

Amadi's Snowman

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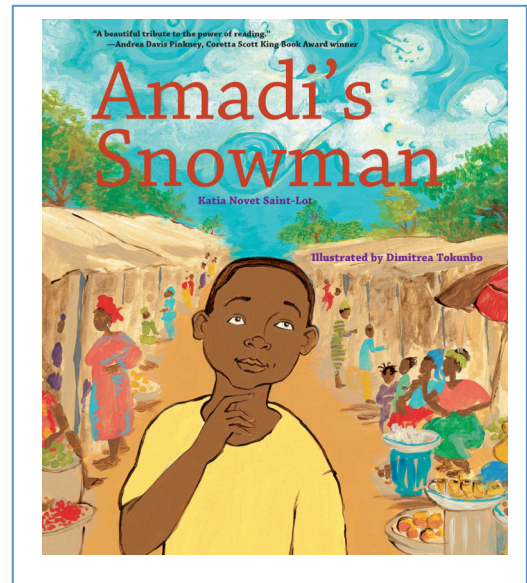
Illustrated by Dimitrea Tokunbo

Paperback, \$7.95

ISBN 9780884484400

9 x 10, 32 pages, color illustrations

Children / Multicultural; Grades 3-6



Summary

Amadi is a reluctant reader who discovers for himself why reading can be both informative and fun. *Amadi's Snowman* can be used as part of a curriculum that explores the subject of books and reading in daily life. It is an excellent book to share with ANY child who may not feel motivated to read. *Amadi's Snowman* can also be used as part of a curriculum that seeks to introduce elementary aged children to the diverse and interesting African country of Nigeria.

Amadi's Snowman will help inspire conversations about:

- Why does Amadi argue with his mother?
- What are the things Amadi likes to do in this story?
- What does Amadi NOT like to do?
- How are you similar to or different from Amadi?
- Does Amadi remind you of anyone you know?
- Where did you learn to read?
- Who are the people who taught you how to read?
- How is Amadi's home and village similar or different from your own?
- Have you ever been to a farmers' market? Is it like the one Amadi visits?
- Amadi isn't going to school in this story. Why do you think he isn't going to school? (Please see Heads Up! below.)
- Amadi is very curious about the snowman he sees in the picture book Chima is reading. Have you ever seen anything in a picture book that made you feel very curious?

- Amadi belongs to the Igbo tribe in Nigeria. Do you know anyone who belongs to a tribe here in the United States? (Teachers—you may want to identify the tribes indigenous to your geographic region.)

Heads Up! Readers might wonder why Amadi does not go to school. This is an important conversation. Here are some facts to help avoid the stereotyping of Nigeria as "just another African country that does not offer free school," or Amadi as "just another African kid who is not in school."

In the 1970s school in Nigeria was free for all children. An economic crisis in the 1990s, however, caused the Nigerian schools to decentralize, which resulted in some schools needing to charge fees. Even where schools are free, not all children who can attend do attend. The most recent statistics on attendance are: 60.1% of all children of primary school age attend primary school; 63.7% of these are boys; and 56.5% of these are girls. Demographic and Health Survey, 2003, (From huebler.blogspot.com/2005/10/primary-school-attendance-in-nigeria.html)

There are some other reasons why children might not attend school: Depending on where a family lives, school may or may not be free. The children may live too far from the school to attend on a regular basis. Parents might want their children to attend school, but they might also need their children at home to help earn money or do chores. Parents of girls from some traditional or religious families might feel school is unnecessary for their daughters.

Activity

- Draw a map of Amadi's morning activities from home to the market and back home again. Add lots of details.
- Find Nigeria on the map or globe. Make up a story about how you would travel there from your home. Your story can be told in writing, in words, in pictures or in movement/acting.
- Research a game children play in Nigeria. Try it out.
- To remind everyone of what it must be like to be unable to read: Create signs for your classroom or school written in different languages, languages your pupils are unlikely to know (maybe even in different alphabets). Ask them to follow the path to a big reward by reading the directions on those signs (you could have a few in English). (You can aid them with a translation and explanation of the languages/alphabets when they get frustrated. The big reward can be a special snack.)
- Cook and eat fried plantains. Find out what other foods Amadi might eat.