







Edition 66
Afrikaans, English

It starts with a story...

Playing with books

Helping young children to develop the ability to read and write is a serious business because being literate is extremely important in our daily lives. But we also need to remember that we don't have to actively teach or tell children *about* books and reading. Instead, we need to allow our children to learn *about* books by exploring them. One of the ways we can do this is by giving them opportunities to play with books. Being allowed to be playful with books helps children to become literate.

Here are some of the ways that children at different stages of development might "play" with books.

-  Babies like to try out books by touching, patting, shaking and even chewing them! They are also great listeners and imitators. Often they make sounds and clap their hands to show how much they are enjoying us reading to them. Try giving babies board and cloth books when you want to allow them to handle books on their own, like during nappy changes. These kinds of books are tough and don't break easily.
-  Older babies enjoy books with flaps, pop-ups and buttons that they can press to make sounds. They also like to point to things on the page or to try turning the page.
-  Many toddlers like to pretend to read aloud and older children often like to pretend to be "the teacher" and read to the class. They can be found turning the pages of a storybook telling their own story as they go, or retelling a story they have heard often – sometimes even with the book upside down! They're practicing reading and showing you that they understand what books are about. Encourage them by making sure that there are always some books around for them to pick up and "read" when they want to.
-  Young children often act out stories they know, or create their own, using familiar story characters. In these imaginary play times, children learn about symbols – when they use a stick as a fairy's magic wand or a box as a car, it means that they understand how one thing can "stand for" another. This is important for literacy learning. Encourage your children's imaginary play by reading lots of different kinds of stories to them.

Playing with books offers children opportunities to learn important literacy lessons and – best of all – it's what children do naturally when we read to them and have books to choose from in their environment.

Enjoy a special story from Africa in celebration of Africa Day on 25 May! You can find it on pages 3 to 8.

Speel met boeke

Om jong kinders te help om te leer lees en skryf, is 'n ernstige saak, want in ons daaglikse lewens is dit uiters belangrik om geletterd te wees. Maar ons moet ook onthou dat ons nie aktief vir kinders oor boeke en lees hoef te vertel. Ons moet eerder ons kinders toelaat om oor boeke te leer deur hulle te verken. Een van die maniere waarop ons dit kan doen, is om vir hulle geleenthede te gee om met boeke te speel. As kinders toegelaat word om met boeke te speel, help dit hulle om geletterd te word.

Hier is van die maniere waarop kinders in verskillende fases van ontwikkeling met boeke kan "speel".

-  Babas hou daarvan om boeke te verken deur daaraan te vat, dit te streek, te skud en selfs te kou! Hulle is ook goeie luisteraars en nabootsers. Hulle maak dikwels geluide en klap hulle hande om te wys hoe hulle dit geniet wanneer ons vir hulle lees. Probeer vir babas karton- en lapboeke gee wanneer jy wil hê hulle moet boeke op hulle eie hanteer, byvoorbeeld wanneer jy 'n doek ruil. Hierdie soort boeke is sterk en breek nie maklik nie.
-  Ouer babas geniet boeke met flappies, opwipprente en knoppies wat hulle kan druk om geluide te maak. Hulle hou ook daarvan om na dinge op die bladsy te wys of om die bladsy te probeer omblaai.
-  Baie kleuters hou daarvan om te maak of hulle hardop lees, en ouer kinders hou dikwels daarvan om te maak of hulle "die onderwyser" is en dan vir die klas te lees. Hulle blaai dikwels deur die bladsy van 'n storieboek en vertel hulle eie storie soos hulle aangaan, of hulle vertel 'n storie wat hulle al dikwels gehoor het – soms selfs met die boek onderstebo! Hulle oefen om te lees en wys vir jou dat hulle verstaan waaroor boeke gaan. Moedig hulle aan deur seker te maak daar is altyd boeke in hul omgewing wat hulle kan optel en "lees" wanneer hulle wil.
-  Jong kinders voer dikwels stories wat hulle ken op, of skep hul eie stories deur bekende storiekaraktêre te gebruik. Tydens hierdie verbeeldingspel leer kinders van simbole – wanneer hulle 'n stok as 'n feetjie se towerstaffie gebruik, of 'n boks as 'n kar, beteken dit hulle verstaan hoe een ding vir iets anders "kan staan". Dit is belangrik vir die ontwikkeling van geletterdheid. Moedig jou kinders se verbeeldingspel aan deur vir hulle baie verskillende soorte stories te lees.

Om met boeke te speel gee kinders geleenthede om belangrike geletterdheidslesse te leer, en – die beste van alles – dit is wat kinders natuurlik doen wanneer ons vir hulle lees en boeke in hulle omgewing het waaruit hulle kan kies.

Geniet 'n spesiale storie uit Afrika ter viering van Afrikadag op 25 Mei! Jy sal dit op bladsye 3 tot 8 vind.



Drive your
imagination

Read to me. Book by book.
Lees vir my. Boek vir boek.





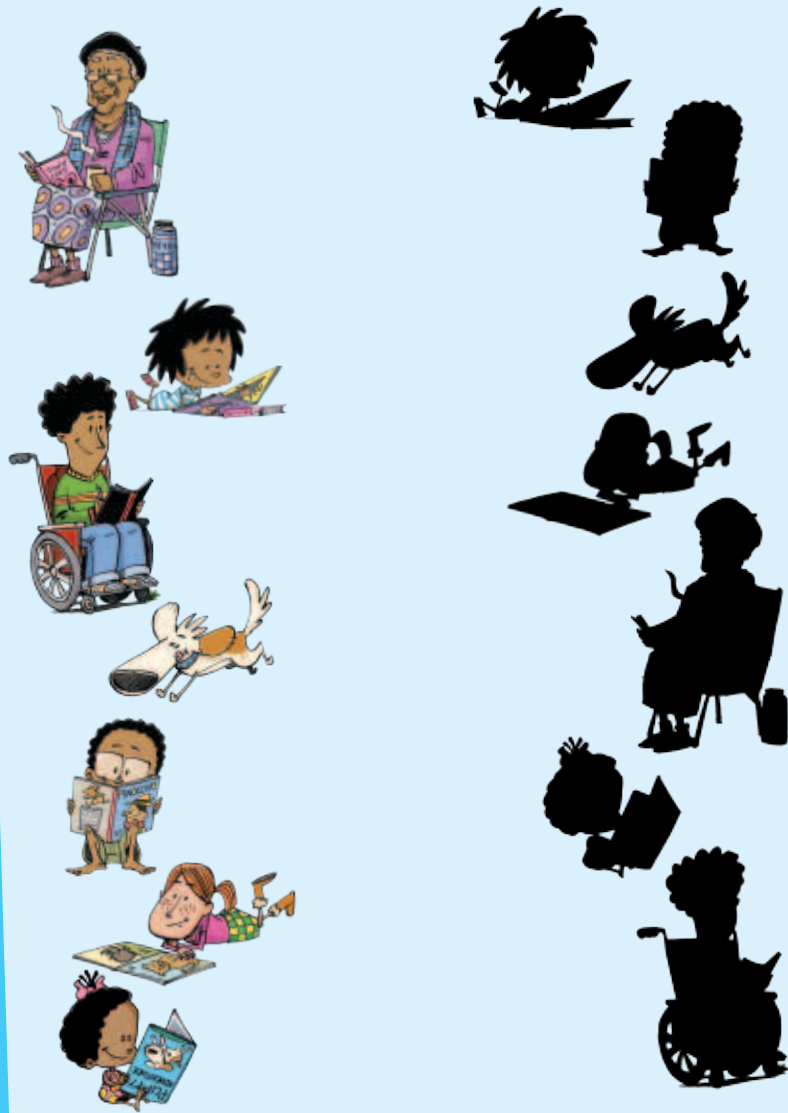
Drive your imagination

Nal'ibali puzzle fun

Do you know the names of these Nal'ibali characters? Can you match them to their shadows?

Nal'ibali-kopkrappret

Ken jy die name van hierdie Nal'ibali-karakters? Kan jy hulle by hul skaduwees pas?



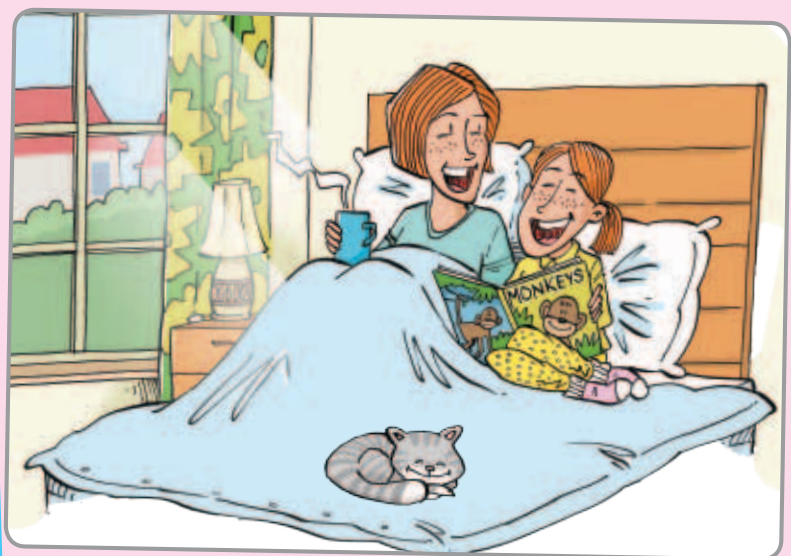
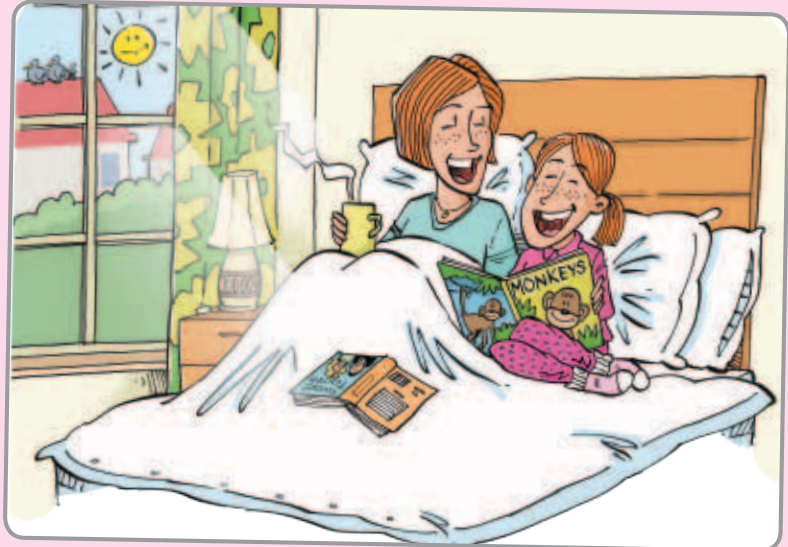
Answers/Antwoorde: Gogo, Bella, Josh, Noodle, Neo, Hope, Mbali

Spot the difference!

Can you find 8 differences between these two pictures?

Soek die verskille!

Kan julle 8 verskille tussen hierdie twee prente vind?



Create your own cut-out-and-keep book

1. Take out pages 3 to 8 of this supplement. Keep the pages together.
2. Fold them in half along the black dotted line.
3. Fold them in half again.
4. Cut along the red dotted lines.

Maak jou eie knip-uit-en-bêreboekie

1. Haal bladsye 3 tot 8 van hierdie bylae uit. Hou die bladsye by mekaar.
2. Vou dit op die swart stippellyn.
3. Vou dit weer in die helfte.
4. Knip dit uit op die rooi stippellyne.



In your next Nal'ibali supplement:

- How playing helps children's literacy development
- Your story: our readers' own writing
- A cut-out-and-keep book, *Touch*
- To celebrate the storyteller Aesop's birthday, a new Story Corner story, *The boy and the jackal*

Looking for activities for your children? Visit the "Resource" section at www.nalibali.org for printables such as bookmarks, cards and postcards.



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In jou volgende Nal'ibali-bylae:

- Hoe kinders se geletterdheid ontwikkel deur te speel
- Jou storie: ons lesers se eie skryfwerk
- 'n Knip-uit-en-bêreboekie, *Dis my liggaam*
- Om die storieverteller Esopus se verjaardag te vier, is daar 'n nuwe storie in die Storiehoekie, *Die seun en die jakkals*

Op soek na aktiwiteite vir jou kinders? Besoek die "Resource"-afdeling by www.nalibali.org vir dinge om uit te druk, soos boekmerke, kaartjies en poskaarte.

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Daily Dispatch

The Herald

Sunday Times

Sunday World



Hy is baie verbaas toe hy opkyk en al die verskillende diere wat by die rivier woon, daar sien. (Leewrik is ook daar.) Hulle het geluister hoe hy sing. Verkleurmannetjie glimlag skaam, en weet glad nie wat om te sê nie.

Die diere skree: "Moenie ophou nie! Sing weer! Ons is mal oor jou liedjie!"

Dit voel vir Verkleurmannetjie net te wonderlik. Die diere wat hom altyd so sleggesê het, glimlag nou vir hom.

Verkleurmannetjie tel sy musiekinstrument op en sing weer sy liedjie:

"Hulle sê ek is lelik, Almal stem saam dit is waar, Maar wanneer ek my liedjie sing, Maak ek pragtige musiek – He, he!"

Hy sing die liedjie oor en oor, en sy hart is baie bly. Hy voel asof vir die eerste keer in sy lewe asof hy maats het. Hy voel asof hy iewers tuishoort.



He looked around and was surprised to see all the different creatures of the river community. (Lark was there too.) They had been listening to him singing. Chameleon smiled shyly, not knowing what to say.

They shouted, "Don't stop! Sing it again! We love your song!"

What a wonderful change. The same creatures that used to criticise him, were smiling at him. Chameleon picked up his instrument and began again:

"They say that I am ugly, Everyone agrees with this, But when I sing my song, I can do this thing called music – Heh, heh!"

On and on he sang, enjoying himself. For the first time ever, he felt as if he had friends. He felt he belonged somewhere.



The singing chameleon is from the SONGOLOLO list – a range of books celebrating both the common and diverse interests and experiences in childhood, featuring stories from Africa and beyond.

Shuter & Shooter Publishers acquired the award-winning children's picture book imprint, SONGOLOLO in 2008. SONGOLOLO is a quality list, featuring books by some of South Africa's foremost authors and illustrators, including Niki Daly, Gcina Mhlophe, Joan Rankin and Jude Daly. The list features several bestsellers, including Niki Daly's *Mama, Papa and Baby Joe*, and Joan Rankin's *Wow! It's Great Being a Duck* and other numerous award-winning titles. For further information, visit www.shuters.com



The singing chameleon

A traditional story from Malawi

Die singende verkleurmannetjie

'n Tradisionele verhaal uit Malawi



Gcina Mhlophe
Kalle Becker

Nal'ibali is a national reading-for-enjoyment campaign to spark children's potential through storytelling and reading. For more information, visit www.nalibali.org or www.nalibali.mobi



Nal'ibali is 'n nasionale lees-vir-genot veldtog wat kinders se potensiaal help ontwikkel deur middel van lees en die vertel van stories. Vir meer inligting, besoek www.nalibali.org, of www.nalibali.mobi





For days and days, Chameleon tried to make music. Finally he began to sing a song he had made up:

*"They say that I am ugly
Everyone agrees with this
But when I sing my song,
I can do this thing called music -
Heh, heh!"*

Excitedly he sang this song over and over again. He couldn't believe that he could compose a song! Louder and louder he sang. When he finally stopped to take a break, he heard the sound of clapping.

Verkleurmannetjie probeer dae lank om 'n wysie te speel. Uiteindelik sing hy 'n liedjie wat hy self uitgedink het:

*"Hulle sê ek is lelik,
Almal stem saam dit is waar,
Maar wanneer ek my liedjie sing,
Maak ek pragtige musiek - He, he!"*

Hy raak so opgewonde dat hy die liedjie oor en oor sing. Hy kan nie glo dat hy 'n liedjie geskryf het nie! Hy sing al hoe harder. Toe hy uiteindelik ophou sing om 'n bietjie te rus, hoor hy die applous.



A very long time ago there was a big river in which there lived a great many animals. There were crocodiles, hippopotami, water buck, ducks, crabs, birds, fish of all kinds and frogs of all sizes. The animals were happy and most of them were really good friends. But there was one animal they all criticised.

The animals were always saying to the chameleon, "Chameleon, you are so ugly!"

The proud hippo said, "Because of you, this river is no longer beautiful."



Lank, lank gelede was daar 'n groot rivier waar baie verskillende diere gewoon het. Daar was krokodille, seekoeie, waterbokke, eende, krappe, voëls, allerhande visse en 'n klomp paddas - grotes en kleintjies. Die diere was baie gelukkig en die meeste van hulle was sommer groot maats. Maar daar was een dier vir wie almal sleggesê het.

Die diere sê elke dag vir die verkleurmannetjie: "Ai, Verkleurmannetjie, jy is darem baie lelik!"

Die trotse seekoei sê: "Dis jou skuld dat die rivier nie meer mooi is nie."



Just then the river otter came up to Chameleon and said, "Oh, you're just the one I've been looking for. I desperately need your help. There's a village nearby which is being tortured by Python. This snake has been eating young calves and goats, and torturing the children. The villagers can't work in their fields. They don't know what to do so they have locked themselves in their homes. Even the chief is powerless. Please come and help!"

Chameleon looked puzzled and asked, "Me? Help with a python? How could I do anything like that?"

"Of course you can help," said Otter.

"Please understand," said Chameleon. "I have just learned to play a song. That's all."

But Otter insisted, "There is a lot you can do with your music! Let me take you to the village where you can sing for the people. It'll help them to forget how terrible life is right now."

"Alright, I'll try," said Chameleon, remembering his promise to the old man.

At last Chameleon felt beautiful and special. He had found a home where the animals and people loved and appreciated him. He lived happily in the village by the waterfall and his music brought joy to all those who heard him sing.



Uiteindelik voel Verkleurmannetjie mooi en spesiaal. Hy het nou 'n tuiste waar die diere en die mense hom liefhet en hom waardeer. Hy woon baie gelukkig in die dorp by die waterval en sy musiek maak almal wat dit hoor baie gelukkig.

“Verstaan my mooi,” se Verkleurmannetjie, “ek het net geleer om ‘n liedjie te speel. Dis al.”

Maar Otter luister nie na hom nie. “Jou musiek kan bate doen om te help! Kom ek neem jou na die dorpie toe, dan kan jy vir die mense sing. Dit sal hulle help om te vergeet hoe swaar hulle op die oomblik kry.”

“Nou goed, ek sal probeer,” se Verkleurmannetjie, want hy onthou wat hy die ou man belowe het.



Net toe kom die otter na Verkleurmannetjie toe en se: “O, jy is net die een na wie ek soek. Ek het jou hulp nodig. Daar is ‘n dorpie hier naby wat bate swaarkry onder Luislang. Die slang eet hulle jong kalwers en bokke, en maak die kinders bang. Die mense in die dorp kan glad nie meer in hulle landerye werk nie. Hulle weet nie wat om te doen nie. Hulle kruip in hulle huise weg en sluit die deure. Selfs die hooftman weet nie wat om te doen nie. Kom help hulle, asseblief!”

Verkleurmannetjie verstaan nie mooi nie. “Ek? Help met ‘n Luislang? Wat kan ek doen?”

“Natuurlik kan jy help,” se Otter.

Fold

Verkleurmannetjie bedank die ou man en belooft om sy bes te doen. Stadig – maar nou nog stadiger as gewoonlik, want hy dra die *imbengwe* – krimp Verkleurmannetjie terug na die rivier. Toe hy weer in sy wegkruipplek is, neem hy die instrument en stilleltjies probeer hy oor en oor om daarop te speel.

Almal by die rivier is besig. Die paddas kwaak, die voëls fladder rond en die seekoei gaap met ‘n groot lawaai. Niemand hoor die verkleurmannetjie nie. Hulle dink nie eens daaraan om hom te soek nie.



Chameleon thanked the old man and promised to do his best. Again, slowly – but now even more slowly because he was carrying the *imbengwe* – Chameleon made his way back to the river. In his hiding place, he took out his instrument and quietly tried to play it over and over again.

The river was busy. The frogs croaked loudly, the birds fluttered about and the hippopotami yawned loudly. Nobody heard the chameleon. They didn’t even think to look for him.

The chief was so impressed by this brave little creature that he made the chameleon a special symbol of good luck and good fortune in his village. He asked a well-respected sculptor to make him a walking stick with the head of a chameleon carved at the top and, at the entrance to his home, he had chameleons carved on the tops of the gate posts. For many years after that the villagers honoured chameleons as a sign of good luck. They believed that you would attract good fortune if you had something carved in the shape of a chameleon in your home.

Verkleurmannetjie se dapperheid maak so ‘n indruk op die hoofman dat hy besluit dat ‘n verkleurmannetjie van nou af die simbool van geluk en voorspoed in sy dorpie sal wees. Hy vra ‘n bekende beeldhouer om vir hom ‘n kiere te maak met ‘n verkleurmannetjie se kop as die handvatsel. By sy huis laat hy verkleurmannetjies op die bopunte van die hekpale uitkerf. Die mense van die dorp vereer verkleurmannetjies vir baie jare as ‘n teken van geluk en voorspoed. Hulle glo dat as daar by jou huis iets is wat in die vorm van ‘n verkleurmannetjie gekerf is, dit vir jou geluk en voorspoed sal bring.



“What’s wrong with your eyes, anyway?” questioned Bull Frog. “They’re always looking forwards, looking backwards, looking everywhere.”

And Crocodile criticised, “Why can’t you decide what you want to look like? Precisely *what* colour are you? Are you green or brown or yellow? Which is it?”

Together they shouted, “You’re so ugly! You’re a disgrace to the river community!”

How very unkind they were.

Eventually Chameleon began to believe their cruel words. He tried to hide and to be as quiet as he could so that no one would notice him.

“En wat makeer jou oë?” vra Brulpadda. “Hulle draai eers vorentoe, dan agtertoe en partykeer sommer al in die rondte.”

Krokodil kritiseer ook: “Hoekom kan jy nie besluit hoe jy wil lyk nie? Watter kleur is jy nou eintlik? Is jy groen of bruin of geel? Besluit nou watter een.”

En dan skree hulle almal saam: “Jy is so lelik! Jy steek almal hier by die rivier in die skande!”

Dit was baie wreed van hulle.

Verkleurmannetjie glo later hierdie wrede woorde. Hy probeer wegkruip en doodstil sit sodat niemand hom sal raaksien nie.



Fold

“Hoe kan ek vir jou dankie sê?” vra Verkleurmannetjie. “As jy goed speel, is dit dankie genoeg,” antwoord die ou man. “Wie weet, as jy mooi musiek maak, kom luister ek dalk eendag wanneer jy langs die rivier speel. Musiek kan baie harte bly maak. As jy dit regkry, sal dit my baie gelukkig maak.”

Die ou man lag. “He-he-he. O, jy wil hê ek moet vir jou ’n musiekinstrument maak. Wel, ek het eenkeer vir ’n kind een gemaak, maar dit was te klein. Ek dink dit is miskien net die regte grootte vir jou.”

Hy gee die *imbengwe* vir Verkleurmannetjie en wys hom hoe om dit vas te hou en dit te bespeel. Stadij-stadig – soos altyd – probeer Verkleurmannetjie die instrument speel. Hy probeer oor en oor. Die ou man is vriendelik en geduldig. “Ontspan!” sê hy. “Jy sal sien, kort voor lank speel jy baie goed.”

“The only way to repay me is by playing well,” answered the old man. “If you play well, who knows, one day I might come and listen to you playing at the river. Music can bring joy to many hearts. I’d feel good if you did that.”

“How will I ever repay you?” asked Chameleon. “The old man was kind and patient. ‘Relax!’ he said. ‘You’ll be making great music in no time.’”

– as was his way – Chameleon tried to play. Again and again he tried. He gave the *imbengwe* to Chameleon and showed him how to hold it and play it. Ever so slowly Chameleon and showed him how right size for you.”



Chameleon would sit sadly in his hiding place waiting for flies and other flying insects to come past. Even though he moved slowly, when he wanted to grab an insect, his tongue was like lightning, striking out – TACK!

Watching him, Frog said, “That makes you even more disgusting!”

“You should talk!” thought Chameleon. “You also like flies and mosquitoes.”

For a long time Chameleon lived like this. He was so sad. Most days he just wished he could travel far away from the river.

Then, one day, as Chameleon was sitting close to the water’s edge looking at his reflection, he saw a bird.

Verkleurmannetjie sit heeldag suutjies in sy wegwakruipplek. Hy wag dat die vlieë en ander vlieënde insekte verbyvlieg. Hy beweeg baie stadig, maar as hy ’n insek wil vang, skiet sy tong soos blits uit sy mond – NJAP!

Padda hou hom dop. “Sies! Dit maak jou eintlik nog viesliker!”

“Kyk wie praat!” dink Verkleurmannetjie. “Jy hou ook van vlieë en muskiete.”

Verkleurmannetjie hou hom vir ’n lang tyd so eenkant. Hy voel baie hartseer. Hy wens amper elke dag dat hy ver van die rivier af kan wegtrek.

Op ’n dag, toe Verkleurmannetjie na sy weerkaatsing in die rivier staar, sien hy ’n voël.



Fold

6

Verkleurmannetjie stem saam. “Ek sing al die hele oggend. Ek moet iets te ete kry.”

“Moenie bang wees nie!” sê Otter. “Die brug sal hou. Mense gebruik rankplante en dik toue gemaak, en lyk maar baie wankelrig. baie gereën en die waterval dreun en raas. Die brug is van lang waterval. Hulle moet dit oorstek om by die dorpie te kom. Dit het sy peis vas. Hulle stap nogal ver. Uiteindelik kom hulle by ’n groot Otter loop so vinnig as wat hy kan. Verkleurmannetjie klon styf aan “Alle sukses, singende Verkleurmannetjie! Ons hoop dit gaan goed!”

Chameleon agreed, “I’ve been singing all morning. I need something here all the time. But let’s have a break now. I’m hungry.”

“Don’t worry!” said Otter. “It’s strong enough. Human beings cross made of long creepers and thick ropes, was wobbly. thundering waterfall that they had to cross to get to the village. The waterfall was wild after the big rains, and the bridge, which was



Finally they got to a travelled for some time. tightly to his fur. They Chameleon held on as he could while Otter walked as fast singing Chameleon! Go well!”

People slowly came out of their homes. They looked at each other wondering whether they had heard correctly.

“What are you talking about?” demanded the chief.

“I am telling you the truth,” said Otter. “Python is dead. He has been killed by my good friend here, Chameleon!”



The chief couldn’t believe it. Nobody could. So Otter said, “Come with us. We’ll show you!”

The friends took the villagers to the waterfall and they told them the whole story exactly as it had happened. The villagers were so happy! They wanted to hear the song that had crept into Python’s heart and led him to his death. Everyone sat at the waterfall listening to Chameleon sing his lovely song, and when he had finished, they cheered.

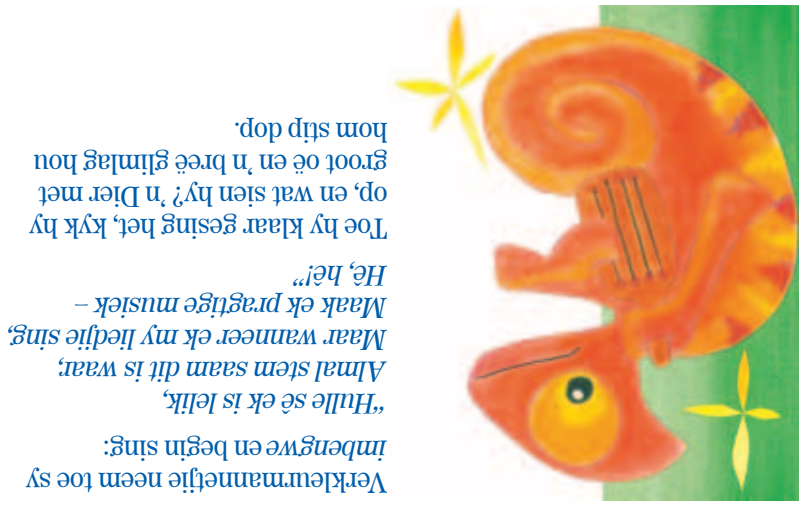
Mense kom stadig en versigtig uit hul huise. Hulle kyk na mekaar en wonder of hulle reg gehoor het.

“Waarvan praat jy, Otter?” vra die hoofman.

“Dis die waarheid,” antwoord Otter. “Luislang is dood. Verkleurmannetjie, my goeie vriend hier langs my, het hom doodgemaak!”

Die hoofman kan dit nie glo nie. Niemand kan dit glo nie. “Nou maar goed,” sê Otter, “kom saam, dan wys ons vir julle!”

Die twee maats neem die dorpsmense na die waterval en vertel vir hulle die hele storie, presies net soos dit gebeur het. Die dorpsmense is baie bly! Nou wil hulle ook die liedjie hoor wat so in Luislang se hart ingekruip het en hom uiteindelik sy lewe gekos het. Almal sit by die waterval en luister hoe Verkleurmannetjie sy liedjie sing. Toe hy klaar is, klap almal hande.



Verkleurmannetjie neem toe sy
imbengwe en begin sing:
"Hulle sê ek is lelik,
Almal stem saam dit is waar,
Maar wanneer ek my liedjie sing,
Maak ek pragtige musiek -
Hé, hé!"
Toe hy klaar gesing het, kyk hy
op, en wat sien hy? 'n Dier met
groot oë en 'n breë glimlag hou
hom stip dop.

Dit is 'n perfekte plek vir 'n verkleurmannetjie. Daar is so baie
insekte om te eet. Die twee maats eet eers, en rus toe 'n bietjie.
Net toe hy amper insluimer, dink Verkleurmannetjie weer aan
die luislang.

"Miskien moet ek weer my liedjie sing. Ek kan nie aan die slaap raak
nie. Sê nou die luislang kom hier aan?"
When he reached the end of the song, he looked up. A creature with
big eyes and a broad smile was staring at him.

"They say that I am ugly
Everyone agrees with this
But when I sing my song,
I can do this thing called music - Heh, heh!"
So Chameleon took his *imbengwe* and began to sing:
"Maybe I should play my music. I can't fall asleep. What if the python
shows up?"
Chameleon to eat. The two friends ate and rested. Chameleon was
just dozing off when he thought about the python.

And Python? Python had eaten a whole calf that morning and so his stomach was very full. Down into the water he fell - CRASH! Rocks fell on him and Python eventually drowned in the deep pool at the bottom of the waterfall.

Chameleon and Otter cheered, "Yebo! Everybody come out! We have good news! Chameleon has killed the python!"



En Luislang? Luislang het net daardie oggend 'n hele kalf opgevreet en sy maag is dus baie vol. Hy val in die water - KABOEM! Daar val rotse bo-op hom en uiteindelik verdrink Luislang in die diep poel onder die waterval.

Verkleurmannetjie en Otter skree kliphard:
"Yebo! Kom almal, kom hier! Ons het goeie nuus!
Verkleurmannetjie het die luislang doodgemaak!"

Verkleurmannetjie sê: "Ek is
jammer om te pla. Ek weet jy
doen baie goeie werk en jy
is besig, maar jy moet my
asseblief help."
Die ou man glimlag
vriendelik. "Jy pla my
glad nie. Wat kan ek vir
jou doen?"
"Kan jy asseblief vir my 'n
musiekinstrument maak?"
"Miskien 'n *imbengwe*?
Ek wil graag leer om een te
speel. Miskien kan jy vir my
lesse gee."

When he reached the old man's house, he pushed the door
open quietly and crept inside. The old man turned around as if
he sensed someone was there.
Chameleon said, "I'm sorry to disturb you. I know you do very
good work and you're busy but I need your help."
The old man smiled kindly, "You're not disturbing me. What
can I do for you?"
"Please could you make me a musical instrument?" asked
Chameleon. "Perhaps an *imbengwe*? I'd like to learn to play.
Maybe you could teach me."
Toe hy by die ou man se huis kom, stoot hy die deur sagtes
oop en krimp binnetoe. Die ou man draai om asof hy kan voel
iemand is daar.

Lark came flying down and landed on the rock right next to him. He drank some water and started singing a lovely song. He hadn't even noticed Chameleon who had camouflaged himself so well.

Chameleon surprised Lark, "Ah, you're so lucky to be able to fly wherever you want and to be able to sing so beautifully. Look at me. Everyone says I'm ugly. Nobody likes me."

Lark looked at Chameleon and then he said, "Who told you that? You are not at all ugly!"



Leeurik vlieg af en land op die klip reg langs Verkleurmannetjie. Leeurik drink 'n bietjie water en begin dan 'n pragtige lied sing. Verkleurmannetjie het homself so goed gekamoufler dat Leeurik hom nie eens raaksien nie.

Leeurik skrik baie groot toe Verkleurmannetjie skielik praat: "Ai, jy is baie gelukkig dat jy kan vlieg waar jy wil en so mooi kan sing. Kyk hoe lyk ek. Almal sê ek is lelik. Niemand hou van my nie."

Leeurik kyk na Verkleurmannetjie en toe vra hy: "Wie het vir jou dit gesê? Jy is glad nie lelik nie!"



“Elke lewe dier wat hier by die rivier woon, sê ek is lelik,” antwoord Verkleurmanneljie. “Weet jy wat? As jy so was glo dat jy lelik is, doen dan iets sodat die ander jou in ’n nuwe lig sal sien. Hoekom verras jy hulle nie? Leer sing!” stel Leurik voor. Toe vlieg hy stierlik weg terwyl hy vrolik sing.

“Miskien kan ek leer sing,” dink Verkleurmanneljie. “Maar ek dink nie ek het al ooit van ’n singende verkleurmanneljie gehoor nie.”

Hy dink baie ure lank hieroor na. Skielik glimlag hy en sê: “Miskien kan ek leer om ’n musikinstrument te speel.”

Met die gedagte in sy kop, krimp hy stadig na die huis van ’n ou man wat musikinstrumente maak. Die man maak allerhande instrumente, maar hy is veral beroemd vir sy *imbengwe’s* – ’n instrument wat uit ’n plat stuk hout gemaak word met lang snare wat aan die bopunt vasgemaak word.

“Every single animal here at the river says I’m ugly,” answered Chameleon.

“You know what? If you believe you’re ugly, then do something that will make others see you differently. Why don’t you surprise them and learn to sing?” suggested Lark before he swooped off into the sky, singing merrily.

“Maybe I *could* learn to sing,” thought Chameleon. “Hmm, I don’t think I’ve ever heard of a singing chameleon before.”

He thought about this for many hours and then suddenly smiled to himself and said, “Maybe I could learn to play a musical instrument.”

With this in mind, he crawled slowly to the house of an old man who was an instrument maker. He made all kinds of musical instruments but he was particularly famous for the *imbengwe*, an instrument made of flat wood with long strings tied at the top of its neck.



It was the python! He seemed hypnotised by Chameleon’s song. “Oh, please don’t stop!” pleaded Python. “That was amazing. Your beautiful voice makes my heart swell with joy. What a song!”

Chameleon wasn’t sure what to do, but he thought, “If I don’t sing, he’ll eat me up!”

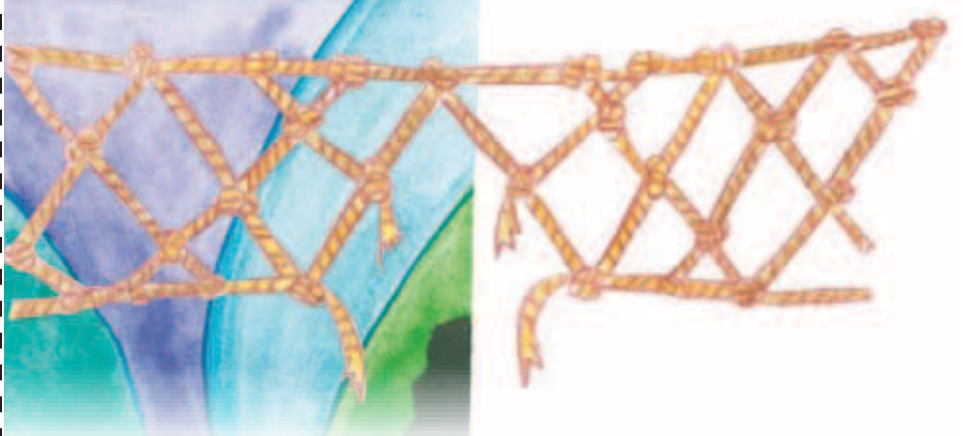
Quickly and with shaking hands, he took his instrument out and began to sing again. On and on he sang until he had an idea.

Dis die luislang! Dit lyk asof Verkleurmanneljie se lied die slang gehipnotiseer het.

“Moet asseblief nie ophou nie!” smeek Luislang. “Dit was wonderlik. Jou stem is pragtig. Dit maak my hart so bly. Wat ’n pragtige lied!”

Verkleurmanneljie is nie seker wat hy moet doen nie, maar hy dink: “As ek nie sing nie, gaan hy my opvreet!”

Sy hande bewe, maar hy haal gou sy *imbengwe* uit en begin weer sing. Hy sing oor en oor, totdat hy ’n slim plan kry.



Still singing and playing, Chameleon began to walk backwards towards the bridge as if to cross it. Python followed him, his eyes rolling and shining just as if he was in love. He swayed from side to side, moving to the beat of the song. Chameleon kept singing and walking backwards very slowly. Python kept following him with his smiling lovey-dovey eyes, getting closer and closer all the time.

Chameleon had almost reached the other side of the bridge when suddenly he felt it beginning to snap. He realised he was in danger.

Out of nowhere, Otter grabbed Chameleon and pulled his friend to safety.

Verkleurmanneljie hou aan met sing en speel, maar loop terselfdertyd agteruit na die brug asof hy dit wil oorsteek. Luislang volg hom. Sy oë rol en blink asof hy smoorverlief is. Hy wieg heen en weer op die maat van die musiek. Verkleurmanneljie sing die lied oor en oor terwyl hy baie stadig agteruit loop. Luislang met sy smeulende oë loop agter hom aan en kom al hoe nader.

Toe Verkleurmanneljie amper aan die ander kant van die brug is, voel hy hoe party van die toue en rankplante begin breek. Hy weet hy is in gevaar.

Skielik verskyn Otter uit die bloute, gryp Verkleurmanneljie en trek hom veilig tot op die wal.