

# BOXTALES THEATRE COMPANY

## DIGITAL ASSEMBLY LEARNING GUIDE

### **The Hunterman & Crocodile** (Single Story)

EDUCATOR NOTES AND PREP ARE ALL IN BLUE

#### STORY SYNOPSES

##### **The Hunterman and the Crocodile** (*Mali, West Africa*)

Donso the hunter-man, against his better judgment, agrees to carry Bamba the Crocodile back to his home in the river. After carrying Bamba into the water and releasing him, Bamba takes hold of his arm, to make Donso his next meal. As they argue, about right and wrong and how a good deed should be repaid, they float by a cow, a horse, a chicken, and an old mango tree, and Donso begs them all to help. They all refuse and say that he deserves to be eaten by the Bamba. Finally, a clever rabbit approaches and plays a trick on the Bamba to help free Donzo. Once they're out of the river and Bamba is back up on Donso's back, the tables are turned and the rabbit suggests that he take Bamba home to his wife "to make a great meal." On his way home, Donso learns that his wife is gravely ill and that she needs the tears of a crocodile to recover. He then gives Bamba his freedom in exchange for a gourd of his tears. Donso learned his lesson and from that time forward he has reminded people of the importance of living in harmony with nature and the necessity of placing Man among – not above – all living things.

This story is a great example of early environmentalism. Maybe even veganism? But it also has some interesting social dynamics at play.

The following questions or exercises are designed to help generate organic conversation within a group that can support core SEL competencies, (Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills and Responsible Decision-Making), in different age groups. They can however be modified by the instructor to fit their respective groups. Feel free to listen carefully to the students and adapt questions, responses and timing as needed. You may also, borrow suitable questions from other grades if you like.

K-6

What do you think this story was about?

What were you feeling during the story?

Which character or characters do you relate with? Why?

5-6 Extensions:

Traditionally, people have seen the Bamba character as having a certain "nature" – a way of being that cannot change. And that the Hunterman should know better than to trust him. But, what if we put ourselves in to the different characters situations?

**The Deal / Peer Pressure: (Hunterman’s point of view)**

Have you ever been talked into doing something you didn’t want to do? Maybe you were scared or you knew it would not turn out well but you let them talk you into it anyway. Maybe you did it to help a friend, please others, or avoid being bullied? How has it worked out for you? Can you think of a better way?

**(Bamba’s point of view)**

Have you ever had to rely on help from a stranger? How did you get them to help you?

Have you ever taken advantage of someone’s generosity? How did it make you feel? How do you imagine they felt? Can you think of a way that might work better for both?

**The other animals: (Hunterman’s point of view)**

Can you listen to criticism? How well do you accept consequences for your actions? How has it worked out for you? Can you think of a better way?

**(Other animals’ point of view)**

Have you ever enjoyed someone else’s suffering if you felt like they deserved it? Would you have stepped in and helped Donso, even if you thought he deserved it? If Donso is treating the animals poorly, how do you think he might learn not to?

**The Rabbit:** Why do you think the Rabbit came to the Hunterman’s aid?

**Moral:** Do you think the moral makes sense at the end? Do you place yourself above others? How? Do you know someone who places themselves above you? How does that feel?

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

**THE HUNTERMAN AND THE CROCODILE**

The Hunterman and the Crocodile, Baba Wague Diakite, Scholastic Press Inc. New York, 1997

Note:

We got this story from Baba Wague Diakite who was born in Mali but now lives in Portland. The dedication to his book goes like this: “To my mother Penda Diakite, who taught me that hard work, honesty, and responsibility are the tickets to existence in any society.” His language is Bambara. His middle name Wague means Man of Trust which was his Grandfather’s name. Stories were his main source of entertainment growing up. They gave him encouragement and good morals. They educated him about his environment and the relationship between man and nature. Hello in his language is *ownee-chay*.