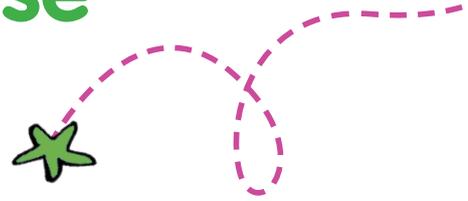


Momma Moeng's surprise

Story by Joan Rankin

Illustrations by Tamsin and Natalie Hinrichsen



It all started when Momma Moeng made a jar of jam for Gogo Moeng's birthday. Then Baby Beka found his best blue balloon. He wanted to give it to Gogo for her birthday.

Momma tied Baby Beka to her back with a soft blanket. Then she put the jar of jam on her head and off she marched to Gogo Moeng's house.

Baby Beka's balloon went *bobbity-bob* and Momma's slippers went *pliff-ploff, pliff-ploff* down the dusty path until she met Siphon coming out of the Tip-Top shop. "Where are you going, Momma Moeng?" asked Siphon.

"Baby Beka and I are going to Gogo Moeng's house. It's her birthday today," replied Momma.

"I've got a packet of crispy potato chips for Gogo Moeng. Can I come too?" asked Siphon.

"Of course," Momma smiled and off they marched.

Siphon's packet of crispy potato chips went *crinkle-crinkle*, Baby Beka's balloon went *bobbity-bob* and Momma's slippers went *pliff-ploff, pliff-ploff* down the dusty path until they came to Mr Chapalala, who was feeding his chickens.

"Where are you going?" he asked.

"We're going to Gogo Moeng's house. It's her birthday," answered Momma.

"I've got a chubby chicken for Gogo Moeng. Can you give it to her?" asked Mr Chapalala.

"Of course," said Momma tucking the chubby chicken under her arm and off marched Momma, Baby Beka and Siphon.

The chubby chicken went *chuk-chuk-chook, chuk-chuk-chook*, the packet of crispy potato chips went *crinkle-crinkle*, Baby

Beka's balloon went *bobbity-bob* and Momma's slippers went *pliff-ploff, pliff-ploff* down the dusty path until they came to Mrs Makabelo's home-bake shop.



“We must get a birthday cake for Gogo,” said Momma. They went inside. *Ting-a-ling* went the doorbell. “Good morning, Mrs Makabelo. Did you know today is Gogo Moeng’s birthday?”

“Oh yes,” said Mrs Makabelo. “I have baked a special cake for her, but I can’t leave the shop. Could you take it to her?”

“Of course,” offered Momma, but there was a problem – Momma needed two hands to carry the cake. So, she made a plan. She put the chubby chicken on top of the jar of jam that she was carrying on her head. Now she had two hands to carry the special birthday cake. Off marched Momma, Baby Beka and Sipho through the *ting-a-ling* door.

When Baby Beka smelt the cake he mumbled, “Nummy, nummy, num-num.”

The chubby chicken went *chuk-chuk-chook, chuk-chuk-chook*, the packet of crispy potato chips went *crinkle-crinkle*, Baby Beka’s balloon went *bobbity-bob* and Momma’s slippers

went *pliff-ploff, pliff-ploff* down the dusty path until they met Valecia.

“Where is everyone going?” asked Valecia.

“We’re going to Gogo Moeng’s house. It is her birthday,” explained Siphho.

“I’ve got a bunch of flowers for Gogo Moeng. Can I come too?” asked Valecia.

“Of course,” said Momma and off they marched.

The bunch of flowers made Valecia sneeze, “*Achoo! A-A-Achooooo!*”

The chubby chicken went *chuk-chuk-chook, chuk-chuk-chook*, the packet of crispy potato chips went *crinkle-crinkle*, Baby Beka’s balloon went *bobbity-bob* and Momma’s slippers went *pliff-ploff, pliff-ploff* down the dusty path until they saw Mr Sithole digging in his vegetable garden.

“Where are you all going, Momma Moeng?” Mr Sithole asked.

“We’re going to Gogo Moeng’s house. It’s her birthday,” she replied.

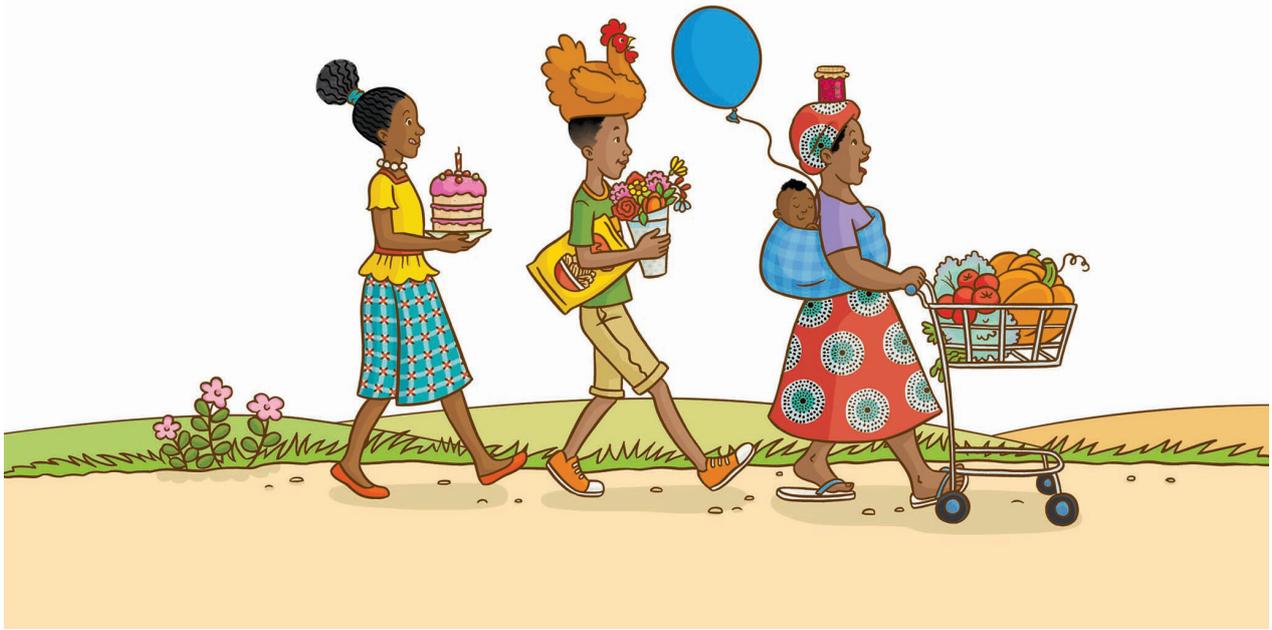
“I have a trolley full of vegetables for her,” said Mr Sithole. “Please could you give it to her?”

“Of course,” answered Momma.

But now Momma had a BIG problem – there was too much to carry! She had to think of a plan.

First, she took Baby Beka off her back and then tied the chubby chicken onto her back with the soft blanket. Baby Beka **SCREAAAAMED!**

So Momma put the chubby chicken on top of the trolley and tied Baby Beka onto her back with the soft blanket. Baby Beka was happy and the chubby chicken was very happy to peck at all the vegetables. But Momma wasn’t happy with this so she put the chubby chicken on Valecia’s head. The feathers tickled Valecia’s nose and made her sneeze even more, “**AAAAA-CHOOOOO!**”



Valecia wasn't happy. So, Momma took the chubby chicken and put it on Sipho's head and she gave him Valecia's flowers to hold. Now Valecia had two hands free to hold the cake. And Momma had two hands free to push the trolley. Everyone was happy and off they marched to Gogo Moeng's house.

The wheels of the trolley went *squeak-squeak-squeak*. Valecia had icing from the cake on her cheeks so her tongue went *slurp-slurp-slurp*. Baby Beka mumbled, "Nummy, nummy, num-num." The chubby chicken went *chuk-chuk-chook, chuk-chuk-chook*, the packet of crispy potato chips went *crinkle-crinkle*, Baby Beka's balloon went *bobbity-bob* and Momma's slipplops went *pliff-ploff, pliff-ploff* down the dusty path all the way to Gogo's house.

Momma knocked on the front door. Sipho whistled. Valecia shouted. But there was NO REPLY. Momma pushed the front door open and they all went inside. But there was NO ONE THERE. They looked in the kitchen – NOBODY. They looked in the bedroom – NOBODY. They looked everywhere. Where could Gogo be?

Momma said, "Let's get cooking and maybe Gogo will turn up." So that is what everyone did – everyone except Baby Beka. He sat on the kitchen counter next to the window and watched

until he saw Gogo walking way down the path at the very bottom of the steep hill.

“Gogo! Gogo!” he called. Everyone looked.

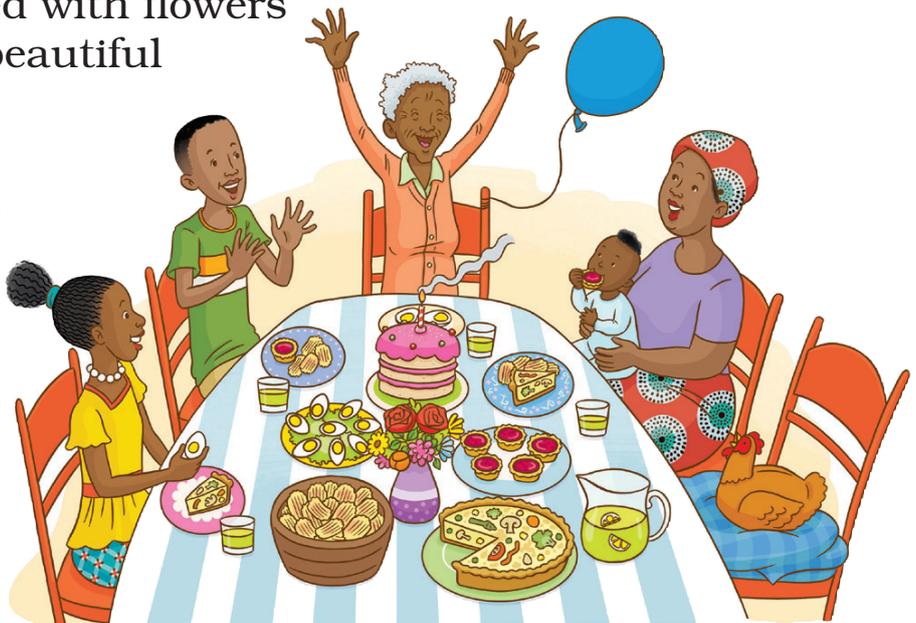
“GOGO! GOGO!” everyone shouted together. “GOGO!”

Way down at the bottom of the steep hill Gogo said, “EE EE. Someone is calling me. Now I can’t go to the shops to buy my birthday supper.”

Gogo turned round and walked all the way up the steep hill. Her slippers went *shuffle-shuffle* on the dusty path. Finally she reached the back door. When she opened it everyone started singing a happy-birthday song.

On the table were the vegetable pie and jam tarts that Momma had made, newly laid eggs from the chubby chicken, the special birthday cake and the crispy potato chips. The table was decorated with flowers and Baby Beka’s beautiful blue balloon.

“THIS IS MY BEST BIRTHDAY EVER!” said Gogo. And she should know, because Gogo had already had at least eighty or ninety birthdays before this one!



GET CREATIVE!

- Write a list of all the things that the people in the story gave to make Gogo’s birthday celebration special. Now add three things that you would like to have given Gogo if you had visited her on her birthday.



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Visual

Choose a part of the story that does not have an illustration and draw a picture for it. Copy out the words of the story that go with your picture or ask someone to help you do this. Attach the story text to the bottom of your picture.



Reading

Read the story aloud concentrating on how you say the sound words like *pliff-ploff*, *bobbity-bob* and *ting-a-ling*. Add body actions to go with the sound words as you say them. If you need someone to read the story to you, then join in when they say the sound words.



Writing

Write a list of all the things that the people in the story gave to make Gogo's birthday celebration special. Now add three things that you would like to have given Gogo if you had visited her on her birthday.



Craft

Make a birthday card for a friend or family member who will be celebrating their birthday soon.

Performance

Look at the picture of Valecia, Siphon and Momma on page 4. What is each of them carrying? Find objects you can use to pretend that they are what Valecia, Siphon and Momma are carrying. Try walking around as Valecia, then Siphon and then Momma while carrying these things.

