

Abiyoyo

by Pete Seeger

Classroom Favorites

Teacher's Guide by Vashti Ivy



A Perma-Bound Production

Notes to the Teacher

This is an South African Folktale that can be put to music. The musical rendition can be obtained on cassette. This book was also an After School reading special.

Synopsis

Once upon a time a young boy and his father were banished from their town for causing too much mischief. The young boy would play his ukelele and disturb his neighbors, and the father would cause all kinds of mischief with his magic. Why, you could be ready to enjoy a nice glass of water when "zoop" your glass would disappear. The town finally grew tired of these tricks and the boy and his father found themselves put out of the town.

One day, the sun rose blood red over the hills. That was the day that Abiyoyo came to town. Abiyoyo was one of the most feared creatures around. He caused strong men to faint and women to scream. He ate sheep whole and also cows. If he got a chance he would eat you alive. On hearing all of the commotion in the village the father said to his son, "If I could get Abiyoyo to lie down, I could make him disappear." So the father and son set out toward the town. The father with his magic wand and the son with his ukelele.

Abiyoyo was a fearsome sight, with long claws, matted hair, and unwashed feet. The little boy whipped out his ukelele and began playing a song about Abiyoyo. The giant was so surprised to hear a song about himself that he began to dance. The faster the music played the faster Abiyoyo danced. Until finally he fell down. Quick as a wink the father stepped in, "zoop," Abiyoyo disappeared. Of course the town was so thankful that the father and son were asked to return to the town. The people in the town joined in singing the new song, A-BI-YO-YO, A-BI-YO-YO, A-BI-YO-YO, BI-YO-YO, YO-YO-YO.

About the Author

Pete Seeger was born on May 13, 1919, in New York, New York. He attended Harvard University. Pete's careers include folksinging, songwriting, writing and organizing. He has been featured in "Tell Me You Love Me, Junie Moon," "To Hear My Banjo Play," "Pete Seeger: A Song and a Stone," 1972.

Pete is the author of children's songs, folk ballads, labor songs, and freedom songs, "Where Have All the Flowers Gone?" and "Turn, Turn, Turn," (with Lee Hays) "If I Had a Hammer," and (in collaboration with the Weavers) "Kisses Sweeter Than Wine."

Other Books by Pete Seeger

The Foolish Frog
The Steel Drums of Kim Loy Wong
The Bells of Rhymney
New Lost City Ramblers Song Book

Objectives

1. To introduce to the students folktales from South Africa
2. To introduce the various forms of storytelling
3. To introduce to the students music, dance, and the arts as an important tool in the survival of the human race

Meaning Study

1. Listed below are some words that appear in the story. First, see if the student can identify the definition of the word by using context clues. Then have students look up words in the dictionary and see how close they have come to the meaning.

slobery: with saliva or food spilling from the mouth
synonym: messy

ostracized: excluded or banished from a place
synonym: banished, excluded

magic wand: a wand used by magicians to complete the act of magic

staggered: (past tense of stagger) walked or stood unsteadily:
caused to reel

possessions: things one owns, some things one possesses
synonym: property

ukelele: a small, four-stringed instrument like a guitar.

magician: one skilled in magic
synonym: wizard

2. Collecting special words -

Put vocabulary words on the board. Discuss the root words and meanings with the students. Students should use their dictionaries. After looking up the meaning, have students to use the words in oral sentences.

Example: Ostracized: Root word, ostracize
Meaning: To banish from a place, or exclude

3. Finding Synonyms -

Listed below are some words from the story. Find a synonym for each of them.

slobbery (*messy, tacky*)

staggered (*swayed, weaved*)

possessions (*personal property*)

ostracized (*exclude, banish*)

Discussion Questions

1. What did the boy play that annoyed the townspeople?
(*the ukelele*)
2. What was the father's occupation?
(*a magician*)
3. What are some of the tricks that the boy's father played on the townspeople?
(*making chairs disappear as people sat down, making a glass disappear before they could get a nice cold drink of water, making the axe disappear just as they were about to cut wood*)
4. What happened to the boy and his father as a result of their music and tricks?
(*They were ostracized from the town, or sent to live on the edge of town.*)
5. Describe Abiyoyo.
(*"He was as tall as a tree, and could eat people...He had long fingernails 'cause he never cut 'em...slobbery teeth 'cause he never brushed them, stinking feet 'cause he didn't wash them, and matted hair 'cause he didn't comb it."*)
6. What happened when Abiyoyo heard a song about himself?
(*a foolish grin appeared on his face, and he started to dance, as the music became faster he danced faster, soon he was out of breath, staggered and fell down*)
7. What did the father do after the giant fell down?
(*He made Abiyoyo disappear with the wave of his magic wand*)
8. What did the townspeople do for the father and the boy?
(*They told them to return back to the town, and bring the ukelele for they didn't care anymore, about the noise or the tricks.*)

Activities

1. Have students retell the story using their own method of storytelling.
2. Create *Abiyoyo* as an operetta with the help of the Drama Department, Art Department, and Music Department.
3. With the help of the music teacher help students create a homemade band. The instruments can be made from tin cans, pie pans, cardboard boxes and other household items.
4. Using papier-mâché and balloons have students create an Abiyoyo mask.
5. Videotape students as they present their version of the story. Have students make up their own stories.

Beyond the Story

Geography

1. With a world map, help students locate South Africa.
2. Help students to find other resources of South Africa besides folktales.

Music

1. Introduce students to other folktales and have them put them to music.
2. Have a lesson on operas, musicals, ballets, and operettas.
3. Research the origin of lullabys.

TEST

Fill in the Blank

Fill in the blanks with the missing words from the story.

slobbery staggered ukelele
ostracized possessions magician
magic wand

1. The boy's father was a _____.
2. The boy and his father were _____.
3. The father had a _____.
4. "Grab your most prized _____ and run!"
5. Just then, the boy whips out his _____.
6. He had _____ teeth 'cause he didn't brush'em
7. He _____ before he fell.

Multiple Choice

Circle the best possible answer for the following.

1. The boy played the
A. piano B. flute C. ukelele.
2. Abiyoyo is a
A. giant B. town people C. monster.
3. The boy's father is a
A. magician B. farmer C. baker.
4. Abiyoyo's fingernails were long because he never
A. cleaned them B. cut them C. polished them.
5. Abiyoyo _____ when he heard the song about himself.
A. grinned B. cried C. screamed

Sequence

Put the sentences in the order that they happen in the story.

- _____ A. The giant staggered and fell to the ground
- _____ B. The boy and his father returned to the town.
- _____ C. Women screamed. Strong men fainted.
- _____ D. The boy annoyed people with his ukelele.
- _____ E. The father "zooped" a chair from under a tired person.
- _____ F. Abiyoyo came to town.
- _____ G. Abiyoyo grinned foolishly when he heard a song about himself.
- _____ H. The father "zooped," and Abiyoyo disappeared.

Short Answers

1. Describe Abiyoyo

2. What did the boy's father do to the townspeople?

ANSWER KEY

Fill in the Blanks

1. magician
2. ostracized
3. magic wand
4. possessions
5. ukelele
6. slobbery
7. staggered

Multiple Choice

1. C
2. A
3. A
4. B
5. A

Sequence

- 6 A.
- 8 B.
- 4 C.
- 1 D.
- 2 E.
- 3 F.
- 5 G.
- 7 H.

Short Answers

1. (see discussion question 5)
2. He would make things disappear: glasses of water, tools, chairs. He played too many tricks.

TEACHER'S NOTES

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