of materials (con-

struction paper, markers, cardboard, etc.) that they can use to create an African village. Then have children write their own stories about life in the village. You may want to help them by offering a story starter such as: A visitor to a small African village was so surprised when she saw... After children have written their stories, encourage them to share the stories with classmates. Display stories on a bulletin board near the village.

Have children dramatize the story of MUFARO'S BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTERS. Supply simple props including white sheets for clothing, a stick to represent a staff, a long length of rope to represent a crown. Later ask children to describe how it felt to take on the personalities of the different characters.

### Other videos and films about African stories available from Weston Woods include:

HOT HIPPO by Mwenye Hadithi, illustrated by Adrienne Kennaway

A STORY- A STORY by Gail E. Haley

THE VILLAGE OF ROUND AND SQUARE HOUSES by Ann Grifalconi

WHO'S IN RABBIT'S HOUSE by Verna Aardema, illustrated by Leo & Diane Dillon

WHY MOSQUITOES BUZZ IN PEOPLE'S EARS by Verna Aardema, illustrated by Leo & Diane Dillon

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# THE MOST WONDERFUL EGG IN THE WORLD

The Most Wonderful Egg in the World

by Helme Heine (Antheneum)

Theme: Self-Esteem

Level: Grades K-1

Length 6 minutes, animated

## Summary

THE MOST WONDERFUL EGG IN THE WORLD, the film, is true to the book, The Most Wonderful Egg in the World, by Helme Heine. The story concerns three hens who are quarreling because each feels that she is more beautiful than the other two. When they cannot solve their problem, they approach the king and ask him to determine which of them is the most beautiful.

The king responds by saying that it is what they do, not how they look. He says that he will make the hen who lays the most perfect egg, the princess.

The three hens each lay unique eggs, which are perfect in their own ways. The story ends with the king deciding to make each a princess, and all live happily ever after as friends.

## Objectives

- Children will learn about values
- Children will explore problem-solving techniques
- Children will learn about the importance of self-esteem

## Before Viewing Activities

Share the book The Most Wonderful Egg in the World with children.

Then ask:

Why are the hens quarreling in the beginning of the story?  
What was so special about Dotty's appearance? Stalky's?  
Plumy's?  
Who do they go to for advice?

What does the king tell them?

What kind of egg does Dotty lay? Stalky? Plumy?

Who becomes the princess at the end of the story?

How do the three hens feel about this?

Discuss with the children the people they know that are very special to them. Ask: Why are these people special? Does it have anything to do with the way they look?

Stress to the children that physical beauty has nothing to do with what makes people kind, or good, or special. Tell children that the film they are about to see concerns three hens, each of whom feels she is the most beautiful. As children watch, have them think about whether or not physical beauty is really important.

Ask children to draw a simple picture of a person. Then arrange the pictures on a table top where each one can clearly be seen. Have children study the group of pictures carefully, looking for the differences and similarities between them. Explain to children that this is one example of how each of them is special and unique. Emphasize that although they were all asked to draw the same thing, each one of them drew a picture in a way that was meaningful to them. To prepare children for the film, explain that the story involves three hens, each of whom is special in her own way. Encourage children to look for the ways in which the hens are different as they view the film.

## After Viewing Activities

Supply art materials that children can use to create their own "perfect eggs". (You might want to provide plastic eggs used to house panty hose for this project.) When children finish, have them share their creations with others in the group. As children discuss their eggs, emphasize the individual ways each child chose to create an egg representing his or her idea of perfection. Stress that this is another example of how we are all interesting and unique individuals.

Talk with children about the process of getting eggs from the farm to the supermarket. Include in your explanation the following stages: eggs laid by hens, eggs collected by machine, eggs packaged, eggs delivered to supermarkets and grocery stores, eggs purchased. If possible, plan a visit to a farm where children can actually see the source of the eggs they enjoy at home!

Discuss other animals and plants that are the sources of the foods we enjoy. Provide pictures of these animals and plants and line them up along the chalkboard. Then provide pictures of foods that we get from these animals and plants. Have children take turns matching the foods to their sources by placing the food pictures in front of the appropriate animals and plants.

Remind children the way the hens' problem was solved in the film. Then ask: What other ways could the hens have solved their problems? What if the king was away and they could not ask him for advice? How do you feel about the way the king solved the problem? What other suggestions might the king have given the hens?

Other book based films and videos about self-esteem are available from Weston Woods. These include:

THE CATERPILLAR AND THE POLLIWOG by Jack Kent

CORDUROY by Don Freeman

HERCULES by Hardie Gramatky

THE UGLY DUCKLING written by Hans Christian Andersen and illustrated by Svend Otto S.

WHISTLE FOR WILLIE by Ezra Jack Keats

THE WIZARD by Jack Kent

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