



Publisher and

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Summary:

This is a retelling of a traditional Somali folktale. A nomad searches for a new land for his family and as he confronts obstacles, both real and imagined, he discovers that his prayers can be answered without him even realizing it. This is one of four Somali folktales published as bilingual children's picture books through the Minnesota Humanities Center's Somali Bilingual Book Project.

(Visit www.mnhum.org/somalibooks to learn more.)

Suggested Ages:

4-6, 7-10

Reading Tips:

Show children a globe or world map to point out the country of Somalia

Read the story all the way through in one language at a time for easier comprehension.

If the reader is not bilingual, use the dual-language audio recording (www.mnhum.org/somalibooks), produced by the Minnesota Humanities Center, to play the story in the additional language.

Share this story when reading similar tales of "wise fools" such as Jack Tales, (ibiblio.org/bawdy/folklore/tales.html) Compare and contrast the tales.

Before Reading:

The main character in this story, Igal Shidad, is a nomad.

What do you know about nomadic life?

While traveling at night in Somalia, what might you see and hear?

This is a story about a "wise-fool". What do you think that means?

Introduction:

"This is a story about a nomadic herder who is traveling at night. He thinks he sees something along the way that makes him stop and wait. Let's read to find out what he sees and what he learns on his journey..."

After Reading:

Why did Igal stop and wait when he first saw the lion?

What would you have done if you thought you saw a lion on your path?

When have you done something like Igal did? How did you feel?

Related Activities

Art: Show students part of a photo or drawing. Have them guess what it is before revealing the whole picture. Discuss different perspectives.

Culture: For an additional lesson on nomadic life, visit National Geographic's Xpeditions: nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions/lessons/12/g35/boundariesmove.html

Dramatization: After an initial reading, ask students to match their facial expressions with how they imagine Igal must be feeling on each page as you re-read the story aloud.

Language: Pull the poem out of this story. Read and discuss it in English and then listen to how it is read in Somali on the audio recording.

This story takes place over one night's time. Students can identify which words in the story indicate a change in the time.

Writing: Discuss with students what it means to be a "wise fool". Have students record a time that they have been a "wise fool".

Practice writing "wise fool" or "noodlehead" stories, beautyandthebeaststorytellers.com/pdf/noodleheadUnit.pdf

Other: For more ideas on using folktales and fables, visit: edsitement.neh.gov/subject/literature-language-arts, then click *Aesop and Ananse*.

Suggestions for English

Language Learners: Help students create a short timeline of Igal's travels. Show how the time progresses from day to night to day again. Mark the time with pictures of what Igal is doing throughout the story.

Related Books

The Lion's Share/Qayb Libaax* by Said Salah Ahmed, illustrated by Kelly Dupre (2007)

Dhegdheer, A Scary Somali Folktale* by Marian A. Hassan, illustrated by Betsy Bowen (2007)

Wiil Waal* by Kathleen Moriarty, illustrated by Amin Amir (2007)

Noodlehead Stories, World Tales Kids Can Read & Tell by Martha Hamilton (2000)

*Also published by the Minnesota Humanities Center.