

MUFARO'S BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTERS

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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.

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