



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
1998 Volume II: Cultures and Their Myths

Three African Trickster Myths/Tales -- Primary Style

Guide for Curriculum Unit 98.02.04
by Linda Frederick-Malanson

This four-week curriculum details three myths/tales. They are:

1. Anansi's Rescue from the River, which is an Ashanti tale (Ghana) about a spider and his sons and the origin of the moon.
2. Ijapa and Yanrinbo Swear an Oath, which is an Yoruba tale (Nigeria) about two tortoises and how they outwitted others.
3. Zomo the Rabbit, which is in the Bantu tradition (Angola, Botswana, Gabon, South Africa, Uganda, and Zimbabwe) about a hare who wishes for wisdom.

I have woven my topic through most of the various parts of the curriculum and have devised a sensible pacing chart for children. It is very teacher-friendly, as I have created teacher-ready materials ready to use. In my paper I have included an introduction, the three tales along with reading, social studies, game, language arts, mathematical and art activities and/or materials along with a comprehensive bibliography and appendix.

One week is spent on each tale using many activities. During the fourth week the children are involved in the following:

1. A review of the three tales done orally.
2. Partner choice reading.
3. Comparisons of story elements.
4. Comparisons of the Ashantis, Yorubas & Bantus.
5. Writing one's own trickster myth.
6. Game play - Oware(Ashanti)/Ayo(Yoruba)
7. A FINALE! (Art and/or dramatics)

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