

Local Stories — Reading Comprehension

MJK Educators | Printable Worksheet | An East African folktale-inspired story with questions and vocabulary activities

Name: _____

Date: _____

Before you read

Think of a time when you shared something with a friend or family member. How did it feel? Tell a partner, then read the story. Look for the **bold** words. You will learn their meanings on the next page.

Sungura and the Last Mango

Sungura the hare was clever, but he was also **greedy**. One dry season, the rains did not come and the river shrank to a **trickle**. The animals grew thin and tired. Only one tree still had fruit: a tall mango tree beside the old baobab. On its very top branch hung a single ripe mango.

Sungura saw it first. “That mango is mine,” he whispered. He jumped, but he could not reach it. He climbed, but he slipped and fell. At last he sat under the tree, **grumbling** to himself.

Ndovu the elephant came slowly down the path. “Why are you so unhappy, little friend?” he asked. “The mango is too high,” said Sungura, “but I will not share it. Not even one bite!”

Ndovu was kind. “I can reach it with my long trunk,” he said. “Then we can share it.” But Sungura folded his arms. “No! It is mine!” Ndovu walked away sadly.

That night a strong wind shook the tree. The mango fell with a thud, rolled down the hill and landed deep inside a **thorny** bush. Sungura crawled in after it, and the thorns pricked his paws and his ears. “Aiyee! Help!” he cried.

Ndovu heard him and came back at once. With his long trunk he gently lifted both Sungura and the mango out of the bush. Sungura felt **ashamed**. “Asante, rafiki,” he said softly. “You helped me even when I was unkind. Let us share the mango, and let us call the others.”

Kobe the tortoise, Ndege the bird and the little field mice came running. Ndovu cut the mango into many pieces, so that everyone had a taste. Then they planted the seed near the river. “**Harambee!**” the animals cheered. “When we pull together, everyone eats.”

Many seasons later, a new mango tree stood by the river, and its fruit was enough for all.

An original story inspired by East African folktale traditions, where clever animals such as Sungura the hare teach lessons about life.

Part A: Find it in the story

1. What happened to the river in the dry season?

2. Where was the mango growing?

3. What did Sungura say when Ndovu offered to help?

4. How did Ndovu help Sungura at the thorny bush?

Part B: Think about it

5. Why do you think Sungura felt ashamed? Use words from the story to help you.

6. Why did Ndovu help Sungura even after Sungura had been unkind? What does this tell you about Ndovu?

7. What do you think the word **harambee** means in this story? Why was it a good word to shout at the end?

Part C: Put the story in order

Write the numbers 1 to 5 in the boxes to show the order that things happened.

	What happened
_____	The animals planted the mango seed near the river.
_____	Sungura tried to jump and climb to reach the mango.
_____	The mango fell into a thorny bush.
_____	Ndovu offered to reach the mango with his trunk, but Sungura said no.
_____	Sungura said thank you and asked the others to come.

Part D: Your ideas

8. What lesson do you think Sungura learned? Do you agree with it? Why or why not?

9. Do you know a story, proverb or saying from your family or community about sharing or helping?
Tell it, or write the main idea below.

Part E: Be the storyteller

Choose one. Draw or write in the box.

- Draw the best part of the story and add a caption.
- Write a new ending where a different animal helps Sungura.
- Retell the story in your own words to a family member and write what they liked best.

My storytelling space

Vocabulary

Here are six words from the story and what they mean.

Word	What it means
greedy	wanting more than your share
trickle	a very small, slow flow of water
grumbling	complaining in a low, unhappy voice
thorny	full of sharp, pointed spikes
ashamed	feeling bad about something you did wrong
harambee	a Swahili word for pulling together to help each other

Activity 1: Fill in the gap

Choose the best word from the box for each sentence.

greedy trickle grumbling thorny ashamed harambee

- The _____ bush scratched my arm when I picked the berries.
- The village shouted “_____!” and everyone helped build the new classroom.
- After the drought, only a _____ of water ran in the stream.
- She felt _____ when she broke her sister's toy and did not say sorry.

Activity 2: Swahili words in the story

Draw a line from each Swahili word to its meaning in English.

Swahili	English
sungura	friend
ndovu	thank you
kobe	hare
asante	elephant
rafiki	tortoise

Activity 3: Use a new word

Write a sentence of your own using the word **greedy** or the word **ashamed**.

For parents and teachers

Suggested for ages 7 to 10 (CBC Grades 3 to 5; KS2 / Years 3 to 5). The story is about 350 words. For younger learners, read it aloud and answer the questions orally. For older learners, add a short written response to question 8.

How to use it

- **Read together first.** Read the story aloud, then let the learner read it again alone or with you.
- **Talk before you write.** Questions 5 to 9 work well as conversation. Spoken answers are as valuable as written ones.
- **Include home languages.** Invite learners to give the word for “thank you”, “friend” or “sharing” in the language spoken at home.
- **Invite an elder.** Ask a grandparent or neighbour to tell a story they remember, then compare it with this one.

Question types

- **Questions 1 to 4:** finding information in the text.
- **Questions 5 to 7:** working out meaning that is not stated directly (inference and vocabulary in context).
- **Questions 8 and 9:** opinion and personal connection.

Answer key (sample answers)

Question	Sample answer
1	It shrank to a trickle.
2	On the top branch of a tall mango tree beside the old baobab.
3	He said no and that the mango was his.
4	He lifted Sungura and the mango out of the bush with his trunk.
5	He had been greedy and unkind, and Ndovu still helped him. (Accept answers that give a reason from the story.)
6	He is kind, forgiving and generous; he helps even when others are unkind.
7	Pulling together to help each other. It fits because everyone shared the mango and planted the seed.
8	Open. Likely: sharing is better than being greedy, and kindness is repaid.
9	Open. Welcome stories in any language; invite an elder to tell one.
C	1 = tried to jump and climb, 2 = Ndovu offered and Sungura said no, 3 = the mango fell in the thorny bush, 4 = said thank you and asked the others to come, 5 = planted the seed near the river.
Vocab 1	1) thorny 2) harambee 3) trickle 4) ashamed
Vocab 2	sungura = hare; ndovu = elephant; kobe = tortoise; asante = thank you; rafiki = friend