



#10076  
**MUFARO'S BEAUTIFUL  
DAUGHTERS**

WESTON WOODS STUDIOS, 1988  
Grade/Interest Level: 3-5  
14 mins.



**DESCRIPTION**

Mufaro lives with his two beautiful daughters in a small African village. Manyara is ill-tempered and self-centered, while her sister Nyasha is her opposite in many ways. When the king announces he's seeking a wife, Manyara's selfishness comes to light. Kind, gentle Nyasha is chosen as queen, and her sister becomes a servant. A Cinderella-type story based on the Caldecott Honor Book by John Steptoe.

**ACADEMIC STANDARDS**

**Subject Area: Grades K-4 History—The History of Peoples of Many Cultures Around the World**

- Standard: Understands selected attributes and historical developments of societies in Africa, the Americas, Asia, and Europe
  - ♦ Benchmark: Understands the main ideas found in folktales, stories of great heroism, fables, legends, and myths from around the world that reflect the beliefs and ways of living of various cultures in times past (See INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS 1.)

**Subject Area: Behavioral Studies**

- Standard: Understands conflict, cooperation, and interdependence among individuals, groups, and institutions
  - ♦ Benchmark: Knows that disagreements are common, even between family members or friends (See INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS 2.)
- Standard: Understands that interactions among learning, inheritance, and physical development affect human behavior

## C a p t i o n e d M e d i a P r o g r a m

- ◆ Benchmark: Understands that human beings tend to repeat behaviors that feel good or have pleasant consequences and to avoid behaviors that feel bad or have unpleasant consequences (See INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS 3.)

### Subject Area: Language Arts–Reading

- Standard: Uses reading skills and strategies to understand and interpret a variety of literary texts
  - ◆ Benchmark: Uses reading skills and strategies to understand a variety of familiar literary passages and texts (e.g., fairy tales, folktales, fiction, nonfiction, legends, fables, myths, poems, nursery rhymes, picture books, predictable books) (See INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS 4.)

### INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS

1. To learn about African culture.
2. To explore relationships between people.
3. To investigate the outcomes of both positive and negative behaviors.
4. To promote the reading of children’s literature.

### VOCABULARY

- |                          |                       |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. advice                | 9. hungry             |
| 2. Africa                | 10. journey           |
| 3. arrive                | 11. kind/kindness     |
| 4. bad temper (bad mood) | 12. millet            |
| 5. beautiful             | 13. servant           |
| 6. daughter              | 14. village/villagers |
| 7. frightened            | 15. worthy            |
| 8. greed                 |                       |

### BEFORE SHOWING

1. Read the book *Mufaro’s Beautiful Daughters* by John Steptoe. Discuss:
  - a. What can you tell from the illustrations about how the people of this small African village lived?
  - b. How does life in this village seem different than ours?
  - c. What would you like most/least about living in a village like this?
2. Locate the continent of Africa on a map or globe. Talk about the climate, vegetation, and animal life.
3. Discuss feelings of jealousy and anger, especially in relationship to siblings. What can be done to resolve these feelings?

### AFTER SHOWING

#### Discussion Items and Questions

1. Where did Mufaro and his two daughters live?
2. Describe the personalities of his two daughters. Why was Manyara always in a bad temper? Was Manyara jealous of Nyasha? How did Nyasha feel about Manyara?

3. What did Nyasha find in her garden?
4. Why didn't Mufaro know about how Manyara treated Nyasha?
5. What information did the messenger bring?
6. Explain Manyara's idea about who should go to the city to meet the king. Why did she say this? What was Mufaro's response?
7. Why did Manyara leave during the night to go to the city?
8. How did Nyasha feel about going to the city with the possibility of becoming queen?
9. Describe the people and things that the two daughters met on their way to the city and what interactions they had with each of them. Discuss why Manyara and Nyasha acted the way they did in each case.
10. What did Manyara say she saw and heard in the king's chambers?
11. What did Nyasha discover when she went into the king's chambers? Why did the king choose Nyasha to be his queen?
12. Describe the wedding preparations.
13. What happened to Manyara? Discuss how Manyara might have felt to be a servant to Nyasha. What might have happened to Manyara if she had behaved differently?
14. What kind of queen will Nyasha be? What kind of queen would Manyara have been?

### Applications and Activities

1. Create an African village with a variety of materials including cardboard, construction paper, and markers. Write stories about life in the village. Share and display the stories.
2. Dramatize the story of *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters*. Use simple props (white sheets for clothing, a stick for a staff, etc.). After the drama, discuss how it felt to be the characters.
3. Role-play various situations involving jealousy and anger. Practice solving conflicts in positive ways. Present the role-plays to younger children.
4. Research and report on various aspects of African culture.
5. Invite people who are native to Africa to visit the classroom and share their knowledge of their homeland and customs.
6. Have an African Culture Day. Prepare traditional African foods. Learn some simple African dances. Assign African names and call each other by those names for the day.
7. Visit a library or museum with an African culture exhibit.

### SUMMARY

In a small African village lives a man named Mufaro and his two beautiful daughters, Manyara and Nyasha. Manyara, an ill-tempered girl, is jealous of Nyasha and vows to one day be queen and have Nyasha as her servant. Nyasha, on the other hand, is a gentle girl who works hard and is kind to animals and people alike. When the king orders that all the beautiful daughters appear so that he might select a queen, Manyara's selfish ways are revealed. Nyasha is chosen as queen and Manyara becomes a servant in the queen's household.

## CMP RELATED RESOURCES

- [Princess Furball #3071](#)
- [A Story, A Story #10044](#)
- [Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears #10106](#)
- [Who's in Rabbit's House? #10105](#)

## World Wide Web



The following Web sites complement the contents of this guide; they were selected by professionals who have experience in teaching deaf and hard of hearing students. Every effort was made to select accurate, educationally relevant, and "kid safe" sites. However, teachers should preview them before use. The U.S. Department of Education, the National Association of the Deaf, and the Captioned Media Program do not endorse the sites and are not responsible for their content.

## JOHN STEPTOE TEACHER RESOURCE

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<http://falcon.jmu.edu/~ramseyil/step toe.htm>

This Web site has a link to a biography of John Steptoe, the author of *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters* and also a link to a lesson plan for the book.



- **AFRICA: IT'S NOT A COUNTRY**

<http://teacherlink.ed.usu.edu/tlresources/units/byrnes-africa/aindex.htm>

This Web site hosts a wealth of lesson plans for teaching about Africa to early elementary age students. It includes lesson plans for daily life, wildlife, folktales, geography and environment, languages, toys and games, and many other topics. Many of the lesson plans include links to other sites on Africa.



## YOUR FEELINGS

<http://www.cyh.com/cyh/kids/main.html?l1=6>

This Web site from the Child and Youth Health agency in Australia is written for children and covers issues related to quite a number of different feelings common to children.