



The Singing Tortoise

READ ALOUD GUIDE

Themes: Promises, Trust, Consequences

Book Brief: In a topical tale from Africa, a man learns his lesson when he tries to use nature for his own good.

Author:
Storytime

Illustrator:
Maria Bazykina

BEFORE READING

The Cover: Ask students to make a prediction about the story based on the cover and title.

The Pictures: Take a quick picture walk and ask students what they notice about the illustrations.

Prior Knowledge: Ask, "What does it mean to keep a promise? Why is it important to do what you say you will do?" (Optional: Think-Pair-Share). Explain to students that this is a fable, a story that teaches a lesson.

Vocabulary: Frontload Tier 2 words using the accompanying [Vocabulary Guide](#).

Purpose for Reading: "As we read, think about the central message or lesson of this story. What does Ama learn about keeping promises?"



Think Aloud: "Ama promised to keep the tortoise's secret, but he broke that promise. When he did, the tortoise wouldn't sing because Ama didn't keep his word. The central message seems to be that when we break our promises, we lose people's trust and there are consequences for our actions."

DURING READING

Check for understanding & make connections:

- What does Ama promise the tortoise?
- Why does Ama break his promise?
- What happens when Ama tells everyone about the singing tortoise?
- Why does the tortoise refuse to sing?

AFTER READING

Our Purpose: "What is the central message or lesson of this fable? What did Ama learn about keeping promises and earning trust?"

Extending Our Thinking: Ask students, "Why is it important to keep your promises? How do you feel when someone breaks a promise to you?" Encourage students to think of a time they kept an important promise or a time when keeping a promise was difficult but the right thing to do. Students can write or draw about that experience, explaining what the promise was and why it mattered to keep it. They can share their stories and discuss how keeping promises helps us be trustworthy friends and family members.

If your students enjoyed this book...

- Explore 100 other free eBooks on Skybrary! Visit www.Skybrary.org to learn more.
- Encourage them to continue to discuss it and refer to it in other lessons and conversations.
- Let them explore more about the topic by reading other books with similar themes, structure, characters, or content.