

All about Handa

Use the popular story of *Handa's Surprise* to help your child understand the relevance of multiculturalism

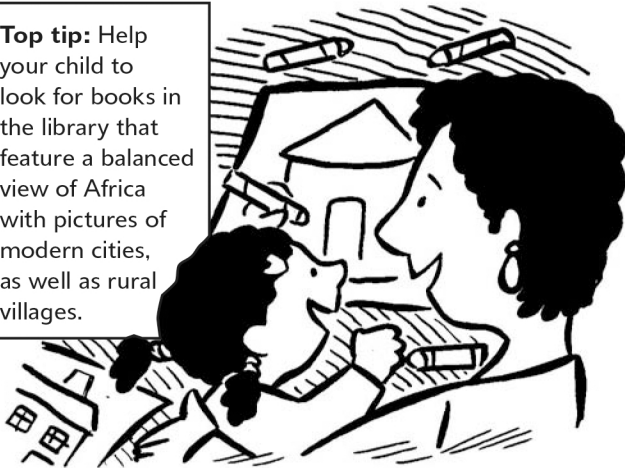
The story of *Handa's Surprise* by Eileen Browne (Walker Books) is an ideal book to read at home to support a 'Multicultural' theme at your child's setting. The story is about a young girl in Africa and shows scenery, animals, fruit, clothing and traditions from another culture. The book enables children to glimpse into a world beyond their own immediate surroundings, and can be used to help children gain an insight into a way of life that is different to their own. If possible, obtain a copy of *Handa's Surprise* from your local library to read with your child and encourage the following activities.

Painting places

Develop your child's observational skills by encouraging them to look at the illustrations in the book very carefully. Work as a team by painting two pictures together, one to show where Handa lives and the other to show where you and your child live.

Talk about the similarities and differences between the two places with the children, and compare the views along Handa's walk to the views that you would see during a walk in your local area.

Top tip: Help your child to look for books in the library that feature a balanced view of Africa with pictures of modern cities, as well as rural villages.



Animal antics

Use the storybook to help your child gain an interest in other aspects of African culture, for example, sculpture, jewellery, music and clothing. Listen to some traditional African music with your child, and encourage them to move and dance to the distinctive tunes and rhythms. Observe examples of African sculpture or jewellery in shops, museums and books. Let your child make their own representations of these objects using Plasticine, salt dough or clay, or buy samples of African-style fabric for dressing up.

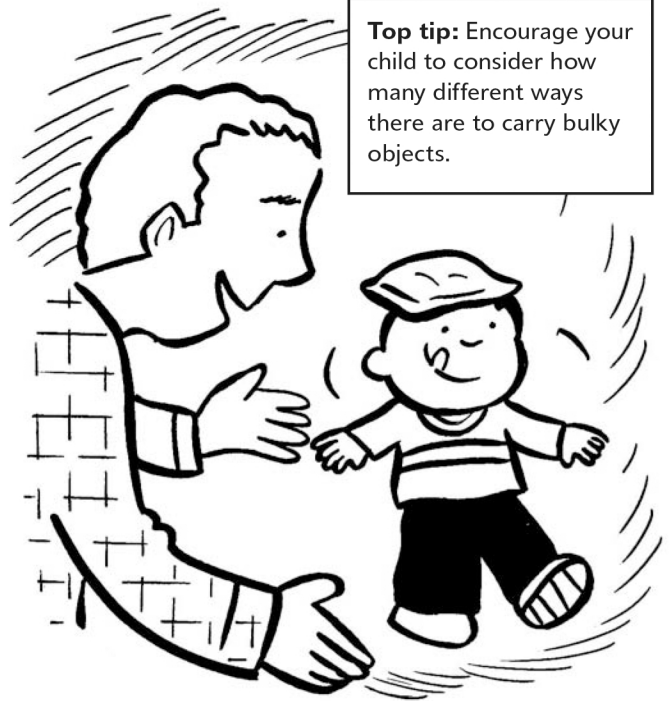
Top tip: Invite your child to show their collections and creations at their setting to help enrich the multicultural theme.



Careful carrying

Ask your child to look at how Handa is carrying the basket of fruit. Explain that carrying items on your head is a traditional practice in some cultures. Encourage your child's physical development by challenging them to carry a beanbag or cushion on their head. Do the same yourself. Count together how many paces you can both walk before the beanbag or cushion falls off.

Top tip: Encourage your child to consider how many different ways there are to carry bulky objects.



Useful books and resources

A is for Africa by Ifeoma Onyefulu (Frances Lincoln).
Kenya by Fred Martin (Heinemann Library).
A Flavour of Kenya by Wambui Kairi (Hodder Wayland).
Handa's Surprise by Eileen Browne (Walker Books).

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