

The Story of Chinye

A story from West Africa

Recommended Key Stage: KS1 and 2

Synopsis: Chinye lives with her stepmother and stepsister but they do not treat her very well. They make her do all the chores. One night Adanma, her stepmother, sends Chinye into the forest to collect water from the river. Chinye doesn't want to go but she does as she is told. While by the river she meets a strange woman who gives Chinye a task to complete. The task has the power to change Chinye's life for ever.

Part 1: Share the Story

Watch the video **Stories from the Woodshed: Chinye** or listen to the audio of Amantha Edmead telling the story.

Afterwards you may want to look at some images of water carrying gourds to see what they are made from and how they look. **Resource A:** Images of gourds

Part 2: Discuss the story

Use the questions below to begin a discussion about the story

KS1 questions	KS2 questions
- What did you think of the story? Did you enjoy it? Why/not? - What do you think the story is about? - How do you think Chinye felt about her stepmother and stepsister? How do you think they felt about her? - Think of three words to describe Chinye. Why did you choose those words? Now how would you describe Adanma or Nkechi?	- What did you think of the story? Is it like any others you've heard? - At the beginning, Chinye has nothing but by the end of the story she has everything – is the story trying to tell us something here? - How would you describe Adanma or Nkechi? Think of three words to describe both of them. Share your words with someone else and see if they have the same ones.

Part 3: Play the Story

KS1 activities	KS2 activities
Story Walk - Students stand in their own space around the room. They have each become Chinye in their own story worlds. - Read out Resource B line by line. As you read, the students use the space to mime the story.	Alphabet Retell - While retelling the story of Chinye the students try to begin each new sentence with the next letter in the alphabet. For example: A bright new day dawned. But Chinye was too busy to notice. Chinye had begun her chores while it was still dark and there was so much still to do. Dressing her stepsister, Nkechi, was her next job. Easily the job she disliked the most because Nkechi took the time to be mean to Chinye. - How far through the alphabet can students get? - Students could work in pairs or small groups to work out each new line before sharing their Alphabet Retelling with the class. If working at home, everyone could join in and create a family retelling of the story.
Kindness Challenge - Have a look around your classroom or home for a small item e.g. a drinking glass, a vase, a pencil, a pair of shoes, an odd sock, a newspaper - Think about Chinye and how she was always nice to her stepmother, stepsister and the people in the village. How could you use the item you have found to be kind to someone else? e.g. a pencil – you could use it to draw a lovely picture or write a friendly message to give as a present; an odd sock – you could find its partner and put them away, if it was a sock no one needed it could be turned into a sock puppet and a sock puppet play could be staged to entertain others. - Create something lovely from your found item to share with another person, just like Chinye.	
Metamorphosis - Think about the snake that came out of the river – it turned into a walking stick and then into an old woman with a stick. - Can you show, with your bodies, how the snake changed into those other things? - For other group or family members can you act like an animal (think about how they move, think about how they sound) then slowly and in a controlled way move and ‘change’ into a new animal. - Can the other members of the group/family guess the two animals? - To make this more of a challenge mime the animals and don’t include any sounds.	

Part 4: Story Stimulus

KS1 Activities	KS2 Activities
Into the Forest Focus on Chinye's journey through the forest. Try to imagine all the sights, sounds and smells she might experience. Write a short piece describing, in as much detail as you can, her journey	Into the Forest Focus on Chinye's journey through the forest. Try to imagine all the sights, sounds and smells she might experience. Write a short piece describing, in as much detail as you can, her journey. Use your descriptions to heighten the sense of her fear and then perform it for your family or class - how could you use your voice to make the journey sound really scary?
Nkechi's story Tell the story from the stepmother's point of view. How will our idea of Chinye change when we see the story from her point of view? Will we still feel that Chinye has been unfairly picked on? Will we see her fear at going into the forest at nighttime?	Setting a task for Chinye Send Chinye into the forest to complete a different task. Could she be sent to collect fruit or flowers for example? How might this alter the way the old lady appears to Chinye? Might it alter the item Chinye has to find in the hut?
	Adanma or Nkechi? Pick one of these two characters as your main character as you retell the story. How will the story alter now we see Chinye through their eyes? Is she someone who is picked on and made to do all the work or is she a lazy, ungrateful girl?

Part 5: Taking it Further

Similar Stories to Chinye:

Cinderella (Europe)

Little Burnt Face (North America)

Donkey Delight (Europe)

Wider Curriculum Links

KS1 PSHE

- about the roles different people (e.g. acquaintances, friends and relatives) play in our lives
- to identify the people who love and care for them and what they do to help them feel cared for
- about different types of families including those that may be different to their own
- that it is important to tell someone (such as their teacher) if something about their family makes them unhappy or worried

KS2 PSHE

- to recognise that there are different types of relationships (e.g. friendships, family relationships, romantic relationships, online relationships)
- about the importance of friendships; strategies for building positive friendships; how positive friendships support wellbeing
- what constitutes a positive healthy friendship (e.g. mutual respect, trust, truthfulness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, sharing interests and experiences, support with problems and difficulties); that the same principles apply to online friendships as to face-to-face relationships
- the importance of seeking support if feeling lonely or excluded
- that healthy friendships make people feel included; recognise when others may feel lonely or excluded; strategies for how to include them
- to recognise if a friendship (online or offline) is making them feel unsafe or uncomfortable; how to manage this and ask for support if necessary

Learning Resources

Chinye

Resource A: Images of gourds

Decorated gourds



"Y1A0832 Nairobi" by Ninara is licensed under CC BY 2.0

A selection of gourds



"Holiday Gourds 327" by TheCulinaryGeek is licensed under CC BY 2.0

A bottle gourd growing



"bottle gourd / Lagenaria siceraria by TANAKA Juuyoh is licensed under CC BY 2.0

A gourd for water



"Ue (gourd) from Cook Islands made from a gourd and sennit (coconut-husk fibre)" by D Coetzee is marked with CC0 1.0

Learning Resources

Chinye

Resource B: Story Walk Prompts

You are Chinye, your stepmother, Adanma, sends you to do all the jobs – scrub the walls, sweep the floor, cut wood, wash the clothes, dress Nkechi, style her hair, feed her.

You're tired after all those tasks and it's late at night but you still feel happy in your heart. Lie down and go to sleep.

CHINYE! Jump up, yawn and stretch then run to Adanma.

She orders you to go into the jungle at night to collect some water. You're scared and plead with Adanma not to go but she demands it.

Pick up your large water gourd and balance it on your head and set off along the path.

The winding path takes you out of the village, wave to your friends as you pass their homes.

The path takes you through the wood, the trees begin to block the moonlight, you're starting to get scared.

The winding path goes out of the wood and into the forest, there's lots of noises that make you stop and stare into the shadows, some noises make you jump in fright.

The path winds into the jungle... what's that? Jump in fright and stop... oh it's a friendly gazelle.

Continue along the path... what's that? Jump in fright and stop... oh it's a hyena who tells you of the lion

Hide behind a tree. Make yourself as small and invisible as possible. Hold your breath as the lion goes past...

Explain to the old woman why you're in the jungle. Mime your story on the spot – wag your finger like Adanma, mime picking up your gourd and walking, meeting the gazelle and hyena, mime hiding from the lion and filling your gourd with water.

Listen carefully as the old woman tells you about the sound of drums and look for the smallest, quietest drum.

Thank the old woman, pick up your gourd full of water, balance it carefully on your head and set off back to the village.

Stop, you hear the drums... follow the sound, it's very loud! Cover your ears.

Put your gourd carefully on the ground and push open the door of the hut.

Cover your ears again because it's so loud in the hut.

Now uncover your ears and close your eyes, listen for the quietest drumming sound.

Learning Resources

There! You spot it, go over and pick up the gourd. It's tiny so tuck it into your waistband.

Go out of the hut, close the door, pick up your gourd filled with water, balance it carefully on your head again and head off back home.

You've finished your tasks, go to your hut and open the tiny gourd.

WOW! Look around amazed as gold, silver, precious stones, a magical cooking pot, silks and fabrics all come streaming from the gourd.

Rush to tell your stepmother.

When Nkechi returns with the large gourd, watch in horror as all their belongings are swept away by the wind. Make sure your clothes aren't blown off, hold on to a tree so you don't get swept away.

Tyr to share all your lovely things with Adanma and Nkechi then wave them goodbye as they leave the village for good.

Let your breath out, phew! Continue along the path to the river.

Take the gourd off your head and begin to dip it into the water to fill it up.

Stop! What's that? A snake, take a large step away from the river. You're amazed as the snake turns into a walking stick and then an old woman.