



Read, Play, and Learn with Dentist Bird!

A Parent's Guide to Reading with Your Child! Ages 5+

BRING FOLKTALES INTO YOUR HOME



Folktales are stories that have been passed down from generation to generation by word of mouth. Folktales teach lessons and start conversations about

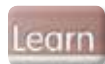
problem-solving, making friends, and being part of a community. Through folktales, children can enter a world other than their own and encounter different cultures and places. Start exploring the rich world of folktales with *Dentist Bird!* You can read, play, and learn together!



How Plover Bird Came to Clean Crocodile's Teeth is an interactive West African folktale from the country of Liberia. Children earn achievements while reading and playing mini-game challenges!



Dentist Bird's Mission of Mercy is a game where players take flight to help deliver medicine to an ailing Crocodile. Siblings can collaborate to earn more points.



After reading, children engage in Geography and Science activities!

PAIRED READINGS

Pair *How Plover Bird Came to Clean Crocodile's Teeth* with the following global folktales for a deeper exploration of the themes of symbiosis, giving, teamwork, and problem-solving.

The Lion and The Mouse

An Aesop fable in which an unlikely pair learn that kindness is never wasted. Jerry Pinkney's wordless adaptation is set in the African Serengeti and invites children to engage in the art of narration.

Anansi the Spider Tales

Originating in Ghana, West Africa, Anansi is a wise and resourceful spider who, like Plover Bird, uses his cunning intelligence to prevail over larger animals. In Gerald McDermott's Caldecott Honor Book, a spider threatened by Fish and Falcon is saved by the help of his sons.

The Little Red Hen

A folktale that teaches children a valuable lesson about teamwork. Adaptations and retellings abound.

The Enormous Turnip by Alexei Tolstoy

A Russian folktale where a family works together to pull a giant turnip out of the ground. Contemporary adaptation includes *The Enormous Carrot*, by Vladimir Vagin, where two rabbits enlist the help of some barnyard friends in their effort to pull a giant carrot out of the ground.

READ TOGETHER

Sit down with your child to read a little-known folktale. Explore the sights and sounds of Liberia's rainforest as you meet a Crocodile with a toothache, his animal friends, and one clever Plover Bird who makes a very special medicine for Crocodile. Together, you can discover the special spot on every screen that will bring this story alive!



Adjust the settings to support your child's reading level.

- highlight
 - *Beginning Readers:* Turn on the audio narration and text highlighting features to build word recognition and reading skills.
- speech bubble
 - *Independent Readers:* Turn off the text highlighting and/or the audio narration features and have your child read to him or herself.



PLAY GAMES TOGETHER

Tap on the Play button to play *Dentist Bird's Mission of Mercy*. This game challenges players to keep Plover Bird in flight so that she can collect medicine and feed it to Crocodile. During her journey through the rainforest, she encounters obstacles such as monkeys throwing bananas, jungle vines, and a fast-moving river! Take turns playing this game with your child or children. Pause gameplay at intervals to:

- Discuss strategies for keeping Plover Bird in the air. What's working? What's not?
- What changes need to be made in how the game is being played? Work together to figure it out, the way the forest animals came together to figure out what was wrong with Crocodile.



LEARN TOGETHER

The "Learn" section of the app offers two opportunities to expand your child's knowledge of this part of the world.

- **Where in the World is ... Liberia?** is an interactive geography activity. Your child will be asked to find Africa, Liberia, and the location of the story.
- **Sounds of the Rainforest** asks your child to match sounds of the forest creatures to their pictures. Each correct answer is rewarded with an animal trading card that teaches about animals and their habitats.



AFTER READING

Here are some ideas for engaging with your child to dig deeper into this rich story.

Learn New Words

Dentist Bird introduces children to lots of new words. Go back to the story with your child and revisit these words!

- **Play “I Spy”:** There are many new words for *big* (enormous, massive, gigantic) and *bad* (fearsome, unbearable, horrible). Ask your child to “spy” and label objects in your surroundings using these new words.
- **Practice Reading:** On Screen 10, children can tap each animal to hear their sound and to read their name. Ask your child to practice reading each animal name with you.



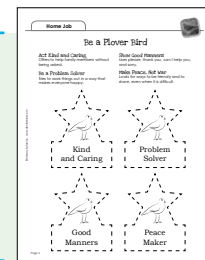
Get to Know Characters

The characters in *Dentist Bird* are like humans: afraid, curious, brave, and even tricky! Have a conversation with your child about these characters by asking:

- Which animal in this story is most afraid of Crocodile? Why?
- Which animal in this story misses Crocodile most? Why?
- Which animal in this story could be Crocodile’s BFF? Why?
- If you could be an animal in this story, which one would you be? Why?
- If Plover Bird were a human, what kind of person would she be? What are her qualities?
- What can Plover Bird teach us about helping others? (*Act Kind and Caring. Be a Problem Solver. Show Good Manners. Make Peace, Not War.*)

Family Project: Make a Job Chart

Print the “Home Job: Be a Plover Bird” poster. Display it in a prominent place at home (fridge, bedroom, hallway). Then, use the poster as inspiration to create a family job chart that could track and reward your child for “acting like Plover Bird.”



Revisit Plot

Screens 18-21 of the “Read” section challenge children to help Plover Bird collect the things needed to make Crocodile’s medicine. They earn achievements for completing tasks.

- **Learn from your child:** Children are digital natives and would love the opportunity to teach parents how to improve their game! Revisit Screens 18-21 and ask your child to teach you how to scrape the tree bark, collect red peppers, gather cotton seeds, and start a fire.



Explore Setting

Dentist Bird is based on a West African folktale that comes from the country of Liberia. The illustrations in the story show beautiful detail of the forest where the animal characters live. They also offer visual and musical glimpses of the people who live in this part of the world.

After reading, sit down with your child and go back to your favorite scenes from the interactive book. Take turns describing it using all five senses (hear, see, feel, smell, taste) as if you were actually there.



🎵 Family Project: Play the Drums

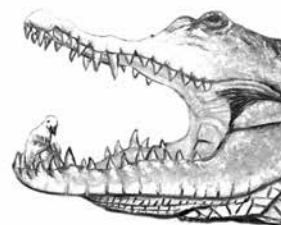
Drumming is a deep-rooted musical tradition of West Africa, including Liberia. On Screen 5 of the “Read” section, you can listen to the percussion sounds of Leaf Walker’s flexible neck turning. The background of the page has built-in drumming sounds. Take turns creating percussion compositions with your child. You can even record them and make a household playlist!



Talk about Healthy Teeth

Crocodile has a toothache because he cannot clean out the food that gets stuck in his teeth.

- Talk to your child about Crocodile’s problem. Why was Crocodile in pain? What caused his toothache? What was the solution for the pain? Then, have them make connections to their own lives. Ask: What are the different ways people can take care of their teeth? What kinds of problems can you have if you don’t take care of your teeth?
- Talk about Cleaning Teeth: On Screen 14, Crocodile watches jealously as a woman cleans her teeth with a natural toothbrush. “How I wish I could hold a branch like that. Then I would be able to clean my own teeth,” he cries. Tell your child that in many parts of the world, a natural toothbrush is fashioned out of twigs or branches. These are also called chew sticks.



Family Project:

Work with your child to research and learn about different tools used around the world to clean teeth.

CREDITS: *Dentist Bird: How Plover Bird Came to Clean Crocodile’s Teeth* is based on a retelling by Michael Richards with illustrations by David Wolobah. Music: Steve Sandberg. Voiceover Narration: Soneela Nankani. Educational Consultant: Alexis Tuckfelt. Production Designer: Faith Su. Developer: Jason Schroeder. Publisher: Literary Safari.



Be a Plover Bird

Act Kind and Caring

Offers to help family members without being asked.

Be a Problem Solver

Tries to work things out in a way that makes everyone happy.

Show Good Manners

Uses please, thank you, can I help you, and sorry.

Make Peace, Not War

Looks for ways to be friendly and to share, even when it is difficult.

