

African Folktale

Story telling is an important part of many countries around the world. You have probably read a lot of stories. Some stories are true and others are fiction. What kind of stories do you like to read? In this section, you are going to learn a lot about African folktale which is a very important part of storytelling. Many writers have written books with stories that were passed down from generation to generation. Get ready to read, learn and do some fun activities!

Here is a list of activities you will work on as you learn more about African Folktale:

- KWL Chart
- Reading Activity
- Listening Activity
- Writing Activity
- In your community

Look at the KWL Chart below. Think about what you already know about African Folktale. Write it down in the "K" column. What do you want to know about African Folktale? Write it down in the "W" column.

KWL CHART

K	W	L
What I know about African folktale	What I want to know about African folktale	What I learned about African folktale

READING ACTIVITY

Have you heard about Cinderella, Beauty and the Beast, the Princess and the Frog? You have probably read the stories or watched the movies! How about Anansi the spider? Kalulu the hare? Gudo the baboon? If not, then you are in for a great adventure. Welcome to the world of African folktales!

For centuries, Africans and their descendants have been telling stories about faraway lands and places. The stories always have animals that can talk. What is fascinating about these stories is that they have travelled from Africa to many parts of the world where Africans and descendants of Africans now live. The stories may have changed slightly but the characters and the messages and the way the stories are told is still the same.

People whose ancestors came from Africa now live in countries such as Canada, the United States, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Brazil, England, Portugal and many more.

What is special about these folktales?

1. the stories are told orally and the people listening have to sing songs
2. the stories always include animals and nature
3. the stories teach a lesson about life
4. the stories do not always have a "happily ever after" ending

Have you ever participated in such story telling?

You are now going to read about a famous character in African Folktale: Anansi, the spider! Anansi is a spider that talks, walks, eats and behaves just like people do!

Anansi the Spider

Who is Anansi?

Anansi is a character who often takes the shape of a spider and is considered to be the spirit of all knowledge of stories. Even though he is a spider, he often acts and appears as a man in the stories. He is also one of the most important characters of West African and Caribbean Folklore.

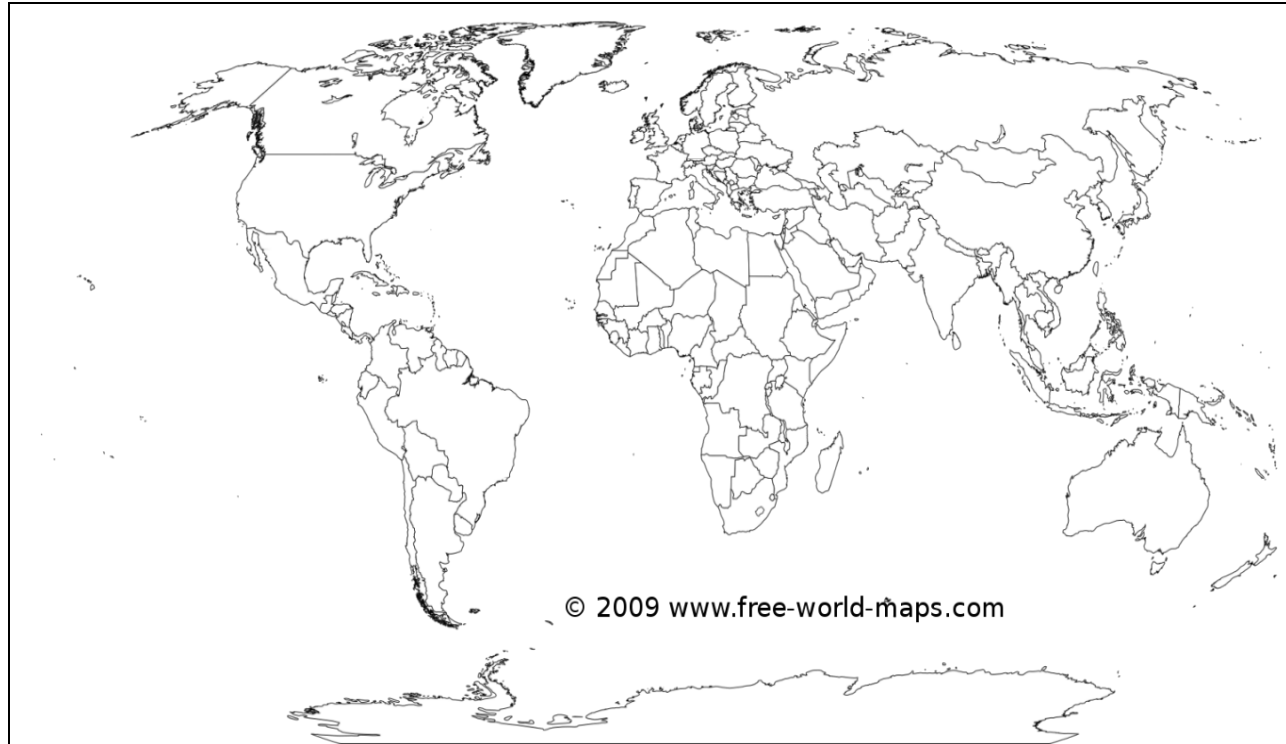
The Anansi tales started in present-day Ghana and were first told by the *Ashanti people*. The word Ananse means "spider" in the *Akan* language. The stories later spread to other groups of the Akan and then to the West Indies, Suriname, and the Netherlands Antilles.

Below are other names for Anansi in different countries around the world:

- Bru Nansi (Virgin Islands)
- Annancy or Anancy (Jamaica, Grenada, Costa Rica, Colombia, Nicaragua)
- Anansi (Trinidad and Tobago)
- Anansi Drew (The Bahamas)
- Aunt Nancy (South Carolina)
- Cha Nanzi (Aruba)
- Kompa Nanzi (Curaçao, Bonaire)
- Kwaku Anansi (Akanland)
- Ba Anansi (Suriname)
- His wife is known as Shi Maria

Activity:

We already know that Anansi the Spider is originally from West Africa but he is also found in folktales in the USA and the Caribbean. Below is a map of the world. Can you find, label and color West Africa, North America, and the Caribbean, the three regions where people tell the story of Anansi?



What does Anansi look like?

Anansi is shown in many different ways. Sometimes he looks like an ordinary spider, sometimes he is a spider wearing clothes or with a human face and sometimes he looks much more like a human with spider elements, such as eight legs.

Activity:

Here are some images of Anansi the Spider. What are some of the differences and what things are the same in all three pictures? Write them down.



Watch an Anansi short animation!

Do you know about the National Film Board of Canada? They make a lot of really cool short films and documentaries about things that matter to different Canadians and the different cultures they all come from. They even made a short film about Anansi as part of its Talespinners Collection. This is a collection of folktales from all over the world. Go online and copy this link to watch *The Magic of Anansi*: https://www.nfb.ca/film/magic_of_anansi

What do you think about Anansi? Can you write a short summary of what you watched? Use the space below to write your summary.

Read about Anansi

Here are some stories about Anansi the spider that can be found at the Edmonton Public Library. Borrow one book and read it for yourself!

1. *Anansi Goes Fishing*
2. *Anansi and the Talking Melon*
3. *Anansi's Party Time*
4. *Anansi and the Moss Covered Rock*

WRITING ACTIVITY: LET'S PLAY A GAME!

By now you will have read a story about Anansi the Spider. Here is a word puzzle from a story you can find online at the Edmonton Public Library called *Anansi and the Moss Covered Rock*. See if you can find all the words at the bottom!

Anansi and the Moss Covered Rock



Anansi

T W D K L L S D D Y P W M J P
 Z N N A L M P E B G G R A W Q
 R P A O C A I E S M E I A L O
 S A R H N S D R F G A H M H K
 W T U A P P E G I H G Y D Z G
 S L N G P E R T C Y U S B C W
 I S J L A W L N P E T N V U Q
 I Q I T H J M E K B U R G Y D
 U O B S N A K E U I N O T R F
 N R E T S K C I R T O C O S Y
 A E B L N D I H B K C K H E J
 A C I R F A M H A K O R E E D
 J U N G L E S C Q R C V C T E
 Z U L A A K P X Q S L I R Z T
 K S H V L X Z C O A P T N U Q

AFRICA
 DEER
 HOT
 JUNGLE
 SNAKE
 TIGER

ANANSI
 ELEPHANT
 HUNGRY
 LION
 SPIDER
 TRICKSTER

COCONUT
 GREED
 JAGUAR
 ROCK
 STROLL
 WALK

LISTENING ACTIVITY

Listen to an elder tell a story. (Get a story teller to tell a story that includes animals, songs, and audience participation)

Here is an example of a folktale from Senegal that you can watch on YouTube.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_detailpage&v=TeNw0hOh0hk

- Who are the main characters in the story?
- What do you think is the moral of this story?
- What did you like about the way the story was told?

IN THE COMMUNITY

Complete the table below by finding out information from the library, from your parents or elders in the community. Some book suggestions are given at the end of the table *suggestion is to provide actual titles and fill in some of the squares*. You can also google. The first one has been done for you as an example.

Animal	Story title	Characteristics of the animal	Lesson I learned from this story
Baboon	Baboon wants a wife	Not very clever	
Spider			
Hare			
Lion			
Elephant			
Tortoise			
Crocodile			

Complete the L portion of the KWL chart. What did you learn about African folktale?

Summary:


Folktales are one of the ways that history is passed down the generations in African, Caribbean, African American and African Canadian communities. In fact, thanks to folktale characters like Anansi the Spider, we can see that the cultures in these parts of the world we have studied in this chapter are all closely related. Folktales are a fun way for us to learn lessons or morals that can help us every day. Lastly, folktales are great for bringing together all kinds of people in our community, young and old.

Thinking Question - why is African folktale important?

REFERENCES

The Underground Railroad

Have you heard or read about the Underground Railway? Do you know what a

railroad looks like right? If you don't, here is a picture . You might know this as a train track. The LRT here in Edmonton moves on a train track or a railroad. Today the train tracks on the Edmonton LRT lead to Clairview and to Century Park. There are many stops along the track and people get off at different stops.

In this module you are going to learn about the Underground Railroad. It played a very important part in the history of the United States and Canada. Canada was the destination that many people hoped to get to. Many books have been written about the Underground Railroad and the people who worked on the Underground Railroad.

Here is a list of activities you will work on as you learn about The Underground Railroad:

- KWL Chart
- Reading activity
- Listening activity
- In the community

KWL CHART

Let's start by completing the KWL chart below. Think about what you know about the Underground Railroad or what you think you know. It's ok if you have never heard of it and you do not know anything. Then think about what you want to know about the Underground Railroad.

K	W	L
What I know about the Underground Railroad	What I want to know about the Underground Railroad	What I learned about the Underground Railroad

READING ACTIVITY

Many people have written stories about the Underground Railroad. It was not really a rail road with train tracks going underground. It was a series of places and people who helped slaves escape from slavery in the United States in the 1800s.

The Underground Railroad was a group of people who worked together to help slaves run away from slave states to free states and to Canada. People like *Harriet Tubman*, *Frederick Douglass*, and *Levi Coffin* played a very important role in helping slaves escape from slavery in the Southern United States to come to the Northern States where they could be free. The slaves who were running away from slavery had to make long and dangerous journeys to get to freedom. They had to be careful not to get caught trying to escape. They had to rely on help from other people along the way especially in places they did not know. The Underground Railroad did not stop in the Northern states of the USA. It went even further north to Canada.

The people who helped slaves escape to freedom using the Underground Railway used their own special words to help. For example, people who guided the runaway slaves from one place to the next were called **conductors**. The places where runaway slaves could find food or could sleep during the night were called **stations** or **safe houses**. The people who hid slaves in their homes, in churches, or in their barns were called **station masters**.

Many slaves running away wanted to get to Canada. There were other destinations that slaves running away went to. Some of them ended up in Mexico, the Caribbean Islands, South America, and cities in the North United States.

Some important words.

Conductors – the people who guided the runaway slaves

Stations or Safe houses - the places where the slaves ate and slept along their way

Station masters- the people who hid the slaves in their homes, churches etc.

Who were the key people involved in the Underground Railroad?

Many stories have been written about the people who were involved in the Underground Railroad. The tables below contain some information on some of these famous people.

Table 1- Harriet Tubman



She was born in 1820 in Dorchester County, Maryland.

- Harriet Tubman was a slave who escaped in 1849.
- Known as "Moses", she was a *conductor*. She was also known as "Minty".
- She is one of the most important figures involved in the Underground Railroad.
- She made 19 trips to the Southern plantations of the United States.
- These 19 trips resulted in her leading around 300 slave to freedom.

To the right and below are some titles of books written about Harriet Tubman and her story.

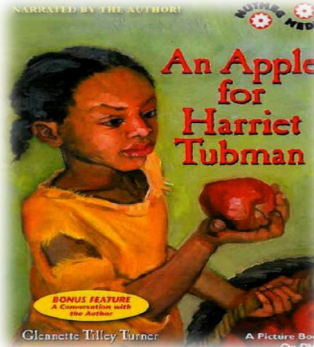
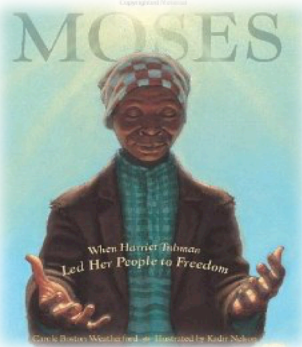
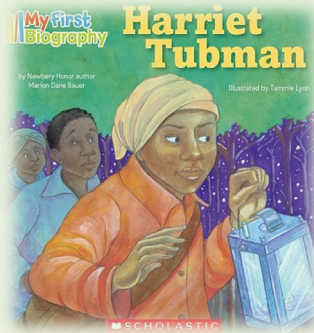


Table 2- Levi Coffin and John Fairfield

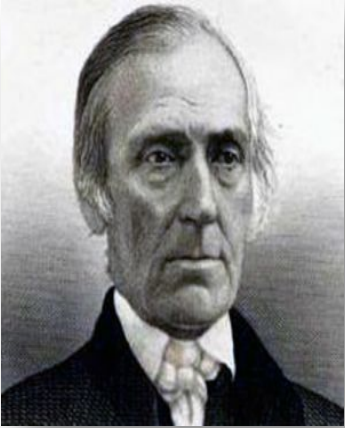

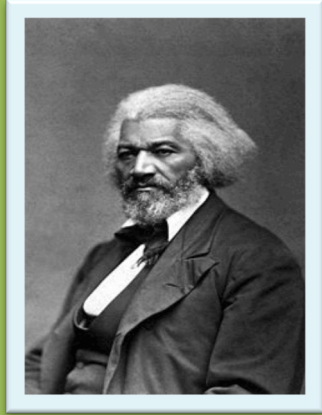
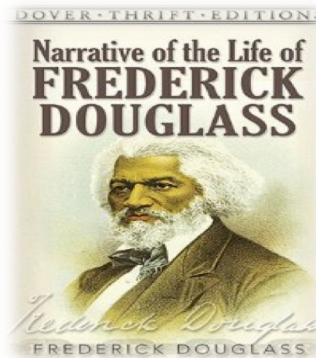
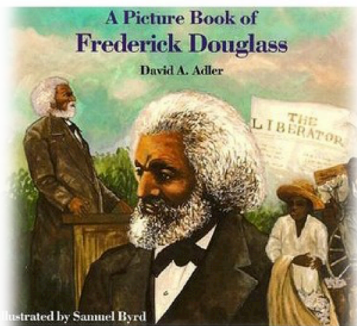
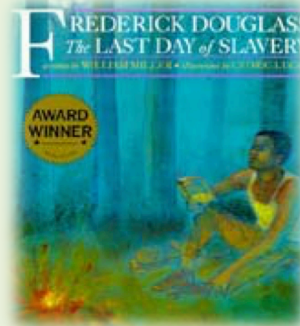
<p>Levi Coffin</p>  A black and white portrait of Levi Coffin, an elderly man with thinning hair, wearing a dark suit and a white cravat.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• He was born in 1798 in New Lawn, North Carolina.• He is sometimes called the "President of the Underground Railroad".• His home was a <i>station</i> or <i>safe house</i>. It was known as "Grand Central Station".• The <i>station</i> helped almost 3000 slaves on their journey to freedom.• Coffin later became a business man and sold only goods made with free labour.
<p>John Fairfield</p>  A black and white portrait of John Fairfield, a younger man with dark hair, wearing a dark suit and a patterned cravat.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• John was born in 1797 in Saco, York County, Maine.• Even though he was raised in a family that had slaves, Fairfield became a <i>conductor</i> in the Underground Railroad.• He would pretend to be a slave holder or a slave trader in order to help runaway slaves escape to freedom.

Table 3- Frederick Douglass

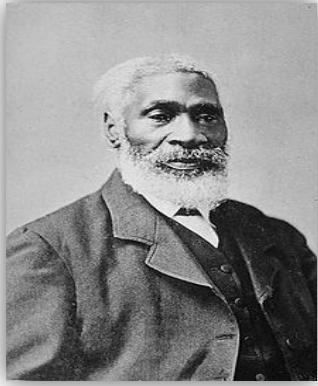
Mr. Frederick Douglass was born in Tuckahoe, Maryland in 1818.

- He is an ex-slave who escaped to the Northern United States as a young man.
- He became an activist and leader of the Underground Railroad in New York.
- Douglass wrote autobiographies (stories about himself) of his time as a slave and as a free man. He set a great example and gave hope to many.
- Frederick fought for civil rights and equality of all humans.

To the right and below are some titles of books written about Frederick Douglass.



And in Canada...

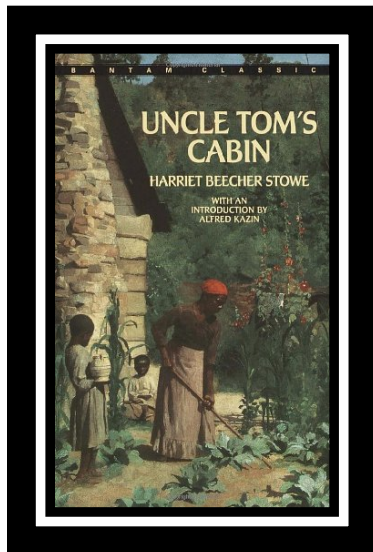


Reverend Josiah Henson played a very important role in the Underground Railroad in Canada.

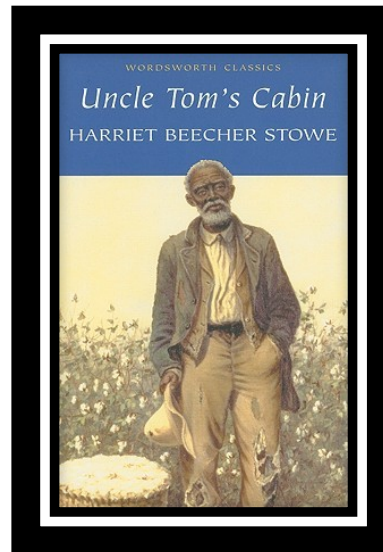
Josiah Henson was born in the United States and he worked there as a slave for 41 years. He managed to escape to Canada in 1830 using the Underground Railroad. When he got to Canada he built a settlement and a school for other slaves who had run away and come to Canada. Reverend Josiah Henson wrote an autobiography, a book about his life, in 1849. Another famous book that uses some information about his life called "Uncle Tom's Cabin",

was written by Harriet Beecher Stowe. Today you can visit Uncle Tom's Cabin Historic Site in Dresden, Ontario.

Here are some book cover images of "Uncle Tom's Cabin". See if you can find these in your local library.



<http://ecx.images-amazon.com/images/I/51iF2FQ6KYL.jpg>



<http://d.gr-assets.com/books/1348092796/46787.jpg>

LISTENING ACTIVITY

Watch a video about the Underground Railway. The video is of Henry Cole reading his picture book called "Unspoken: A story from the Underground Railroad". On the internet you can search for "Henry Cole and Unspoken" to find the video. Or you can follow this link https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=voL_dToHjUU

Question:

What happened in this story?

IN THE COMMUNITY

Go to your local library and look up a book on the Underground Railway. Ask the librarian to help you find one. Find out information that can help you answer the following question:

1. Why is the Underground Railway famous?

What have you learned about the Underground Railroad? Complete the last column of the KWL chart on page 2.

REFERENCES

1. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harriet_Tubman
2. <http://www.mapsofworld.com/metro-maps/underground-railroad-facts.html>
3. <http://katishistoricalwebpage.weebly.com/john-fairfield.html>
4. <http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=F000006>
5. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frederick_Douglass
6. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Josiah_Henson
7. <http://www.biography.com/people/harriet-tubman-9511430>
8. <http://www.biography.com/people/frederick-douglass-9278324>

Featured Author: Tololwa M. Mollé

We are lucky to be part of a community that is full of talented people who we can learn from. People in your community such as elders and storytellers can teach you interesting things that you might not find in a book! In this module we are going to learn more about Tololwa Mollé, a story-teller and writer who lives here in Edmonton. Have you heard about Mr. Mollé before? Do you know what types of books he writes?

Here is a list of activities you will work on as you learn about Tololwa Mollé:

- KWL Chart
- Reading text and reading comprehension questions
- Listening and listening comprehension questions
- In the community
- Writing - word puzzle, completing KWL chart
- Trivia - maps (showing geographical location and fun facts)

KWL CHART

Look at the KWL Chart below. Think about what you already know about Tololwa Mollé. Write it down in the "K" column. What do you want to know about him? Write it down in the "W" column.

K	W	L
What I know about Tololwa Mollé	What I want to know about Tololwa Mollé	What I learned about Tololwa Mollé

READING ACTIVITY

In many African and Caribbean traditions, storytellers play an important part in the life of the community. They tell stories that entertain both children and adults, but they also have a special job that they do through their stories. Have you ever thought about why story-tellers are important? Thanks to the stories that they tell, we can learn about the way people lived long ago, or about cultures



far away from us. They help the community to remember interesting and important things long after they have happened. And, often, their stories have an important lesson or moral for us to learn. The lesson or moral can help us to be better friends and family to each other.

To the left is a picture of Tololwa Mollel.

Tololwa Mollel was born in Arusha, Tanzania, Africa. He is a storyteller who writes story books for children. He also writes plays. Mollel has written seventeen books that have been published internationally (in many different countries). He has also won many awards. Some of his award winning story books are in the table below.

<p>1. <i>Rhinos for Lunch and Elephants for Supper</i></p>	
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2. <i>Big Boy</i>	
3. <i>My Rows and Piles of Coins</i>	

Tololwa Mollel's books have been published in Canada, the United States, Australia, England, and Tanzania. Mr. Mollel's books have been translated into many different languages. Some examples of these languages are:

- Kiswahili - Tanzania's national language
- Korean
- Norwegian
- South African languages
- Spanish

Mollel lives here, in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada with his wife and two kids. Before he moved to Canada, he lived in Tanzania where he taught at a university. He was

"I aim to provide a feast of words - written and spoken - for the eye, the ear and the mind; as well as for the creative imagination, and for performance."

Tololwa M. Mollel

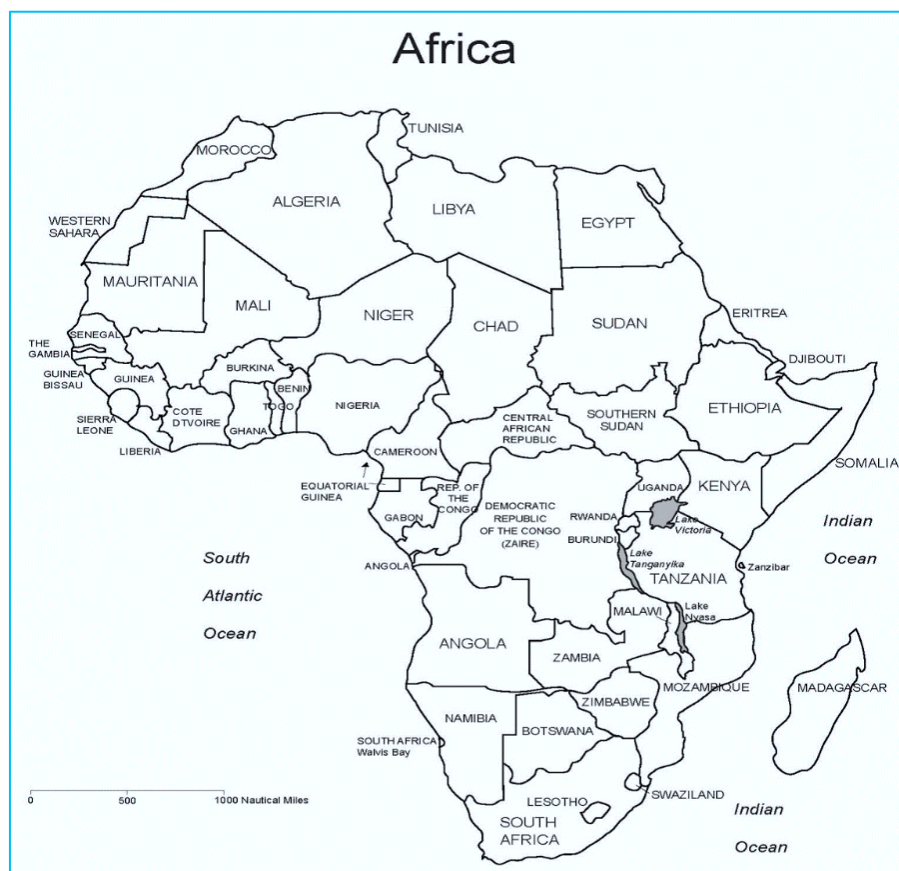
also an actor and performer. As an actor and performer, he traveled to countries like Germany and Sweden.

Now, Mollel writes children's books and is a part of a number of

organizations that work with writers. In addition to writing books, Mollel gives workshops to children in schools. He also gives presentations and reads stories at local libraries.

MAPS AND TRIVIA

This is a map of the continent of Africa. Your task is to find Tanzania, the country in which Tololwa Mollel was born and color it in. (hint: Tanzania is in the East of the continent, that's the right hand side of the map!)



A little bit of trivia and fun facts about Tanzania for you to remember:

- The *capital* city of Tanzania is Dodoma.
- The *largest* city is Dar Es Salaam.
- Dar Es Salaam is Arabic for "House of Peace".
- Tanzania has two official languages: **Swahili** and **English**.

LISTENING ACTIVITY

In this section we are going to listen to Tololwa Mollel tell a story. After this there are a few questions for you to answer about the story:

Click on this link to watch a video of Tololwa Mollel telling the story called Just the Perfect Thing: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wFYA_OHoKSO

Now try to answer the following questions. Listen to the story again if you need to!

1. This story is about Ngwele who is a maker-of-things. What kind of animal is Ngwele?
2. Who did the hare trick first?
3. Who did the hare take spots from?
4. How did the hare get a scale-made coat?
5. What did the hare make with the birds' feathers?
6. What happened to hare in the end?
7. What do you think the lesson or the moral of the story is?

IN THE COMMUNITY

Go to your local Edmonton Public Library and check out one or more of Tololwa Mollel's books. A list of some of his books is in the table below.

How many books can you read before Afro Quiz?

Complete the table by writing down the names of the main characters in the stories you have read. Put a check mark✓ next to each book title once you finish reading it. You can also listen to someone reading the story to you! The first one has been done for you as an example

Book Title / Story Title	Main characters in the story	I have read/listened to the story ✓

<i>The Orphan Boy</i>	Character names here	✓
<i>A Promise to the Sun</i>		
<i>The Princess Who Lost Her Hair</i>		
<i>The King and The Tortoise</i>		
<i>Kele's Secret</i>		
<i>Dume's Roar</i>		
<i>Kitoto The Mighty</i>		
<i>Subira Subira</i>		

WRITING ACTIVITY: Let's play a game!

Have you noticed that there are animals in many of Tololwa Mollel's stories? Animals are a big part of storytelling in Africa.

Below is a word puzzle for you to complete. All the words you have to find are animals that can be found in different parts of Africa. Can you find all the words?

If you have never heard of the animal before, ask somebody to help you find a picture of it on the internet!

ANIMALS OF AFRICA

- BABOON
- CHEETAH
- CHIMPANZEE
- COBRA
- CROCODILE
- ELEPHANT
- FLAMINGO
- GAZELLE
- GEMSBOK
- GIRAFFE
- GNU
- GORILLA
- HARTEBEEST
- HIPPOPOTAMUS
- HYENA
- KUDU
- LEOPARD
- LION
- MARTIAL EAGLE
- MEERKAT
- OSTRICH
- PANGOLIN
- RHINOCEROS
- SPRINGBOK
- ZEBRA

D K O B G N I R P S H R R C H
 Z E E O P E L E P H A N T O O
 T E L G A E L A I T R A M B S
 O N I N N Z U I Z G T L H R T
 M O D I G N U D F E E L V A R
 L O O M O A C K U V B I K E I
 E B C A L P Z H O K E R D F C
 O A O L I M L E E B E O A F H
 P B R F N I V S L E S G J A Y
 A I C W O H L Q M L T M M R E
 R H I N O C E R O S E A E I N
 D S U M A T O P O P P I H G A



Completing the KWL Chart (Writing Activity)

We have read about Tololwa Mollel's life, listened to a story of his and by now we have also checked out at least one of his books from the library, and learned the names of some of the animals in his stories. We have a lot of new information! Let's use this information to complete the L column of the KWL chart. What did you learn about Tololwa Mollel?

SUMMARY

We can learn a lot from reading books and watching things on the TV, but sometimes the people around us who live in our community are full of new and interesting things that we can enjoy and learn from. Tololwa Mollel lives in Edmonton and is doing a great job of telling stories based in Africa to children. That way children can learn about Africa even though it is so far away. Like many other African and Caribbean storytellers, Tololwa Mollel's stories very often have lessons or morals for us to learn and to remember.

Thinking Question - why are storytellers important?

Literature Icon – Rosa Parks

There are many famous people who have written books about themselves (autobiographies) or have had books written about them by other people. In this module, you are going to learn about a famous woman whose courage changed the lives of many people in North America. Many books have been written about her. She also wrote her own book. This woman's name is Rosa Parks. Let's start by completing the chart below. What do you already know about Rosa Parks? It's ok if you have never heard of her - you will learn. What do you want to know about Rosa Parks?

Here is a list of activities you will work on as you learn about Rosa Parks:

- KWL Chart
- Reading activity and comprehension questions
- Listening activity
- In the community
- Writing activity

KWL CHART

K	W	L
What I know about Rosa Parks	What I want to know about Rosa Parks	What I learned about Rosa Parks

READING ACTIVITY

Rosa Parks grew up in Montgomery, Alabama. She thought the rules that black (African American) people had to live by were not fair. She did not like these rules. As a young child Rosa stood up for herself and she believed that *everyone* deserved the same respect and rights. Below is a list of some of the rules.

African Americans were not allowed to:

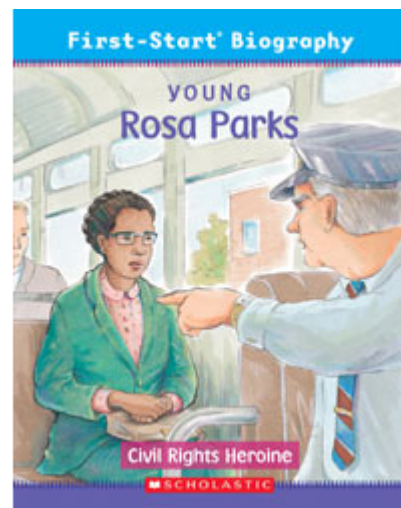
- Attend the same schools as white Americans,
- Eat at the same restaurants or use the same water fountains,
- Ride in the front of the bus (black people had to sit in the back)

In 1955, Ms. Parks changed the lives of African Americans in Montgomery and all across America with one courageous act. One evening in December, she refused to give up her bus seat in the front of the bus to a white passenger. She was arrested and put in jail. This did not bring her down. She fought back and after a long struggle her heroic efforts and those of other African Americans, brought about the Civil Right Movement.

<http://www.harpercollinschildrens.com/books/Rosa-Parks>

<http://bradmeltzer.com/book/i-am-rosa-parks/>

These are some of the books that have been written about Rosa.



Questions

1. Where did Rosa Parks grow up?
2. What did Rosa Parks do that made her famous?
3. Look at the pictures of the story books on Rosa Parks above. What big challenge did Rosa Parks face?
4. Do you know anyone who did something courageous like Rosa Parks?
5. Many books have been written about Rosa Parks. Can you give a reason why many people have written about her?

LISTENING ACTIVITY

Here are some videos on Rosa Parks. Follow the links to learn a little more about Ms. Parks.

<http://video.pbs.org/video/2331005550/>

Or

<http://www.watchknowlearn.org/Category.aspx?CategoryID=4399>

IN THE COMMUNITY

Go to your local library and look up a book on Rosa Parks. Ask the librarian to help you find one. Find out information to the following questions:

1. Why is Rosa Parks famous?

2. Where in the United States did she perform her courageous act?

3. Write a short summary about it in the writing activity below.

WRITING ACTIVITY

Summary of the book I read

Title:

Author:

What I read:

Here is a map of the United States of America. Look for the state of Alabama and draw a circle around it.

What other states are near Alabama?



Now that you have learned some new things about Ms. Parks, go back and fill in the *L* part of the KWL CHART.

Thinking Question - why is it important that Rosa Parks' story is written down in a book?