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# GALIMOTO

Author: Karen Lynn Williams

Illustrator: Catherine Stock

Publisher: Lothrop

## THEME:

It's amazing how something as common and uncomplicated as wire can be used to create complicated and interesting things.

## PROGRAM SUMMARY:

Walking through his village, a young African boy uses his wits to search for scraps of wire to make his very own 'Galimoto.'

Viewers are shown how something as common and uncomplicated as wire can be used to create complicated and interesting things. LeVar interviews a wire artist who makes sculptures from wire, a circus family who does high wire acts without a net, and he rides on the longest tramway in the world – which, by coincidence, moves on a cable wire.

## TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION:

Discuss why other villagers laughed or shook their heads when Kondi said he planned to make a galimoto. Invite students to share their experiences of occasions when others thought they couldn't do something, but they proved them wrong in the end.

Talk about the qualities that Kondi possessed that enabled him to successfully make his galimoto. For example, he was persistent (he never gave up trying to obtain materials), resourceful (he saw possible uses in different types of materials), and creative.

Although students will be able to identify many ways in which their lives are different from Kondi's, also discuss the similarities between Kondi and themselves. Ensure that students realize that the story is set in contemporary Africa.

## CURRICULUM EXTENSION ACTIVITIES:

Before viewing the program, brainstorm a list of items that are made of wire or that have wire as a part. Retain the list to refer to after watching so that students may add to it.

Go on a classroom scavenger hunt looking for everyday items that utilize wire in some form. Collect as many of these items as possible on a table and discuss the differences in the way the wire is used. Also notice the differences in wire thickness and malleability.

Obtain some samples of different types of wire (a local electrical supply company may have some scraps) and have students examine them. Some wires are actually made up of smaller wires.

In the story, Kondi collected scrap wire and made a toy vehicle—a "galimoto." Have students use all sorts of recyclable materials to create their own galimoto. Collect materials such as styrofoam containers, cardboard rolls, toothpicks, popsickle sticks, film canisters, twisty ties, lids from milk jugs and other containers, packing material, and the like, for students to use. Display all the creations and provide time for students to demonstrate what they have made.

Work with the physical education teacher to provide students with the opportunity to use a balance beam. After they have had some practice, discuss difficulties they might have had in keeping their balance. Have them imagine what walking a tightrope must be like in comparison to walking on a balance beam.

Have students pantomime walking a tightrope. Provide a small umbrella, a pole, and other props for them to use in their pantomime.

Invite an electrician into the class to discuss the importance of safety around electrical appliances, wiring, and electricity in general.

Kondi is a contemporary African boy. Locate Africa on a world map. On a map of Africa, locate Malawi, the setting for this story. Discuss the great variety in the geographical regions of Africa, i.e., desert, rain forests, Nile River valley, etc. To lead the students into some research, make a K-W-L chart with them about Africa. Start with a brainstormed list of what they know (K) about the continent. Have them think of the questions they have about Africa (W) and record them on the chart. After the students have completed their research, record what they have learned (L) on the chart. Work with the media specialist to find both fiction and nonfiction books about Africa to assist students with their research. Students may wish to do a creative project that shows what they learned through their research.

Give students a length of wire and have them make a wire sculpture. Stipulate that they may bend, twist, or shape the wire in any way they choose, but they may not cut it. Display their creations. (Eighteen-gauge aluminum wire is easy for students to manipulate. Galvanized or annealed steel—also 18-gauge—is somewhat stiffer, but may also be handled fairly easily.)

## RELATED THEMES:

imagination  
world cultures

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**RELATED READING RAINBOW PROGRAMS:**

Program #81 — Tar Beach

Program #55 — Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:**

Karen Lynn Williams grew up in Connecticut and has a degree in deaf education. She has taught hearing impaired children in the U.S. and in Malawi, where she lived for several years. Her fascination with the independence and ingenuity of the village children inspired the story of *Galimoto*. She presently lives with her family in Pittsburgh.

**ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR:**

Catherine Stock is the author and/or illustrator of numerous books for children, including *Emma's Dragon Hunt*, a **Reading Rainbow** review book. She typically travels to the location where a story she is illustrating is set to research the surroundings before she does her watercolor paintings. She makes her home in New York City.

**BOOKS REVIEWED BY CHILDREN:**

THE LITTLE PIGS' PUPPET BOOK  
by N. Cameron Watson (Little, Brown)

LOOK AT THIS  
by Harlow Rockwell (Simon & Schuster)

MY FIRST ACTIVITY BOOK  
by Angela Wilkes (Random House)

**SUPPLEMENTARY BOOKLIST:**

FLYAWAY GIRL  
by Ann Grifalconi (Little, Brown)

COUNT YOUR WAY THROUGH AFRICA  
by Jim Haskins, illus. by Barbara Knutson (Carolrhoda)

AT THE CROSSROADS  
by Rachel Isadora (Greenwillow)

MASAI AND I  
by Virginia Kroll, illus. by Nancy Carpenter (Four Winds)

the JAFTA series  
by Hugh Lewin, illus. by Lisa Kopper (Carolrhoda)

MIRETTE ON THE HIGH WIRE  
by Emily Arnold McCully (Putnam)

STARRING MIRETTE & BELLINI  
by Emily Arnold McCully (Putnam)

BIG BOY  
by Tololwa Mollel, illus. by E. B. Lewis (Clarion)

EMEKA'S GIFT: AN AFRICAN COUNTING STORY  
by Ifeoma Onyefulu (Cobblehill/Dutton)

OGBO: SHARING LIFE IN AN AFRICAN VILLAGE  
by Ifeoma Onyefulu (Gulliver/Harcourt Brace)

MALAWI IN PICTURES  
by Thomas O'Toole (Lerner)

CHARLIE'S HOUSE  
by Reviva Schermbrucker, illus. by Niki Daly (Viking)

WHEN AFRICA WAS HOME  
by Karen Lynn Williams, illus. by Floyd Cooper (Orchard Books)



Define theme. theme synonyms, theme pronunciation, theme translation, English dictionary definition of theme. n. 1. A topic of discourse or discussion. See Synonyms at subject. 2. A subject of artistic representation. 3. An implicit or recurrent idea; a motif: a...Â Theme - definition of theme by The Free Dictionary. <https://www.thefreedictionary.com/theme>. Printer Friendly. Dictionary, Encyclopedia and Thesaurus - The Free Dictionary 12,276,392,287 visitors served.

Theme definition: A theme in a piece of writing , a talk , or a discussion is an important idea or subject | Meaning, pronunciation, translations and examples.Â The theme of the summit was women as 'agents of change'. [+ of]. One of Chomsky's main themes is that the appearance of open debate is illusion. The need to strengthen the family has been a recurrent theme for the Prime Minister. Synonyms: motif, leitmotif, recurrent image, unifying idea More Synonyms of theme. 2. countable noun.