



Tsakani and the wooden dolls

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Long time ago, in a mountainous village of Mbhokota, there lived a girl called Tsakani. She stayed with her granny. Tsakani did not have friends and was lonely.

She wanted a friend to make clay pots and animals with her. She wished there was someone to play with.



Her granny noticed this and thought, "The child looks so lonely. This is not good. I will make a plan."

Her granny knew how to carve wood and make sculptures of animals and people.

She made sculptures of things in her imagination.



Granny carved a wooden doll for Tsakani.

“You are the best!” said Tsakani with excitement when she gave her the doll.

The wooden doll could walk and sit, but only when it was close to Tsakani.



Tsakani was very happy playing with the wooden doll. But soon, she was lonely again.

The doll could only walk and sit, but not talk. There was no one to talk to.



And so, her granny made another doll that could walk, sit, and talk.

Tsakani was over the moon. She even danced her special dance. She said, "Granny, you have made me so happy."

They talked together until the sun set.



But the wooden doll could not dance, and Tsakani liked to dance. She liked to dance the happy dance, the victory dance, and xibelani.

She wanted to swing this way and that way, not alone, but with a friend. There was no one to dance with Tsakani.



Her granny made another beautiful wooden doll. This doll wore beads and bangles, and of course the doll also wore xibelani.

This wooden doll could walk, sit, talk, and dance!



The doll and Tsakani danced together.

From that day, when she was not at school, Tsakani played with the wooden dolls that her granny had made.

Tsakani was not lonely anymore.



When her granny realised how happy Tsakani was, she made a wooden doll for every child in the village.

She also carved many wooden sculptures for decoration.

The whole world could see the work of her beautiful hands.



Ulwazi Lwethu is a Zenex Foundation funded and initiated project to develop a series of graded and leisure African language readers and teacher support materials. This project is targeted at teaching and supporting learners in the Foundation Phase to improve their home language reading and understanding. The readers have been originated in nine African languages in collaboration with Molteno Institute for Language and Literacies, Nelson Mandela Institute for Education and Rural Development, Room to Read South Africa, and Saide. All resources are developed as Open Education Resources (OER).



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