



# Sia and Friends

*A selection of reading  
and counting stories  
for Class 3*



Rewriting the story  
for global literacy



**WORLD BANK GROUP**





© 2019 CODE

ISBN: 978-1-987874-08-2

Illustrations: Chase Walker (pages i, iii, iv, 1, 2, 3, 6, 19, 22, 24, 25, 26, 29, 47, 74, 75, 86, 87, 91) and  
Amandu Tarawallie (pages 8, 9, 10, 13, 16, 17) and  
Leslie Lumeh (pages 31, 32, 34, 35, 36, 38, 41, 43, 44, 46, 49, 52, 56, 58, 60, 64, 66, 67, 68, 71, 72, 76, 84).

Managing Editor: Charles Temple, Ph.D.

Story credit:

*Do You Want to Make Friends?*, CODE/PEN-Sierra Leone; *What Makes a Friend?* CODE/PEN-Sierra Leone; *The Rainy Season*, Rainny Brito/PEN- Sierra Leone; *Tina's Quest*, Bernadette Kimokai; *My Mother is a Teacher*, Jacqueline Leigh/PEN-Sierra Leone; *Water for the Classroom*, CODE/PEN-Sierra Leone; *All about Bees*, CODE/PEN-Sierra Leone; *Bees are Builders*, CODE/PEN-Sierra Leone; *How Monkey Got His Tail Back*, retold by Charles Temple; *Bisi the Detective*, Jacqueline Leigh/PEN-Sierra Leone; *Anansi and the Yam Hills*, Retold by Michael Auld and Susan LaBella; *Sharks!*, CODE/PEN-Sierra Leone; *Sia and the Magic Baskets*, Teresa Amui/PEN- Sierra Leone; *The Boiled Eggs*, retold by Charles Temple; *Abu and Adama*, CODE/PEN-Sierra Leone; *Grandma Makes Banana Cake*, CODE/PEN-Sierra Leone.

Design: Kwabena Agyepong

Published by: CODE

Reading Level: Class 3, ages 8–9



This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License. To view a copy of this license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>.

Note: **None of images in this book are in the public domain, stories with author attribution are not in the public domain.**

You are free to:

Share — copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format as per the license terms detailed below:

**Attribution:** You must give appropriate credit, provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made. You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use.

**NonCommercial:** You may not use the material for commercial purposes.

**NoDerivatives:** If you remix, transform, or build upon the material, you may not distribute the modified material in any form.

**No additional restrictions:** You may not apply legal terms or technological measures that legally restrict others from doing anything the license permits.

**Notices:** You do not have to comply with the license for elements of the material in the public domain or where your use is permitted by an applicable exception or limitation.

**No warranties are given.** The license may not give you all of the permissions necessary for your intended use. For example, other rights such as publicity, privacy, or moral rights may limit how you use the material.

For more information contact CODE:  
321 Chapel Street  
Ottawa, Ontario Canada K1N 7Z2  
I 613 232 3569 [info@code.ngo](mailto:info@code.ngo)

Printed by PRINTMASTERS  
Dubai, United Arab Emirates  
Printed in 2019

This development of this book benefited from the advice and contribution of Charles Temple, Ph.D., Kathy Ganske, Ph.D., and Johanna Kuyvenhoven along with the support and generous financial contribution of the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE) in Sierra Leone and the World Bank/REACH.

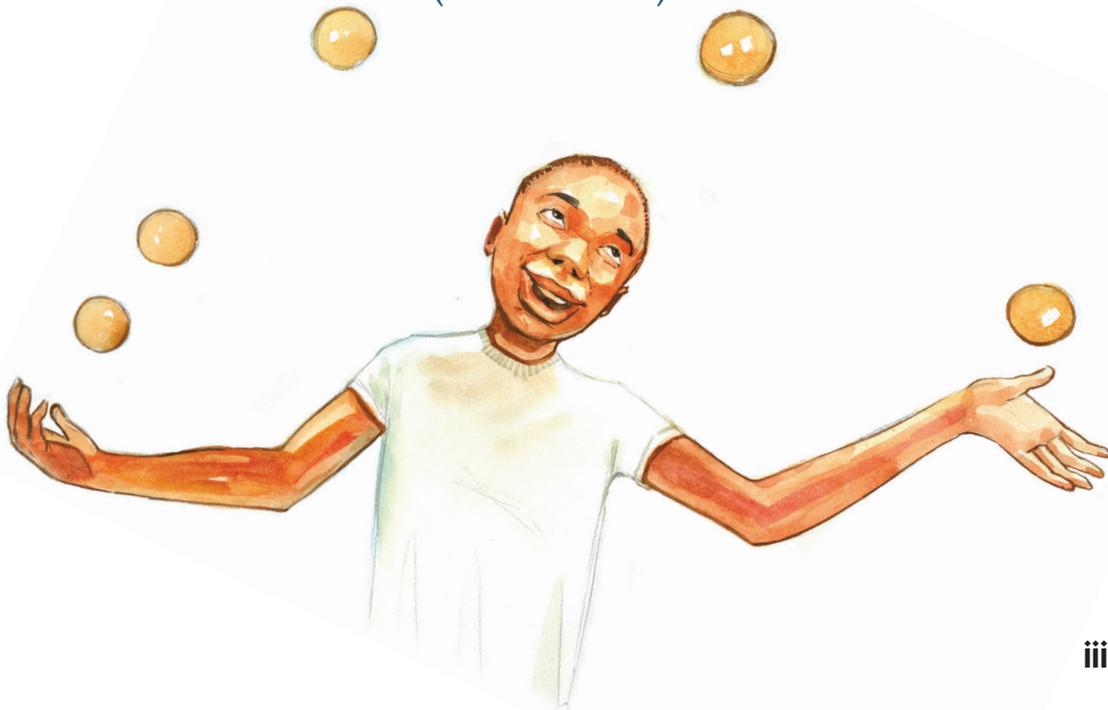
The stories in this book were developed and reviewed in consultation with the Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary Education (MBSSE) in Sierra Leone.





# Table of Contents

Do You Want to Make Friends? (100-200L-lo 2).....	1
What Makes a Friend? (300-400L-2) .....	2
The Rainy Season (500-600L-hi 2).....	3
Tina’s Quest (400-500L-2) .....	10
My Mother is a Teacher (400-500L-2) .....	18
Water for the Classroom (300-400L-1) .....	21
All About Bees (300-400L-lo 2) .....	25
Bees are Builders (400-500L-2) .....	28
The Boiled Eggs (300-400L-lo 2) .....	30
Anansi and the Yam Hills (500-600L-hi 2).....	36
Sharks! (400-500L-2) .....	47
Sia and the Magic Baskets (400-500L-2).....	49
How Monkey Got His Tail Back (300-400L-lo 2).....	67
Grandma Makes Banana Cake (300-400L-lo 2).....	73
Abu and Adama (200-300L-1) .....	77
Bisi the Detective (300-400L-lo 2).....	86







# Do You Want to Make Friends?

You should be nice.

You should take time to play.

You should do things with your friend.

Be someone they can trust.

You should not brag.

You should share what you have.

You should say “please” and “thank you.”





# What Makes a Friend?

Honesty. That means being honest.

Loyalty. That means being loyal.

Trusty. That means being someone to trust.

Worthy. That means being worth knowing.

Friendly. That is acting like a friend.





# The Rainy Season

*By Rainny Brito*

It was 10:00 o'clock in the morning. Teacher was ill. She was not in school today. The students sat quietly in the classroom.

Suddenly Amina stood up. "Class, I will be our Teacher. Please pay attention."

All her classmates laughed. All except the class prefect.





“Amina, if you do not behave, I will write your name for punishment,” said the prefect.

But Amina walked boldly to the front of the class, “I am only improving my oral skills. Am I lying, class?”

And the whole class roared, “Nooooo!”

Amina picked up the cane from Teacher’s desk. She began to walk boldly like their class Teacher.

“Okay, teach us something, since you have become a Teacher,” said the class prefect, with a laugh. Amina took a piece of chalk from its box.

“Teach us about the rainy season!” shouted Miata. Miata was the smallest girl in the class.

Amina gave them a broad smile. Amina wrote the words “Rainy Season” on the board.





Amina smiled and went on. “August is the most difficult time in the rainy season because it rains heavily and almost every day.”

“Teacher Amina, what kind of work do people do during the rainy season?” Abu asked.

Amina paused to get her answers clear. “Of course, people do all types of work during the rainy season, but the most important work in our village is farming and fishing. Farming begins in May. That is when the rains begin to fall. Crops do well when they have enough water.”

“When it rains, the streams and rivers begin to flow. The fish will travel at will. People use nets, hooks, fences, and bamboo cages to catch the fish.”







The class prefect stood up smiling, “Teacher Amina, I don’t mean to disagree with you, but where does water come from?” The whole class gave a heavy sigh.

Amina threw the piece of chalk in the air three times. She caught it three times. Then she cleared her throat. “Oh, my dear prefect, water is just a traveler. The sun is its careful driver.”

The whole class shouted, “Yes, Teacher Amina, give us more.”

“Listen and I will. Water really has no starting point. But let us begin with the ocean. That is where most of the earth’s water stays.”

The whole class listened closely. Amina was happy to say more. In a strong voice, she said, “The sun heats up the mighty ocean. The mighty ocean breathes steamy air. With the sun’s heat, the rivers, the streams, and the puddles also send their steamy vapour above.





Likewise, the fertile soil and green plants give off moisture. The gusty winds carry all this steamy air up into the sky above. This process is called evaporation.





The hungry clouds swallow all the steamy air from the ocean, rivers, the soil and the plants. Brothers and sisters, boys and girls, the clouds then change the steamy air into liquid. Whenever the clouds belch, water falls from the clouds in the form of rain. That process is called precipitation.”

Amina’s classmates were amazed. They stood and clapped for her. They sang her name, “Amina, Amina, Amina.”

And do you know? Just then lightning sparked and thunder rumbled. And it rained and rained. Or, as Amina would say, it precipitated.





# Tina's Quest

*By Bernadette Kimokai*

It was Monday. Tina rose early and grabbed the family's big bucket.

Then she walked half an hour through the dark streets to the public tap. She passed three younger girls already coming back from the tap. They carried heavy water buckets on their heads.





She waited her turn, then filled her bucket. She could barely lift it onto her head. But she didn't spill a drop on the long walk home.

The sun rose. Tina dressed and hurried down the sidewalks to school. Tina thought about the math test that waited for her. She would do okay, she thought. She had studied well into the night.

Tina did well on the test. Mrs. Kamara, the teacher, named her class prefect for the month. That was a surprise! But here came another surprise. Her teacher asked, "Tina, what would you do for the class now that you are the class prefect? We are counting on your leadership."

Tina stood speechless. The rest of the class murmured. Tina's strength was in sports and not speech. And not leadership. Or so she thought. Leadership meant setting a path for her classmates to follow. Was she a leader?





Santigie, the hulky boy who sat behind Tina, pinched her just then.

“Ouch,” she cried.

“What is it?” Mrs. Kamara asked.

Before Tina could answer, Santigie stood. He asked to be excused to go out for a drink of water. The tap was a long way from their classroom. Santigie was gone for twenty minutes. The children had to miss important parts of their lessons if they had to go out to drink water. They would have to review the lesson when they returned, if they were lucky.

Tina turned around to look for her friend Safire. Maybe Safire would have an idea for a project. But Safire shook her head. The end of school bell rang at that moment. Tina was relieved.

“Tina,” Mrs. Kamara said, “I hope by tomorrow you will have an idea for a class project.”





Tina nodded her head. She grabbed her bag. She ran out, shoving past her classmates.

Safire came puffing behind her. Tina reached the huge iron gates and waited for Safire.

“I am thirsty,” Safire complained.

“I also want to drink,” Tina said. The two walked two more blocks to the tap.

They waited ten minutes in line. Then they finally had long drinks and felt refreshed.

“This tap is too far from our classroom!” said Tina.





“You know what we should do?” Safire asked. Tina shook her head and waited for her friend’s idea.

“We should protest!” Safire said with anger in her voice.

“Why should we do that?” Tina asked. She thought of Safire holding a sign on a stick. She laughed.

“Let’s protest so they will put taps nearer to our classrooms!” said Safire.

“We don’t need to protest. But you have a point. Something needs to be done,” Tina replied.

“I tell you. Let’s do something fast,” said Safire.

The girls walked home. Tina was in deep thought. Safire was going on and on about the protests. Tina noticed the sizes and colors of the buckets the women and children carried on their heads as they fetched water.





Tina thought and thought. Then she had an idea.

Both girls lived in the same compound. They went into their different houses and set about their chores. Tina talked with her mother and she agreed to help with Tina's idea.

The next day, Tina had a carefully washed bucket with its cover. She had some cups, too. They could fill and refill those. Tina was surprised to see Safire with a bucket as well.

“Thank you, Safire,” Tina said. Both girls walked to school feeling proud.

They carried their buckets with clean water into their classroom. Pupils and teachers watched them pass. Mrs. Kamara smiled as the girls walked in. They opened their buckets and showed the sparkling clean water. Tina felt proud and light. She was ready to give her speech. Safire, her noble friend, stood by her side.

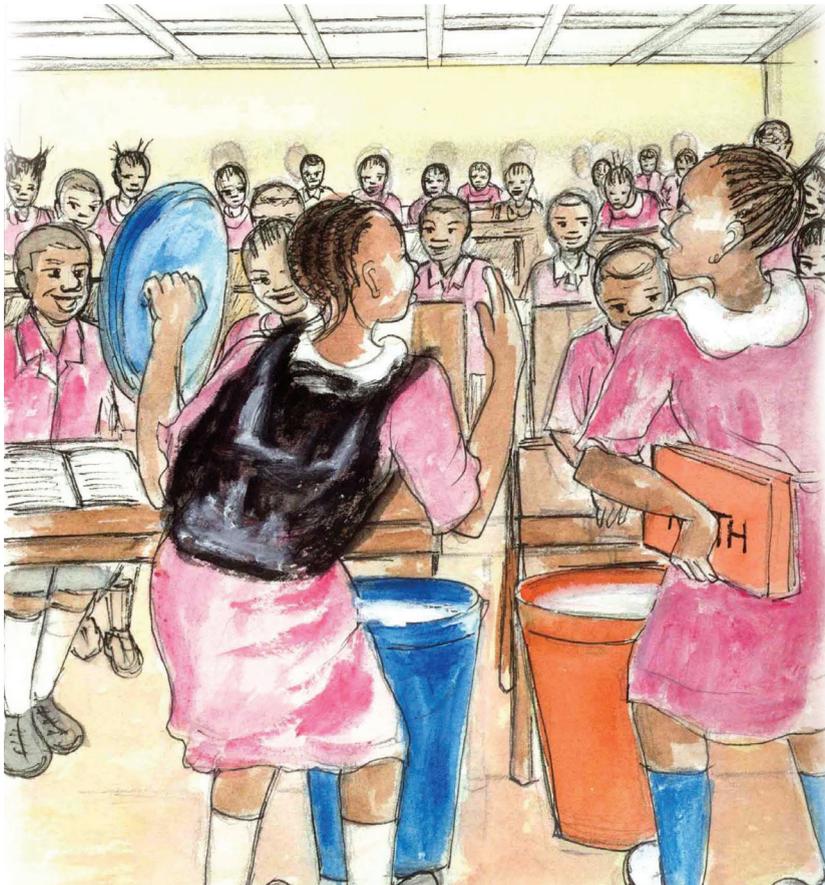




As Tina was about to speak, Santigie stood up. “I want a drink,” he said. “Please,” he added. All the pupils laughed.

Tina cleared her throat to speak. “Having clean, healthy, and safe drinking water helps us learn.”

The class let out a roar of cheers. She passed out cups, and everyone had a cool drink of water.





The whole school heard about what Tina had done. Soon other pupils were taking turns washing and refilling buckets with water. They washed the cups, too. Every classroom had a bucket of clean water and they had clean cups for drinking it. No pupils missed a lesson to get a drink of water.

The next week, Tina and Safire walked to school together. “What should we do next?” Tina asked her friend.

What they did next is another story.





# My Mother is a Teacher

*Jacqueline Leigh*

My mother is a teacher.

My brother and I attend primary school. I am in Class 3, and my brother is in Class 4.

We wake up early in the morning. I sweep and I help my brother get ready for school.

My mother teaches in our school. We walk to school together. We always arrive early because teachers cannot be late!

At school we speak only English so we will learn it.

Sometimes my mother leads the assembly. She is good at singing.

After assembly, we go to our classes. My mother teaches Class 1. Sometimes she comes to ask my teacher if I am working hard.





At lunchtime, we go to our mother for lunch money. We must speak English to her. If we do not, she will not give it to us!





At home we speak our language again. We wash our uniforms and eat. We do errands for our parents.

Then my mother gives us lessons in English. Our cousins come for lessons, too. My mother plans her school lessons and marks papers.

In the evening we pray. Then we eat again.

At night we tell jokes and stories in our language.

Our mother does not allow us to mix English with our language. She says, "Speak only one language at a time."

I like having a teacher in our family.





# Water for the Classroom

Tina's classmates were thirsty.

“Bring us water, please,” said Santigie.

“Okay” said Tina. “How much water do we need?”

“I want one cup,” said Rugi.

“So do I,” said Sia.

“Okay, everybody will get one cup,” said Tina. “How many students are there in the class?”

“Forty,” said the teacher.

“So we need forty cups of water,” said Tina.

Tina got a bucket. She read the label. “The bucket will hold 10 litres,” she said. “How many cups are in a litre?”

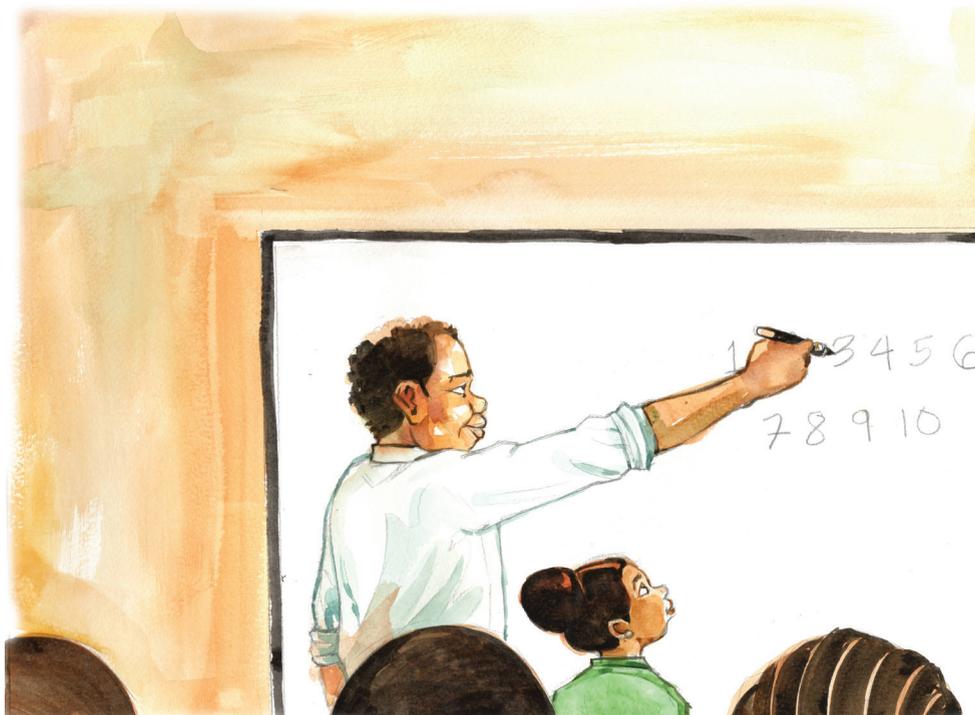
“Four,” said the teacher. “So how many buckets of water will we need?”

Tina didn't know.

The teacher said, “I will help you.”

The teacher wrote on the board:





40 students need 40 cups of water.  
1 litre of water is 4 cups.

“How many buckets of water do we need, class?” asked the teacher.

“I know! We can add the cups,” said Abu. “One cup of water for Bintu, Sia, Safire, and me. One more cup for Amina, Hajj, Aske, and Emily...”

“Stop, Abu. Adding is too slow,” said the teacher. “Let’s multiply and divide instead.”





“How?” asked Abu.

“If one litre has four cups, how many cups do ten litres have?”

“I don’t know,” said Abu.

“Multiply ten times four,” said the teacher. The teacher wrote on the board:

$$\begin{array}{r} 10 \text{ litres} \\ \times \quad 4 \text{ cups} \\ \hline \end{array}$$

“Forty!” said Abu.

“Forty what?” asked the teacher.

“Forty cups!” said Abu.

The teacher wrote

$$\begin{array}{r} 10 \text{ litres} \\ \times \quad 4 \text{ cups} \\ \hline 40 \text{ cups} \end{array}$$

“So how many cups does the bucket hold?” asked the teacher.

“Forty!” shouted the class.

“Then how many buckets do we need?” asked the teacher.





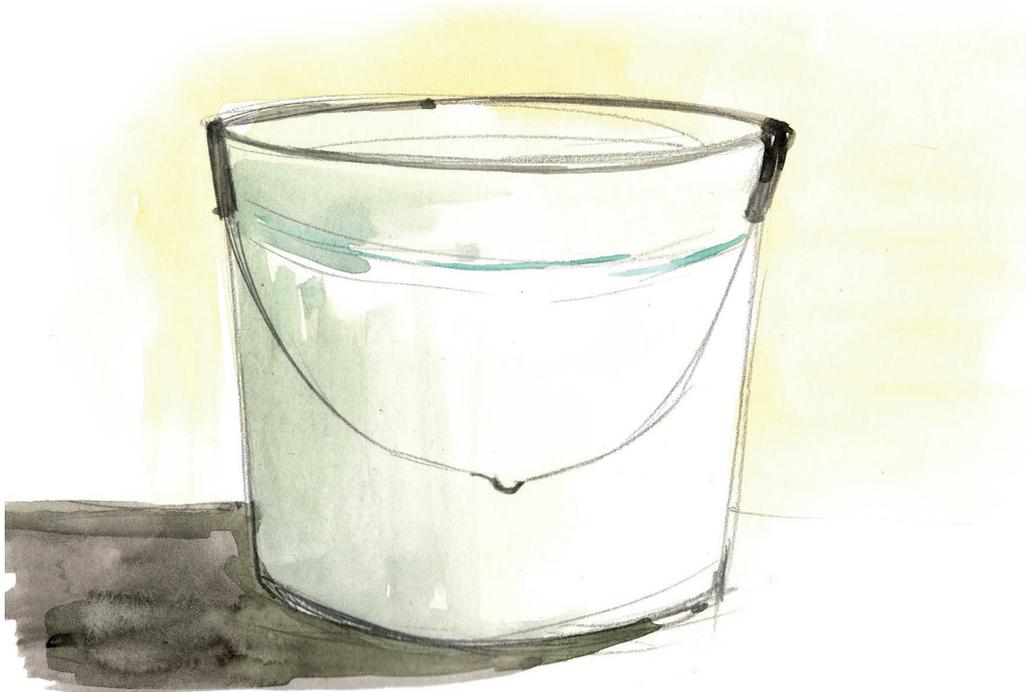
The class was quiet.

“Okay, I will show you. Now let’s divide,” said the teacher.

$$\frac{40 \text{ cups of water}}{40 \text{ cups in a bucket}} = \text{What?}$$

“One!” Shouted the class.

“Right!” said the teacher. “Tina, please get us one bucket of water. Plus one more cup for me!”





# All About Bees



Bees are good. They give us honey to eat. They help plants grow.

A bee visits 2,000 flowers in a day. There is sweet juice in flowers. It is called nectar. The bee sucks nectar from each flower and takes it back to her hive. She puts the honey into a honeycomb. The next day she does it all again.

In summer, a worker bee lives only 30 to 45 days. In her life she can only make a little bit of honey. Together, twelve bees make one teaspoon of honey in







their lives. Between 20,000 and 60,000 bees live in a hive. Together they can make a lot of honey.

Bees can fly fast, over 20 kilometers per hour. Bees can also fly far, as much as 10 kilometers each day.

A worker bee finds flowers. She tells other bees where they are. She tells them which way to go and how far to travel. But bees cannot talk, so she tells them by dancing. Her dance shows the other bees where to find the flowers!

Bees are helpful. Their honey is sweet and tastes good. Bees are good for plants, too. Dust from plants sticks to their legs. The dust is called pollen. Bees take pollen from plant to plant and it helps other plants grow.

Bees can be harmful, too. One bee sting can hurt, but many bee stings could kill you. Stay away from bees. Let them do their job.





## Bees are Builders

Bees live in hives. Together they build a honeycomb. A honeycomb is made of wax. Each worker bee makes wax in her body. She makes a tiny amount. Her wax is as small as a pin head.

Together the bees build a cell. The cell has six sides. The shape is called a hexagon. This is the best shape for a cell. The shape makes the most cells with the least wax. Many cells make a comb. Most hives have 100,000 cells.

Some cells are for the bees' eggs. The queen bee lays the eggs. She lays 2,000 eggs a day!

Baby bees hatch from the eggs. Most bees are worker bees and they are females. Some bees are drones. The drones are males and they stay in the hive.





The worker bees go out to collect nectar. They also make honey. They store the honey in other cells.

One worker bee can only make a little bit of honey. But many thousands make a lot of honey. A whole hive can make 40 kilograms of honey in a year.





## The Boiled Eggs

A farmer once took a herd of cows to town to sell. The road was rough. The hills were steep. In time he made it to the market where he sold his cows. Then he started home. The trip was just as long. The road was just as rough. And the hills were just as steep. When night came, he was tired. He stopped at an inn for his rest.

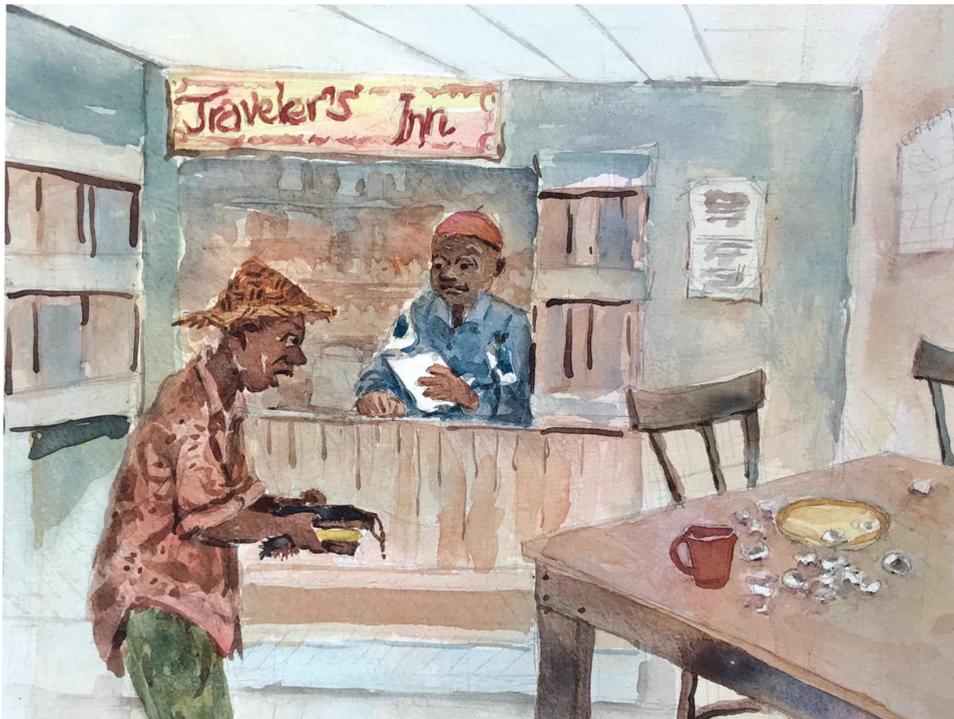
Morning came. He was hungry. He asked for ten boiled eggs. He ate. Then he went to pay. But, oh no. There was a hole in his purse. Most of his money was gone!

He had enough to pay for his bed. But he could not pay for the eggs.

“I am sorry,” he said. “I am an honest man. I will come back next week. Then I will pay for the eggs.”

The owner was not happy. But he agreed.





The farmer went home. Soon he forgot all about the eggs. He forgot the money he owed.

A year passed. The farmer took another herd of cows to town to sell. He passed the inn. He remembered that he had not paid for the eggs. He went inside. He told the owner he was sorry. “How much do I owe?”

The owner handed him a bill. Ten million (10,000,000) Leones!





“What?!” asked the farmer. “How can this be?”

“You ate ten eggs. Suppose each of those eggs hatched. I would have ten chicks. Suppose each chick grew. I would have ten hens. Suppose each hen laid ten eggs. I would have 100 (one hundred) chicks. Suppose each chick grew. I would have 100 hens...” the owner went on and on. “One egg costs 1,000 (one thousand) Leones. You owe me for 10,000 (ten thousand) eggs. Pay me 10,000,000 (ten million) Leones!”





The farmer could not pay so the owner called the police. The police took the farmer away to jail. As they went, the farmer passed a wise old friend. He asked him to stop. He told the friend what had happened.

“Hmm,” said the friend. “Yes, I think I can help you.”

The next day, the farmer was taken to the judge. The owner said, “This farmer owes me ten million Leones. Make him pay me now!”

“What do you have to say?” the judge asked the farmer.

“If you will wait,” said the farmer, “my friend will come. He will speak.”

“All right,” said the judge. They waited. And they waited. And they waited.

“Where is your friend?” asked the judge. “We cannot wait any longer.”

Just then the door opened and the farmer’s friend ran in.





“I am sorry I am late,” he said. “I was boiling my corn. Then I planted it.”

“What?” asked the judge. “Everyone knows boiled corn cannot grow!”

“No?” asked the friend. “If boiled eggs can hatch, then boiled corn grow!”

“Hah!” said the judge. “You are right.”

“Sir,” she said to the owner, “if you wanted your eggs to hatch, you should not have cooked them. This farmer does not owe you ten million Leones. But you owe him 100,000 (one hundred thousand) Leones for causing trouble.”





The owner frowned, but he paid.  
The farmer gave half to his wise old friend. The friend laughed, “We each earned 5,000 (five thousand) Leones for every egg you ate!”





# Anansi and the Yam Hills

*Retold by Michael Auld and Susan LaBella*

Readers Theater: This story can be read out loud. Assign each student a part and they can read the lines out loud when their character speaks.

This story can also be performed as a drama. Ask the students to volunteer to be a character and have the students practice the lines in groups first, and then do a presentation for the entire class with actions and voices.





**READER 1:** Once upon a time, there lived a woman named Five (5). She was an evil woman with magical powers.

**READER 2:** The woman named Five did not like her name. When she was a child, other children made fun of it.

**READER 3:** The children would slap their hands together. They yelled “Give me five!” and then burst out laughing.

**READER 4:** That made Five mad. One day she decided to cast a spell on the people:

**FIVE:** From this day forward, anyone who says “five” will disappear!

**READER 5:** The spell caused a big problem in the town. No one could say the word





“five” anymore because they would disappear. Children could not say their 5 times tables. Shop keepers could not name the price of anything that had 5 in it.

**READER 6:** One time, a shopper asked the shop keeper the price of a toy.

**SHOP KEEPER:** It is five thousand.....

**ALL:** WOOSH!

**READER 7:** The shop keeper disappeared!

**READER 8:** A sneaky spider named Anansi also lived in the town. Times were hard for Anansi. His family had no food to eat. He was too small to work. He had to use his brain to get what he needed to live.





- READER 9:** Anansi heard about the spell the woman had cast. He thought and thought. Could he use the spell to get what he needed?
- ANANSI:** Hmmmm.. These are tough times. How can I make this spell work for me?
- READER 1:** Finally, Anansi had an idea. First, he piled up 5 hills of rich brown dirt along the side of the road.
- READER 2:** In each hill, Anansi planted yellow yams. He watered the yams. Soon they began to grow.
- READER 3:** Anansi then sat down by the yam hills and waited. Soon, along came Dog. He had a basket of ribs. The sneaky spider spoke in his sweetest voice.





**ANANSI:** Good morning, Brother Dog. I know you are busy. But can you help me? I am not as smart as you. Would you help me count how many yam hills I have planted?

**BROTHER DOG:** Don't bother me, spider. You should have learned to count long ago.

**READER 4:** The grumpy dog walked away. Anansi sat down to wait.

**READER 5:** Soon, Bull came by. He carried a basket of fruit.

**ANANSI:** Brother Bull, Brother Bull, would you lend me a hand?

**BROTHER BULL:** What is the problem, Brother Spider?

**ANANSI:** I was a sickly child. I never went to school. Can you





help me count the yam hills  
I have planted?

**BROTHER BULL:** Sure, Spider! Let's see. You  
have 1..2..3..4..5....

**ALL:** Poof!

**READER 6:** Brother Bull disappeared!  
His fruit spilled on the  
ground. Anansi grabbed up  
the sweet treats and rushed  
home.





- READER 7:** During the next few months, Anansi tricked many others in the town. He tricked Turtle and Owl. He tricked Rabbit and Scorpion.
- READER 8:** He grew very fat from all the food he stole and ate.
- READER 9:** One day, Mrs. Hen passed by. She had a basket of vegetables. Mrs. Hen was on her way to the market to sell her vegetables.
- READER 1:** Mrs. Hen passed yam hills. Anansi dropped down from a tree.
- ANANSI:** Good morning, Mrs. Hen. Can you help me with a problem?
- MRS. HEN:** Of course, Mr. Spider, what can I do?





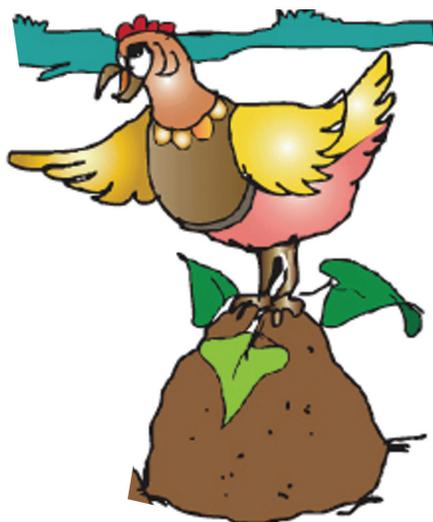
**ANANSI:**

I have planted these yam hills. But I don't know how many I have. Would you count them for me, please?

**READER 1:**

Mrs. Hen was onto Anansi's tricks. A few weeks before, she had seen him fool Brother Scorpion.





**READER 2:** Mrs. Hen walked over to the last yam hill. She climbed on top.

**MRS. HEN:** Let's see, Mr. Spider. You have 1...2...3...4 yam hills – and the one I'm standing on.

**READER 3:** Anansi was angry!

**ANANSI:** What are you doing? That is not how you count!

**MRS. HEN:** Why, what do you mean, Mr. Spider?





**ANANSI:** I don't know of a number called "the one I'm standing on." Start again!

**READER 4:** So, Mrs. Hen moved to another yam hill. She stood on it. Then she began to count.

**MRS. HEN:** You have 1...2...3...4 yam hills. And the one I'm standing on.

**READER 5:** Anansi became even angrier. He shouted...

**ANANSI:** That is not what you're supposed to say!!

**MRS. HEN:** Well, if you are so smart, tell me what I am supposed to say?

**READER 6:** Now Anansi was really shouting.

**ANANSI:** You are supposed to say 1...2...3...4...5...Ooops...





**ALL:**

WOOSH!

**READER 7:**

Anansi disappeared,  
leaving Mrs. Hen with her  
vegetables. And all the  
leftovers in Anansi's kitchen.

**READER 8:**

And that goes to show you

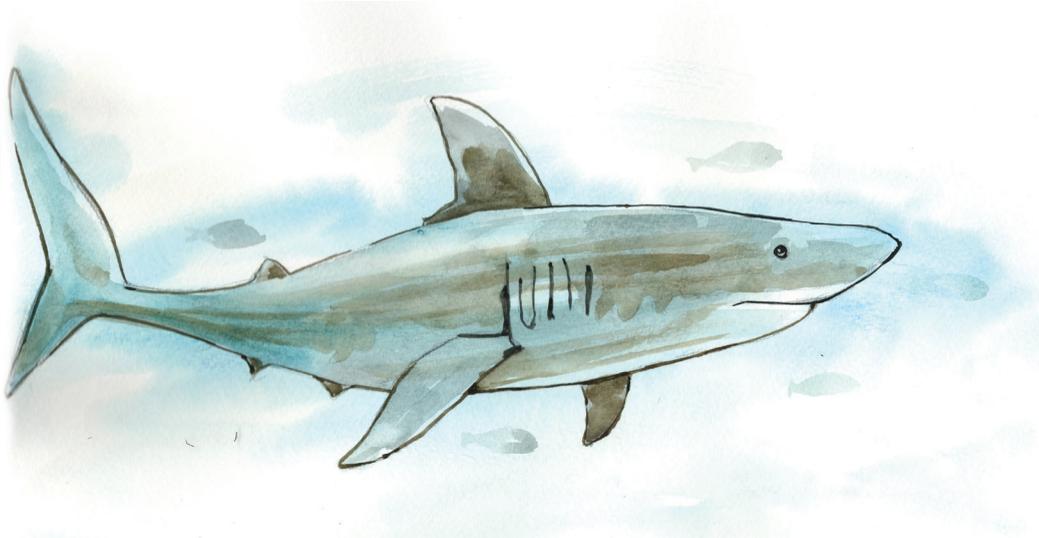
**ALL:**

Don't be greedy!





# Sharks



Sharks are scary. Some sharks attack humans, but most kinds do not. Thirty-eight kinds of sharks are dangerous to people. Those are sharks that swim in shallow water. That is where people swim, too.

But there are more than 500 other kinds of sharks that people do not often meet.

Sharks can be big. A whale shark can be 12 meters long. Most sharks are the same size as people. But a pale cat shark is only 20 centimeters. It would almost fit in your hand.





Do not try to hold a shark because sharks have many teeth. Most sharks have 3,000 teeth. When one tooth falls out, another takes its place.

Sharks can bend because they have no bones. A shark's whole body is made of cartilage. You have some cartilage in your nose. Cartilage is flexible and durable, but it is lighter than bones.

Sharks can see well. They can see in the dark better than a cat.

Sharks can smell well. They can smell 10,000 times better than you.

Sharks can feel tiny movements. They can feel a fish's heart beat through the water.

Some sharks swim fast. A great white shark swims 40 kilometers per hour. That is as fast as an okada!

Not all sharks are scary. But it is best to stay away from them.





# Sia and the Magic Baskets

*By Teresa Amui*

## Chapter 1

Sia's father fell sick. Sia went to visit him at the hospital.

“Sia,” her father said. His voice was weak. “I have some groundnut seeds in my red bag. Make a garden with them.”

“Thank you, Papa,” said Sia.





The family spent all their money on Papa's hospital expenses, but he died anyway. Mama struggled to take care of the family. Sia and her brothers, Sahr and Komba, stopped going to school.

So Sia planted the groundnuts seeds her father gave her. She watered them every day. One morning she saw tiny plants in her garden.

"What will you do with your groundnuts?" her brother Sahr asked.

"I will sell them at the market. It will help mama pay for our school fees," answered Sia.

One day, Sia went with mama to the market. She wanted to sell her groundnuts. The villagers sold many kinds of food they grew on their farms. Sia's mother sold used clothes for children.

Mama spread the used clothes on a mat. Sia's groundnuts were on an old tray, which she carried on her head.





“Fresh groundnuts, fresh groundnuts!”  
yelled Sia

After a long while she had only sold one tin full of groundnuts. She kept the two shiny coins in her pocket. Sia was so happy about the coins. So she ran back to Mama with a big smile. She gave the coins to Mama.

“Thank you, Sia,” said Mama.

“With this money I can go back to school, Mama,” Sia yelled.

Mama frowned. She gave the coins back to Sia.

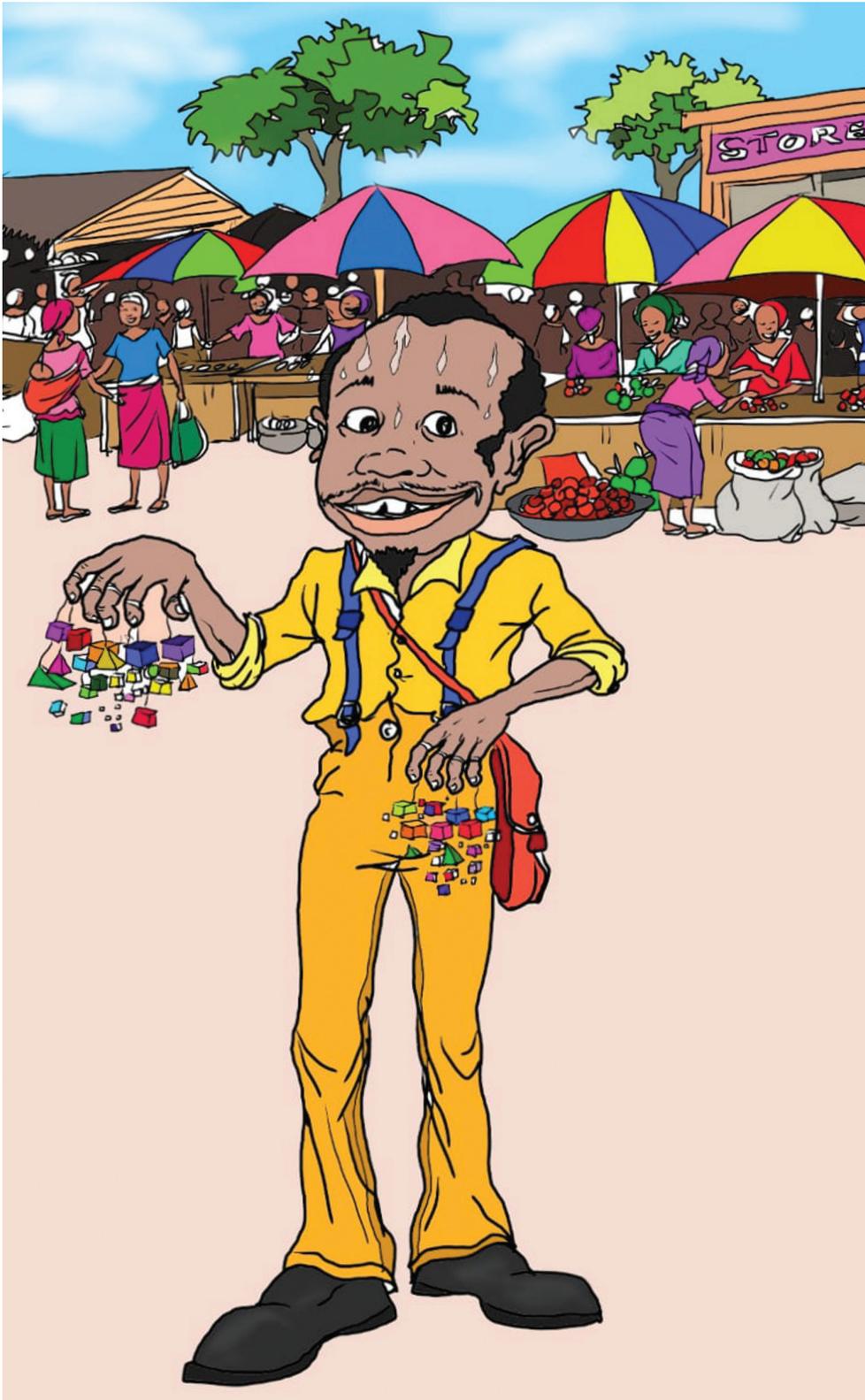
“Sia, this money is too little. It isn’t enough to pay for your school fees.”

“I want to be a doctor when I grow up. I cannot be a doctor if I don’t go to school,” said Sia.

“Some day you will go back to school,” said mama.

Sia picked up her tray of groundnuts again. “Fresh groundnuts, fresh







groundnuts!” Sia shouted louder than before. Still no one wanted to buy her fresh groundnuts.

As she hawked her groundnuts, she saw a funny looking man. He wore bright yellow shirt and yellow trousers. He even had yellow in his hair. This man had the longest legs in the whole market. He had the tiniest baskets for sale. He wore the baskets round his fingers like rings. No one bought any of his baskets. The other sellers laughed when he called out to shoppers. The man’s lips were parched with thirst. He sweated in the sun. Sia felt sorry for him. So, with her only coins she bought him water. The funny man thanked her kindly. Then he tried again to sell his baskets.

“Wonder baskets, magic baskets!” cried the funny man.

“Excuse me sir,” said Sia. “Why do you call them wonder baskets?”





“Because they can do wonderful things,” said the man. “They can even hold water.”

“Hold water?” asked Sia.

“Yes!” shouted the funny man, holding up his index finger.

“They can hold the river,” he said.

“But they are so small,” said Sia.

“My name is Jango, the magic man. I weave wonder baskets. Magic baskets.” Pointing at one of the baskets round his fingers, he added, “This one can hold the sea. This one can hold the ocean. This one can hold the sun and it will not tear.”

“The sun?” shouted Sia.

“You have shown me a kindness. Now come and let me show you,” said Jango, the magic man.

So she followed him. His long legs carried him fast. Sia had to run to catch up.





But since his head was above everyone else's, Sia knew just where he was.

They arrived at a small hut surrounded by a fence made of bamboo mats. Inside the hut were thousands of tiny baskets of every colour. Some of them were as small as a grain of sand.

“These are the wonder baskets,” said Jango, the magic man.

“They are tiny,” said Sia.

“Hold this one,” said Jango, the magic man.

Sia put her tray of groundnuts on the ground. She took a tiny green basket from his palm. It was so heavy! Sia dropped it on the ground. To her surprise, water spilled from it. There was so much water that the little hut started to flood! The water rose up to her knees and then, to her waist. She tried to swim but didn't know how.





The water rose to her neck. “Help me! I can’t swim!” called Sia to Jango.

With one scoop, all the water was back in the basket. Sia was wet from head to foot. Her feet were stuck in the mud.





## Chapter 2

In Chapter 1, Sia's father gave her groundnut seeds. Then he died. Her family was poor. Sia planted the seeds. When the groundnuts grew, she took them to the market. She did not sell many. But she did meet a magic man. His name was Jango. He had magic baskets. Let us read and see what happens next.

The funny man ran off to grab a basket from the pile in the corner of the hut. Then he ran back. He smiled so wide that the corner of his mouth touched his ears.

“What is in it?” asked Sia.

“Something no one in this village has ever seen,” said Jango.

Sia was afraid.

“Stop!” she shouted.

But it was too late. The basket was on the ground.

A black bird flew out of the basket. Then there was a blue one. More birds flew out.

There were green, purple, white, orange and many more birds. They flew straight





to the sky. The sky was filled with birds of every colour. Sia heard the villagers talking behind the mat fence. They were all amazed. It was a beautiful sight indeed.





“Where do you get these magic baskets?” asked Sia.

“I weave them,” replied Jango.

“With what do you weave them?” asked Sia.

“I weave bamboo, wonder and magic into tiny baskets. And they are the best baskets.”

Sia saw the piles of bamboo in the corner. “Where is the magic and the wonder?” she asked.

“I will show you how I weave,” said Jango.

He took two giant steps into his hut. He came out with a knife. He carved the bamboo into tiny pieces.

“Now may colour fall from the sky,” he said.

Sia looked up and wondered how colour would fall from the sky. When she looked back down, Jango was weaving a small yellow basket.





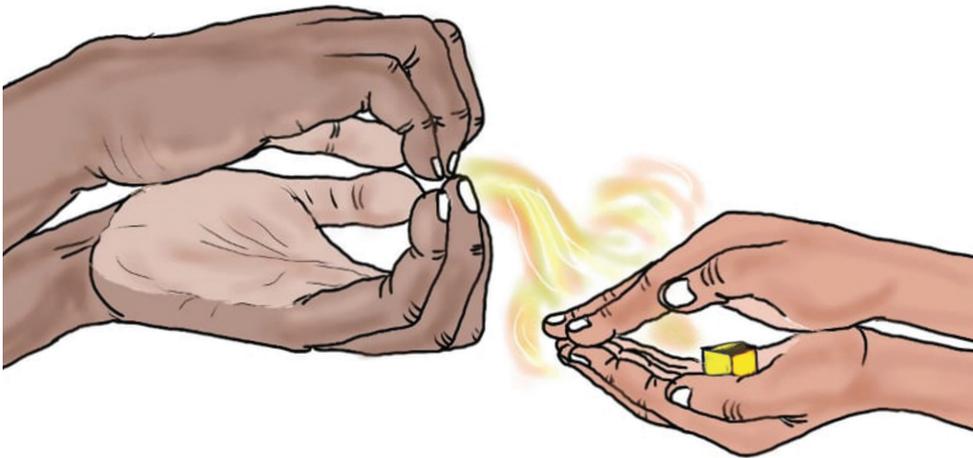
“Now I need magic to make it complete,” said Jango.

“Is magic falling from the sky, too?” asked Sia.

“No, it comes from my heart,” said Jango. He shut his eyes for a while and then he opened them again.

“Our basket is done,” said Jango.

Jango gave the basket to Sia with both hands like it was an egg. She gently closed her fist round the tiny basket.



“What do I do with it?” asked Sia.





Before she could say anything else, Jango dropped the basket to the ground. Sia was afraid of another flood so she ran to the gate. But instead of water, rice poured out of the little hut. It was brown rice. It came out with such force that the tall man was covered in rice. He had rice in his hair and rice everywhere. Then with one shove all the rice was back in the basket.

“You will take this one home with you,” said Jango, the magic man.

“Thank you,” said Sia.

Sia felt a drop of rain on her forehead. Then it started to rain heavily.

“I have to go now,” said Sia.

She picked her tray of groundnuts from the mud and put it back on her head.

“Don’t forget the basket,” said Jango.

So she put the magic yellow basket in her pocket.





## Chapter 3

In Chapter 2, Sia met a magic man. His name was Jango. He showed her magic baskets. He gave her one. Sia took it home. Let us read and see what happens next.

Sia ran all the way back to find Mama. The tray of groundnuts became heavy in the rain. In her pocket was the magic basket.

The market was nearly empty. The other sellers had packed up their goods and sought shelter. But Mama was waiting for her.

“Sia, where have you been?” asked Mama. “Let us hurry home or you will catch cold.”

Mama wrapped a blanket around Sia. Mama carried her used clothing on her head. Sia also carried her groundnuts on her head.

As they walked through the rain, Sia said, “Mama, I saw a funny-looking man at the market today.”





“Really?” asked Mama.

“He said he was a magician and he gave me a magic basket,” said Sia.

“Magic lives only in stories, Sia,” said Mama.

“No, Mama, magic is real.”

“Sia, magic does not exist,” said Mama. Sia dipped her hand in her pocket and pulled out the basket.

“This is the magic basket,” said Sia.

Mama laughed. “It looks funny,” she said.

“When we get home, you will see,” said Sia.

When they reached home, Sia dropped the basket on the ground. All the rice poured out. It covered the kitchen floor. It flowed into the parlour. Mama’s eyes were wide with surprise. Sia’s brothers, Sahr and Komba, looked with opened mouths.







They scooped the rice into sacks. There were more sacks than they could count. They went to their neighbours and got more sacks.

“I will sell the rice tomorrow at the market. Now you can all go back to school,” said Mama with a big smile.

“I will now be able to become a doctor. What do you want to be, Sahr?”

“I want to study the ways of the sea, and become a ship captain.”

“And you, Komba?”

“I want to study geography. I will become an explorer, and find out what lies across the sea.”

The next day, Sahr asked, “Sia, can you take us to see the man with the magic baskets?”

“Yes,” said Sia. “His name is Jango. I will show you where he lives.”

Sia, Sahr, and Komba walked back along the road to the market. Sia led





them a long way in one direction. “Was his hut down this way?” she asked.

No. Then she led them along a different road. Then they walked and walked in every direction.

But they did not find the mat fence. They saw no sign of the weaver’s hut.

Jango, the basket weaver was gone.





# How Monkey Got His Tail Back

Monkey used to play tricks on the animals. He pulled rabbit's ears. He tied snake into a knot. He plucked cat's whiskers.





The animals did not like Monkey's tricks. They decided to teach him a lesson.

One afternoon Monkey slept under a tree. The animals crept up on him. They rolled a big rock onto Monkey's tail.

"Ow!" shouted Monkey. He woke. He jumped up. He pulled. He yanked. He broke his long tail off!

Cat took Monkey's tail. She ran away.

Monkey chased after Cat. "Give me back my tail!" he yelled. "I need it to climb trees."





“No!” said Cat. “You will play more tricks on us.”

“No, I won’t,” said Monkey. “I promise. Please give it back.”

“You must give me something,” said Cat.

“What?” said Monkey.

“Bring me milk from Cow,” said Cat.

“Then I will give you back your tail.”

Monkey went to Cow. “Cow, please give milk to Cat. If you give milk to Cat, Cat will give me my tail back.”

Cow said, “Bring me grass from Farmer. Then I will give milk to Cat.”

Monkey went to Farmer. “Farmer, please give grass to Cow. If you give grass to Cow, Cow will give milk to Cat. If Cow gives milk to Cat, Cat will give me my tail back.”

Farmer said, “Bring me rain from Cloud. Then I will give grass to Cow.”

Monkey went to Cloud. “Cloud, please give rain to Farmer. If you give rain to





Farmer, Farmer will give grass to Cow. If Farmer gives grass to Cow, Cow will give milk to Cat. If Cow gives milk to Cat, Cat will give me my tail back.”

Cloud said, “Bring me water from River. Then I will give rain to Farmer.”

Monkey went to River. “River, please give rain to Farmer. If you give rain to Farmer, Farmer will give grass to Cow. If Farmer gives grass to Cow, Cow will give milk to Cat. If Cow gives milk to Cat, Cat will give me my tail back.”

River said, “I will gladly give you water.”

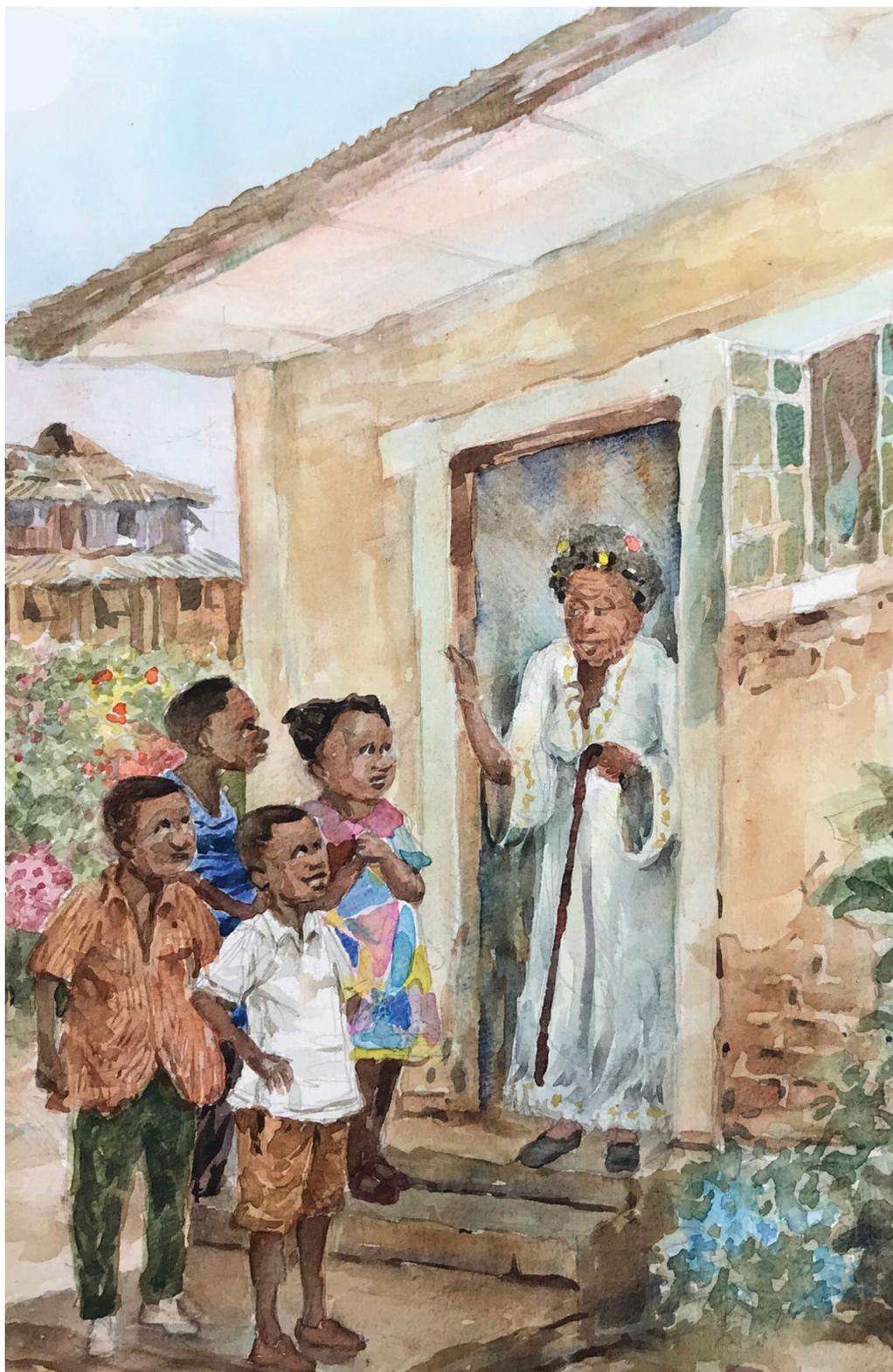
River gave water Cloud. Cloud gave rain to Farmer. Farmer gave grass to Cow. Cow gave milk to Cat. And Cat gave Monkey his tail back.





Monkey thanked Cat. Monkey climbed a tree. He laughed and laughed. He is not laughing at the animals any more. He is laughing because he is happy to have his tail back.







# Grandma Makes Banana Cake

Grandma had a big new oven. “I will make banana cake today,” she said.

“Good!” said Augusta. “We love banana cake.”

“Come back tonight,” said Grandma.

That night, Grandma heard,

“Knock, knock!”

Grandma opened the door. There stood Augusta, Sahr, Abu, and Sallieu.

“Is the banana cake ready?” asked Augusta.

“Yes, it is. Come in,” said Grandma.

Then she shouted to Grandpa, “Slice the banana cake into 4 pieces.”

“Okay,” said Grandpa.

“Knock, knock!”

Grandma opened the door again. There stood Amadu, Roro, Ned, and Allieu.





“May we have some banana cake, too?” asked Amadu.

“Yes, you may. Come in,” said Grandma.

Grandma shouted to Grandpa, “Here come 4 more children. Now we need 8 pieces.”

Grandpa shouted back, “How do I cut them?”

“You have 4 pieces. Slice each piece into 2 pieces. Then you will have 8 pieces.”

“Okay,” said Grandpa.





“Knock, knock!”

Grandma opened the door one more time. There stood Ruby, Bintu, Jenneh, and Hajj.

“May we have some banana cake, too?” asked Amadu.

“Um, yes, you may. Come in,” said Grandma.

Grandma shouted to Grandpa, “Here come 4 more children.”

“What do we do now?” asked Grandpa.

“Get the other banana cake out of the oven. There is plenty for everybody.

“Knock, knock”...







# Abu and Adama

Readers Theater: This story can be read out loud. Assign each student a part and they can read the lines out loud when their character speaks.

This story can also be performed as a play. Ask students to volunteer to be a character and have the students practice the lines in groups first, and then do a presentation for the entire class with actions and voices.

**NARRATOR 1:** Abu and Adama were twins.

NARRATOR 2: They looked just alike.

NARRATOR 3: Their hair was short and black.

NARRATOR 4: Their eyes were big and bright.

NARRATOR 5: They were both very fit.

NARRATOR 1: And they loved the same game:

ALL: Football!

NARRATOR 6: Abu was quick and smart.





NARRATOR 7: So was Adama.

NARRATOR 8: Adama's passes were true.

NARRATOR 9: So were Abu's.

NARRATOR 10: Abu scored goals.

NARRATOR 11: So did Adama.

NARRATOR 12: Abu was the striker on the Tikonko Tigers.

NARRATOR 1: Adama said to Abu,

ADAMA: "I want to play for the Tigers, too."

ABU: "I don't think you can."

**ADAMA:** "Why not?"

ABU: "Because the Tigers are a boys' team. Girls don't play on our team."

ADAMA: "But I want to play. And I am as good as any boy,"





**ABU:**

“Okay, let us go ask Mr. Kargbo.”

NARRATOR 3:

Mr. Kargbo was the coach of the Tikonko Tigers.

NARRATOR 3:

That afternoon they went to see him.

NARRATOR 4:

Mr. Kargbo was sitting on his veranda. He was reading a newspaper.

ABU:

“Hello, Mr. Kargbo.”

MR. KARGBO:

“Hello, Abu—”

NARRATOR 5:

Then he stopped. He looked surprised.

MR. KARGBO:

“What? Why are there two Abu’s here?”

NARRATOR 6:

Abu laughed.

ABU:

“This is my sister, Mr. Kargbo. Her name is Adama.”





**ADAMA:**

“Hello, Mr. Kargbo. I am pleased to meet you.”

MR. KARGBO:

“Hello, Adama. What can I do for you?”

NARRATOR 7:

Adama was quiet.

NARRATOR 8:

She looked down at her feet.

MR. KARGBO:

“Yes? Speak up, Adama.”

ABU:

“Mr. Kargbo, Adama wants to play for the Tigers.”

MR. KARGBO:

“What?”

**NARRATOR 9:**

said Mr. Kargbo. He looked very surprised. Then angry.

MR. KARGBO:

“But she is a girl. The Tigers are a boys’ team. Girls cannot play for the Tigers.”

ADAMA:

“But I have practiced hard. I play well.”

MR. KARGBO:

“I am sorry.”





- NARRATOR 10: Mr. Kargbo stood up.
- MR. KARGBO: “You are welcome to watch our games. It was nice to meet you.”
- NARRATOR 11: And then he went inside.
- NARRATOR 12: Abu and Adama walked home, slowly.
- ABU: “I am sorry, Adama.”
- ADAMA: “It’s not fair, Abu. There is no girls’ team in this village.”
- NARRATOR 1: The next Saturday was a big game.
- NARRATOR 2: But on Wednesday, Abu felt ill.
- NARRATOR 3: On Thursday, Abu had a fever.
- NARRATOR 4: On Friday, his father took Abu to the clinic.





**NURSE:** “You have malaria, Abu.”

NARRATOR 5: said the nurse.

NURSE: “You must take these pills and stay in bed.”

NARRATOR 6: Saturday came.

ADAMA: “I am sorry you are ill.”

NARRATOR 8: Then Adama grinned.

**ADAMA:** “May I borrow your uniform?”

ABU: “Yes!”

NARRATOR 9: said Abu. He grinned back at his sister.

NARRATOR 10: The team was on the field.

NARRATOR 11: Adama was in front.

NARRATOR 12: Both teams played hard.

NARRATOR 1: The game was tied, 0 to 0.

NARRATOR 2: There were only 10 seconds left.





**ADAMA:** “Pass the ball to me!”

NARRATOR 3: shouted Adama.

NARRATOR 4: Adama headed the ball into the net!

ALL: “GOAL-----!!!”

NARRATOR 5: shouted the crowd.

NARRATOR 6: Mr. Kargbo ran onto the field.

NARRATOR 7: He hugged Adama.

MR. KARGBO: “You are a hero, Abu!”

NARRATOR 8: he said. He patted her on the back.

ADAMA: “Um, Mr. Kargbo?”

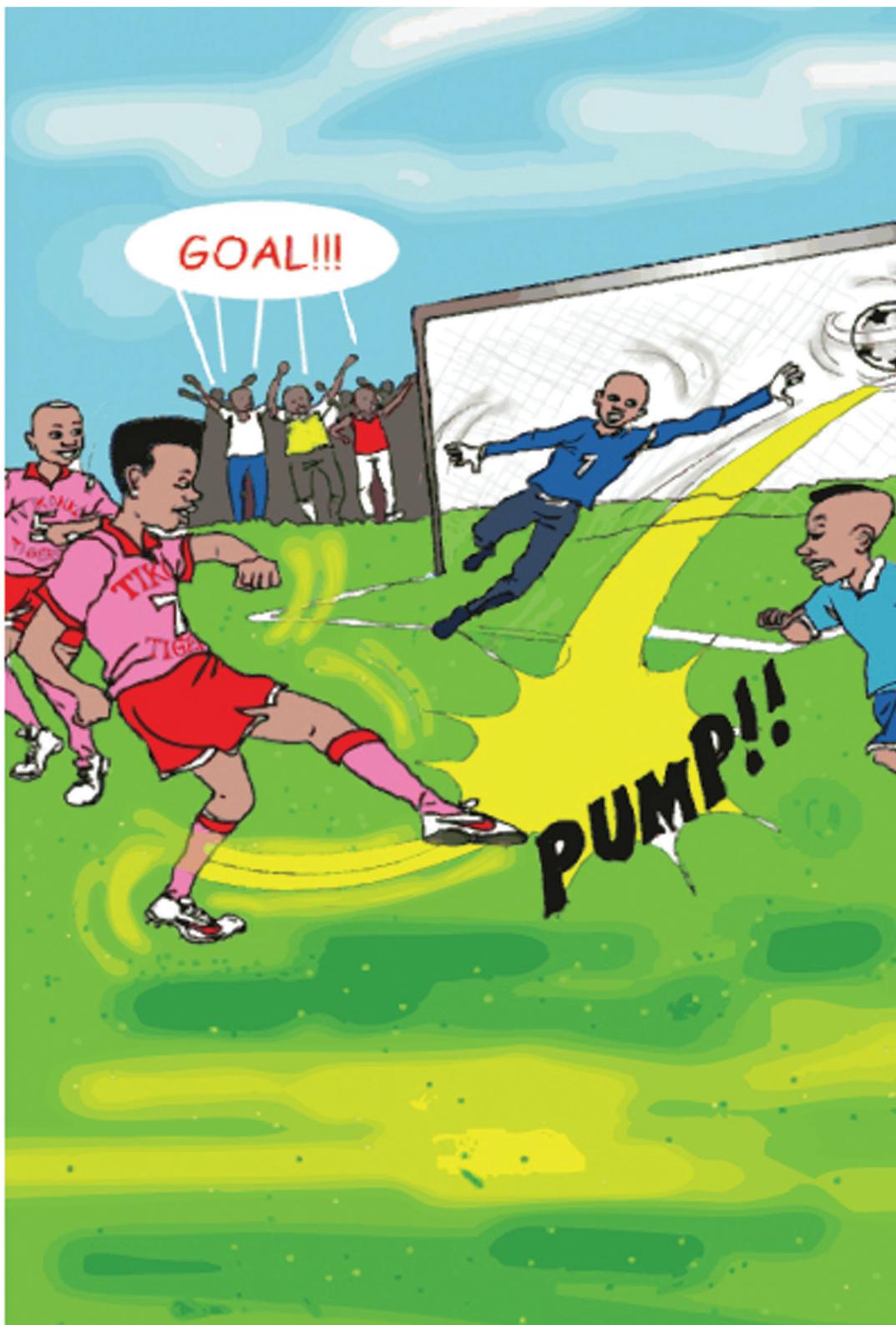
NARRATOR 9: said Adama.

ADAMA: “Abu is ill.”

**MR. KARGBO:** “What?!”

NARRATOR 10: Mr. Kargbo looked puzzled.







**ADAMA:** “I am Adama. You know,  
Abu’s sister.”

**NARRATOR 11:** Mr. Kargbo laughed.

**NARRATOR 12:** Then he said,

**MR. KARGBO:** “Well, I guess this team can  
always use two strikers.”

**ALL:** The end!





# Bisi the Detective

*By Jacqueline Leigh*



“This is my office. I am a detective. I can find anything. I can solve any case. They call me Bisi the Detective,” said Bisi.

“Bisi, did you wash your uniform today?” asked Mama.

“Yes, Mama.”

“Did you finish your homework?” asked Mama.

“Yes, Mama.”

“Someone will come soon Somebody will need you to help them,” said Mama.

Just then a girl came running. Her clothes did not fit. She wore only one shoe. “Help! I can’t find it! Are you the detective?”





“Yes, I am. Did you lose your shoe?”  
asked Bisi.

”No, it is at home,” said the girl.

“Did you lose your belt?” asked Bisi.

“No, my belt is at home.”

“What did you lose?” asked Bisi.

“I can’t find Tiger. I always feed him  
after school. But today I can’t find him. He  
is gone!”

“Is Tiger a tiger?” asked Bisi.

“No, Tiger is my puppy,” said the girl.  
“And he is gone!” The girl started to cry.





“I’m sorry,” said Bisi. “Please don’t cry. We will find Tiger.”

“Thank you,” the girl sniffed.

“What does he look like?” asked Bisi.

“He’s fat. He is black and white. And he has a black tail and black feet,” answered the girl. She wiped her eyes.

“Do your friends know that you have a puppy?” asked Bisi.

“Everybody knows! He barks all the time,” said the girl.

“I can find him for you. Let’s go to your house,” said Bisi.

The two girls went to the house. Bisi looked everywhere. She looked under the tea bush. She looked under the pots in the kitchen. She looked in the wash yard. She looked behind the coal pot.

“Tiger is not in your compound. Maybe he took a walk. I am Bisi the Detective. I will find him for you.”

The two girls walked down the road.





“Ruff ruff! Ruff! Ruff! Ruff!” They heard a puppy bark.

“Tiger! That’s Tiger!” shouted the girl.

Bisi and the girl followed the sound to a compound. A boy looked out of the gate.

“Good morning. Do you have a puppy here?” asked Bisi.

“Yes, I have a puppy named Frisky,” answered the boy. He looked nervous.

“I don’t see it. Where is it?” asked Bisi.

“We tie him up. We don’t want him to run away. He’s very frisky,” said the boy.

“Can we see your puppy, please?” asked Bisi.

The boy led them back to the wash yard. There was a fat puppy. The puppy was black and white. He had a black tail and black feet. The puppy barked happily and licked the girl’s hand.

“I am Bisi the Detective. This is not your puppy. This is her puppy,” said Bisi.





“No, it isn’t. This is my puppy,” said the boy.

“Puppies lick their owners. They like people who feed them. This puppy is licking her, not you. The puppy knows she feeds him, not you,” said Bisi.

The boy looked ashamed. “But I love puppies so much. I wanted one of my own,” he said sadly.

“Don’t worry. I am a detective. I will help you find a puppy of your own,” said Bisi.

Bisi, the girl, and the puppy walked back to Bisi’s house.

“Bisi! Where have you been? I have been looking for you everywhere!” said her mother.

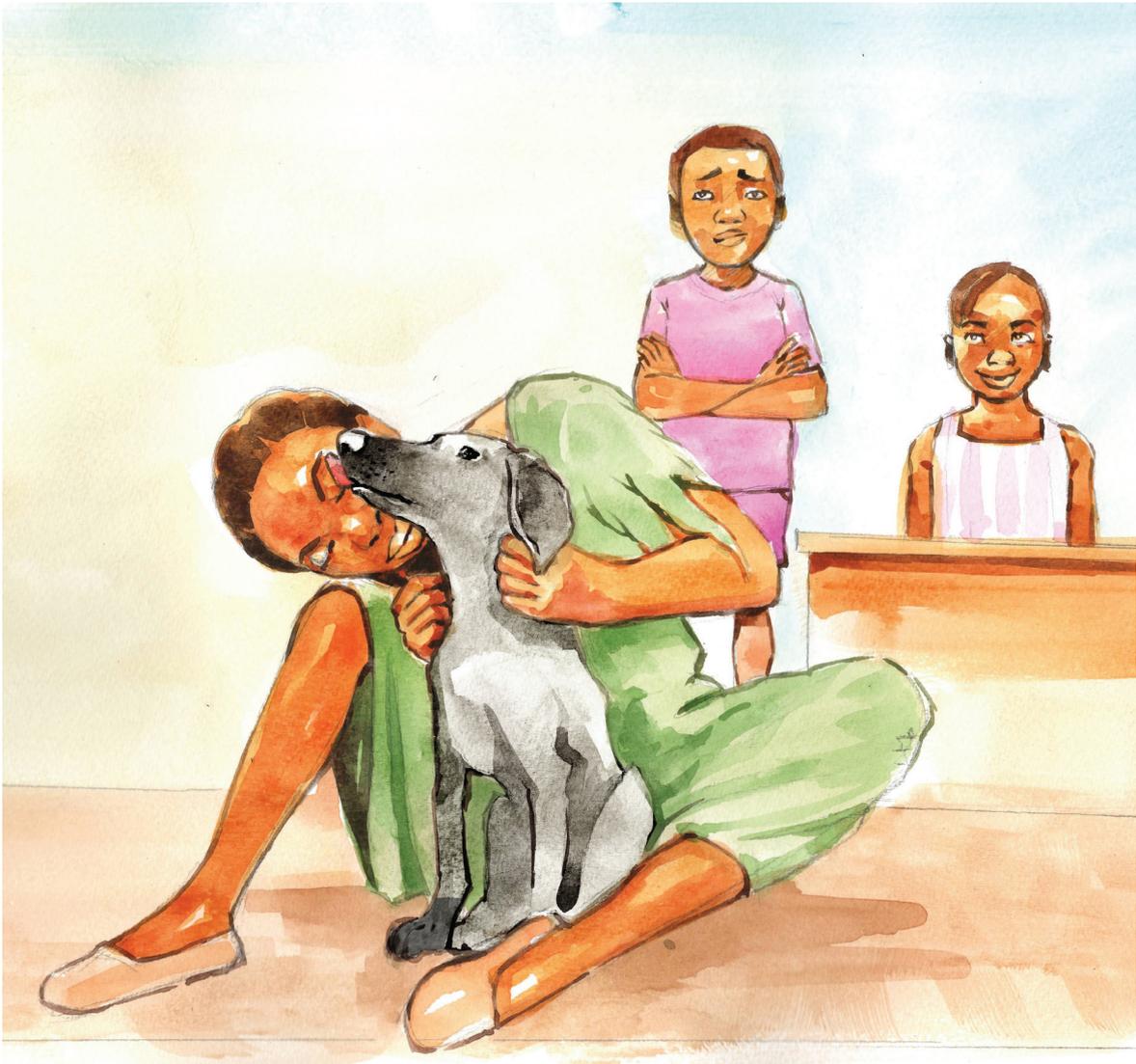
“I solved a case, Mama. I’m a detective,” said Bisi.

“Bisi found my puppy! She’s a very good detective,” said the happy girl.





“Ruff ruff!” said the puppy.





Read more exciting stories about Sia and her friends in Book 1 and Book 2.

