



ABITYOYO

ABOUT THE SHOW

About the Show

Abiyoyo is based on a South African **folktale** about a giant who eats everything in sight—cows, goats, and even children! This one-man story telling experience will encourage participants to face the monsters in their own life with honesty, courage, and strength of spirit. Audiences will learn that *Abiyoyo* just wants to be recognized. Brought to the West by Pete Seeger as a bedtime story for his own children, the original South African folktale takes on the attributes of the storyteller themselves, implying that each storyteller adds something different to the tale. *Abiyoyo* will be brought to life through **traditional** South African dance, music, and cultural nuances that address fears that speak to us all.

Abiyoyo Origins

Abiyoyo is a **Bantu** lullaby from the continent of Africa, specifically South Africa in a small village outside of Cape Town, inhabited by the Xhosa people. The original lullaby of *Abiyoyo* is typically sung in Xhosa (pronounced Kow-Suh). This folktale was created long before we were writing stories down and has been told for many **generations**. *Abiyoyo* is a story that parents would tell their children to get them to behave better and is very similar to the Boogey Man in American Culture. If children didn't behave, *Abiyoyo* would come down and steal kids that weren't listening to their parents, or who were getting into trouble. The lullaby is sung to neutralize, or stun, *Abiyoyo* allowing the kids to run away! According to a song by American folk singer, Pete Seeger, *Abiyoyo* had once appeared in a town after blocking out the sun. It began terrorizing the townspeople and eating livestock. Meanwhile, there was a boy and his magician father who were recently forced out of their village because the father kept making the villagers' things disappear with his magic wand. The villagers got so upset about their things **constantly** disappearing that they banished both father and son. The boy was a fine ukulele player, another cause for them being kicked out of town. So, when the two came across the giant, the boy created a song to play on his ukulele while his father used his magic to make *Abiyoyo* disappear. Thus, saving the townspeople, their homes, and their livestock! In 1963, Pete Seeger published the first ever written book of this African story.

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Vocabulary

Folktale noun

1. a story originating in popular culture, typically passed on by word of mouth.

Traditional noun

1. the transmission of customs or beliefs from generation to generation, or the fact of being passed on in this way.

Bantu noun

1. a group of Niger–Congo languages spoken in central and southern Africa, including Swahili, Xhosa, and Zulu.

Generations noun

1. all of the people born and living at about the same time, regarded collectively.

Constantly adverb

1. continuously over a period of time; always.

Reading Questions Circle the correct answer

1. What did the boy's father do that made the villagers kick them out?

- A. Threw water balloons at everyone
- B. Ate all the farmers' crops
- C. Kept making things disappear
- D. Called Abiyoyo to destroy the village

2. Which continent did the story of Abiyoyo originate from?

- A. Australia
- B. Africa
- C. Antarctica
- D. Asia

3. Who was the first person to write down the story of Abiyoyo?

- A. Albert Einstein
- B. Beyoncé
- C. Thomas Jefferson
- D. Pete Seeger

4. What musical instrument did the little boy play?

- A. Ukulele
- B. Oboe
- C. Flute
- D. Djembe Drum

5. Parents told the story of Abiyoyo to their children to get them to behave.

- A. True
- B. False

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Learn Xhosa

English/Xhosa

Welcome!/Siya namkela nonke!

Hello my name is.../Molo igama lam ngu...

What is your name?/Ngubani igama lahko?

How are you?/Kunjani kuwe?

I am well, thanks./Ndisaphila, enkosi.

Math Problem

Before Abiyoyo came to the town for lunch, the farmers had 12 cows, 15 sheep, and 4 goats. Now, the town only has 3 cows, 7 sheep, and 1 goat. How many of each did Abiyoyo eat?

_____ Cows _____ Sheep _____ Pigs

Create

Based off the play that you watched, and what you've read, draw your own version of what you think Abiyoyo looked like. Make sure to add as much detail as possible!



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Create your own story!

With each generation that passes the story of Abiyoyo down, it changes a little bit each time. Use the template below and fill in the blanks to create your own version of this tale! Share it with your friends and family when complete.

Once upon a time, there was a (noun) _____ who played the (musical instrument) _____. He'd go around town -- "Ploop ploop ploop ploop." The grownups said, "Get that thing out of here." Not only that, but the boy's father also was getting in trouble. He was a (profession) _____. He had a magic wand. He'd go, "Zoop, zoop," and make things (verb) _____. But the father played too many tricks on people. Somebody would be doing a hard job of work -- "Zzzz, zzz, zzz, zzz." Up comes the father with his magic wand, and -- "Zoop!" their tools would disappear. He'd go up to somebody about to drink a nice, cold glass of water -- "Zoop!" the glass disappears. He'd come up to someone about to sit down after a hard day's work -- "Zoop," no chair. People said to the father, "You get out of here! Take your magic wand, and you and your (noun) _____ LEAVE." The (noun) _____ and his father were kicked out. Now in this town, they used to tell stories. The old people used to tell (noun) _____ about the giants that lived in the old days. They used to tell a story about a giant called Abiyoyo. They said he was as tall as a house... and could eat people up! Of course, nobody believed them, but they told the story anyway. One day, the first people got up and looked out of their windows. They saw a great (adjective) _____ shadow over the sun. They could feel the whole ground shake. Women screamed! Strong men fainted! "Run for your lives, Abiyoyo is coming!" He comes to the sheep pasture, grabs a whole sheep... "CHOMP!" He comes to the cow pasture, grabs a whole cow... "CHOMP!" Just then, the (noun) _____ and his father woke up. "Hey, pa! What's coming over the field?" "Oh, son, that's Abiyoyo. Oh, if I could only get him to lie down, I could make him disappear!" The (noun) _____ says, "Come with me, father." He grabs his father by one hand, his father gets the magic wand, the (noun) _____ gets the (musical instrument) _____, they run across the field...people yell, "Don't go near him! He'll eat you alive!" There was Abiyoyo. He had (adjective) _____ fingernails because he never cut them, slobbery teeth because he never brushed them, stinking feet because he didn't (verb) _____ them...he raised his claws...and the boy whips out his (musical instrument) _____, and starts to sing: Abiyoyo, Abiyoyo, Abiyoyo, Abiyoyo. Abiyoyo yo yoyo yo yoyo. Abiyoyo yo yoyo yo yoyo. Well, you know the giant had never heard a song about himself before. And a foolish grin spread over the giant's face. And the giant started to dance. Abiyoyo, Abiyoyo, Abiyoyo, Abiyoyo. The boy went faster. Abiyoyo yo yoyo yo yoyo. Abiyoyo yo yoyo yo yoyo. The giant got out of breath and fell... ZOOP, ZOOP! People looked out their windows to find that Abiyoyo had disappeared! They ran across the fields. They lifted the (noun) _____ and his father up on their shoulders. They said, "Come back to town. Bring your (musical instrument) _____, we don't care anymore!" And they all sang, Abiyoyo, Abiyoyo, Abiyoyo, Abiyoyo.

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Answer Key

Reading Questions

1. C
2. B
3. D
4. A
5. A

Math Problem

- 9 Cows
- 8 Sheep
- 3 Goats

Standards

RL.3.1 Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

1.OA.1 Use addition and subtraction within 20 to solve word problems involving situations of adding to, taking from, putting together, taking apart and comparing, with unknowns in all positions, e.g., by using objects, drawings, and equations with a symbol for the unknown number to represent the problem.

L.3.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

RL.3.2 Analyze literary text development. a. Determine a theme and explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text. b. Retell stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures.