

African Themed Booklist

Here are a few African essentials for any book corner. The children may have their own favourites too.

***Bringing the Rain to Kapiti Plain* by Verna Aardema (Macmillan Children's Books, ISBN: 978-0-333351-64-9)**

Kapiti Plain is a beautifully illustrated African story-poem which adopts the repetitive structure of 'The House That Jack Built'.

***Rumble in the Jungle* by Giles Andreae and David Wojtowycz (Orchard, ISBN: 978-1-860396-60-1)**

A rhythmic, rhyming text which consists of poems about a variety of wild animals integrated within large, bold, colourful pictures depicting each one. In some cases the flow of the text follows the movement of the creature concerned, for example the snake and the chimpanzee.

***We're Going on a Lion Hunt* by David Axtell (Macmillan Children's Books, ISBN: 978-0-333741-49-8)**

This is the same basic rhyme as *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* but this time we are hunting a ferocious lion and are in Africa. Two brave girls set off to find it and there are glimpses of the animals of the plains in the pictures.

***Handa's Hen* by Eileen Browne (Walker Books Ltd, ISBN: 978-0-744598-15-5)**

A counting story with a surprise ending about Handa and her friend Akeyo, as they hunt around the village for grandmother's black hen.

***One Child, One Seed. A South African Counting Book* by Kathryn Cave and photographs by Gisele Wulfsohn (Frances Lincoln Children's Books, ISBN: 978-0-711219-10-6)**

The photographs show the lives of Nothando and her family and how they grow pumpkins in a South African village. This is a text that operates at three levels. The captions under the photographs on the left-hand page relate counting from one to ten. On the right-hand page there are details about growing and harvesting pumpkins, as well as information about daily life in this rural part of South Africa.

***Lila and the Secret of Rain* by David Conway and Jude Daly (Frances Lincoln Children's Books, ISBN: 978-1-847800-35-0)**

Lila's Kenyan village is suffering a terrible drought. When Lila hears her mother say that 'without water there can be no life', she sets out with her grandfather's help on a quest to uncover the secret of rain and so save the village. Beautiful language accompanies delicate illustrations that convey the sparseness of life and landscape.

***Hot Hippo* by Mwenye Hadithi and Adrienne Kennaway (Hodder Children's Books, ISBN: 978-0-340413-91-3)**

The pictures and text are both rich and memorable in this deceptively simple African story. Hot Hippo longs to live in the river rather than on dry land but what about the fishes? Will they be safe? When Hot Hippo opens his mouth in a wide yawn he proves that the fishes are safe – even with him in the water.

***A Twist in the Tail* by Mary Hoffman and Jan Ormerod (Frances Lincoln, ISBN: 978-0-711218-33-8)**

A collection of ten stories from around the world, featuring tricky animals who win through in the end. It includes a cumulative story from Turkey, a Nigerian story about a boastful tortoise and an Anancy Spiderman story (Caribbean).

***We All Went on Safari. A Counting Journey through Tanzania* by Laurie Krebs and Julie Cairns (Barefoot Books Ltd, ISBN: 978-1-841487-82-3)**

This is a wonderfully evocative rhyming picture book about four children going on an adventure through the Tanzanian grasslands. With their Maasai friends they spot all kinds of wildlife in their natural setting, and count them off in English and Swahili. There are beautiful illustrations, maps and extra facts as well!

***This is the Tree. A Story of the Baobab* by Miriam Moss and Adrienne Kennaway (Frances Lincoln, ISBN: 978-0-711214-91-0)**

This rhythmic poem tells of the African wildlife that lives in and around the baobab tree. More detailed facts are incorporated into a final spread where the words are displayed on the tree's leaves and branches.

***A is for Africa* by Ifeoma Onyefulu (Frances Lincoln, ISBN: 978-0-711210-29-5)**

Photographer Ifeoma Onyefulu introduces readers to her native Nigeria in this alphabet book. The whole alphabet is represented by beautiful and compelling photographs of a piece of African life providing lots and lots for readers to talk about.

***The Leopard's Drum* by Jessica Souhami (Frances Lincoln Children's Books, ISBN: 978-1-845075-06-4)**

Bright paper-cut pictures of forest animals illustrate this traditional West African folk tale. Nyame the Sky-God covets Leopard's drum and offers a reward. But although all the animals try their best only the little soft-shelled tortoise succeeds to gain the reward of a hard shell.



This booklist is taken from the Handa's Surprise Talk and Play Story Pack by Jane Bunting. Published by Yellow Door, this resource offers a wealth of activities that will help children to develop the important language skills they need to succeed as learners, readers and writers. For more information visit www.yellow-door.net or call 0845 603 5309.

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