

Africa Is My Home

A RIF GUIDE FOR EDUCATORS

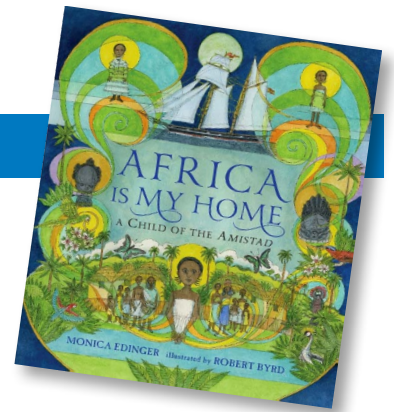
Themes Perseverance, African American History, Slavery

Book Brief: Magulu is only nine years old when she is taken by slave traders and brought to the Americas. She is on board the *Amistad* when its passengers rise up and overthrow their captors, but her journey to freedom—and back home to Africa—has only begun.

Author:
Monica Edinger

Illustrator:
Robert Byrd

Content Connections:
Social Studies, Science



TIME TO READ!



BEFORE WE READ, LET'S LOOK AT...

The Cover: Have students make predictions about the book based on the title and the cover illustration. Who is the girl on the cover? What

can we tell about her? What else is on the cover? Have students heard of the *Amistad*? What does “amistad” mean?

The Pictures: Show students the maps on the first page and pages 20-21 to help them understand where this story takes place. You might want to compare with a modern map; Mendeland is now Sierra Leone.

Prior Knowledge: This book tells the true story of a young girl who was on board the *Amistad* in 1839.

What do your students know about slavery in the US at that time? Explain that slavery in this country ended gradually, and different states and territories had different laws about slaves. Other countries had different rules about slavery and the slave trade, and the US had complicated agreements with those countries recognizing those rules. This complex legal situation is what keeps Magulu and the other *Amistad* passengers stuck in the US for so long, and what eventually leads to the Civil War in 1861.

Vocabulary: pawn, slavery, shackles, witnesses, exhibition

Purpose for Reading: As you read, think about the book's title, *Africa Is My Home*. How is Africa important for Magulu even when she's in the US? How does thinking of her home keep her strong?

WHILE WE READ

MONITORING COMPREHENSION:

- ◆ Why is Magulu taken by slave traders?
- ◆ What happens when Magulu gets to Cuba?
- ◆ Why do the captives on the *Amistad* rise up?

- ◆ Why can't Magulu and the other passengers go back to Africa immediately?
- ◆ What does Magulu want to do when she gets back to Africa?

LET'S THINK ABOUT

Our Purpose: How does the author show us that Africa is always important for Magulu? How does thinking of Africa and what she'll do once she returns help Magulu stay strong and motivated? How would you have felt if you were Magulu?

Extending Our Thinking: Today, Magulu is commonly known as Margru, the incorrect name that was given to her when she arrived in the US. Why is it important to call her by her real name? Many human beings who were enslaved had their names changed or erased. Later, many immigrants who came to the US through Ellis Island had their names changed. Is a name important? Why or why not? How does it feel when someone calls you by the wrong name?

NOTE TO EDUCATORS

- ◆ Extension Activities for Educators also available.



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