

# Have I Got a Story to Tell You!

## The Silent Children

by Mimi Brazeau

### Noise of thunder and lightening

**Narrator 1:** Lightening strikes in the village of \_\_\_\_\_. The noise is loud and makes the villagers tremble. Little Mamadou is afraid. He presses against his father for protection. He doesn't know that the lightening will change the lives of the people of \_\_\_\_\_ forever.

### Birds' song, soft music

**Narrator 2:** Everything is calm in the early morning. But something extraordinary is happening. No laughter in the compounds, no happy voices disturb the mysterious silence that dominates. (mysteriously) What a strange atmosphere.

### Household noises

**Mama Kinde:** Mamadou, get up. Come eat some bread before you go to school.

**Narrator 1:** Mamadou doesn't answer. His mother is annoyed.

**Mama Kinde:** Mamadou, my son, you are impolite. Answer me right away!

**Narrator 2:** Mama Kinde turns around and sees Mamadou in front of her. He tries to talk, but no sound comes from his mouth.

### Noise punch

**Mama Kinde:** Mamadou, my poor child, what's happening? (worried) Have you lost your tongue? Answer me, please.

**Narrator 1:** Mamadou tries with all his might to make a sound... Nothing... Not a syllable... He can't pronounce a word. Mama Kinde is very worried.

## Activity 2

**Mama Kinde:** My husband, come see... Your son is mute. Let's go see the traditional healer. Someone has cast a spell on us.

### Music punch

**Narrator 2:** Mama and Papa Kinde take Mamadou to the village square. They are surprised to see all the inhabitants of the village there, talking loudly. The children sit together under the mango tree and... Calamity! None of them can talk. The village chief talks to the crowd.

### Noise punch, suspense music

**Chief:** Dear villagers, something bad has happened to us. Our children have lost the ability to speak. We think a spell has been cast upon us. Why? Why this terrible tragedy? We have to cast off this spell.

**Crowd:** Yes, yes! We have to be rid of the spell. For the love of our children.

**Healer:** Dear friends, I am the village healer... but I am powerless to solve this problem. Let's go ask Wogbo, the elephant, for advice.

### Music

**Narrator 1:** At these words, the villagers set out on the path leading to the land of Wogbo, the grand elephant. The children follow silently.

**Crowd:** Wogbo! Wogbo! Where are you? We need to ask your advice. Wogbo, Wogbo!

### Crashing music

**Narrator 2:** The earth trembles. The bushes shake and the grand Wogbo appears.

**Chief:** Wogbo, my friend, you are wise, and we respect your strength. Help us. Our

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## Activity 2

children are mute.

**Narrator 1:** Wogbo shakes the chief's hand with his grey trunk, and approaches the children.

**Wogbo:** Mute... the children are mute... Let's see... children, are you mute?

**Children:** Wogbo, help us!

**Parents:** (joyfully) They speak, our children speak!

**Mama Kinde:** Mamadou, can you speak now?

**Narrator 2:** Mamadou tries to speak. Catastrophe! He has become mute again!

**Mama Kinde:** Wogbo, what is happening? Why do the children answer you, but not us, the adults?

**Wogbo:** Certain phenomena are mysterious, but sometimes... we provoke them. Dear parents, do you speak to your children? Do you tell them that you love them?

**Crowd:** Oh, yes, yes, yes!

Wogbo: Good. Now, do you listen to what they have to say?

**Crowd:** (Convinced) Yes, yes, yes... uh (less convinced) uhm, sometimes, uhm well, (sadly) not always.

**Mama Kinde:** They are our children, Wogbo. They have to listen to us and respect us!

**Wogbo:** That is true, Mama Kinde. You are right. But listening and respect don't exclude sharing. They should be able to share their opinions. You have listened to them too little. If they don't have the right to express themselves, why do they need a voice?

That's why they have become mute.

**Crowd:** (surprise) Hohohohohohoh!

**Mama Kinde:** We want them to speak and express themselves.

**Crowd:** Give back our children's beautiful voices!

**Chief:** We will let them express themselves with respect and love. You have the word of the chief of the village of \_\_\_\_\_!

**Wogbo:** So be it, that is your wish. All the children of the world have the right to express themselves. It's their right! It's their choice! So, your wish is granted!

### Thunder, music punch, soft music

**Narrator 1:** At these words, the children begin laughing and talking at the same time. They have so many things to say. The parents, astonished, listen to their children as if it were the first time they had heard their beautiful voices. The elephant couldn't remember ever seeing a more beautiful moment in the village.

**Narrator 2:** And Wogbo, the grand elephant, satisfied and moved, takes the solitary path into the bush.