

Magic Drum

Set in Nigeria, this drama explores the issue of inclusion and exclusion

Once, in the country of Nigeria, there lived a very kind and generous ruler, the Oba. This ruler was very lucky because he had a magic drum called the Magic Ilu. Whenever this ruler beat a certain rhythm on the Magic Ilu and sang a feasting song, delicious food appeared to be enjoyed by everyone.

One animal in particular, the tortoise (called the Ijapa), was quite impressed by the magic drum and thought how lucky the Oba was to have it. If only he, Ijapa, could be so lucky.

Well, it happened one day Ijapa's wish came true.

When the Oba and the villagers were swimming in the river, they discovered and ate some delicious coconuts. They did not know, however, that these coconuts belonged to Ijapa. When Ijapa appeared and accused the Oba of stealing, the ruler gave Ijapa the magic drum as compensation.

Ijapa was delighted with his new drum. At first he invited everyone to his feasts. This was especially important as lack of rainfall dried up all of the crops. But soon Ijapa began to take advantage of his power. He began inviting some of the people and animals to his feast, and excluding others. Neither the Oba, the people, nor the animals knew quite what to do.

- How do the animals who are excluded feel? How do those feel who are included?
- What choice do the animals have now that Ijapa has the drum?
- What might happen if Ijapa continues to exclude some of the animals?

These and other questions allow participating children to examine the meaning of generosity and the issues surrounding inclusion vs. exclusion.

