



Classroom Guide

Title: **Galimoto**

Author: **Karen Lynn Williams**

Illustrator: **Catherine Stock**

Theme: It's amazing how something as common and uncomplicated as wire can be used to create complicated and interesting things.

Program Summary: Walking through his village, a young African boy uses his wits to search for scraps of wire to make his very own “Galimoto.” Viewers are shown how something as common and uncomplicated as wire can be used to create complicated and interesting things. LeVar interviews a wire artist who makes sculptures from wire, a circus family who does high wire acts without a net, and he rides on the longest tramway in the world – which, by coincidence, moves on a cable wire.

Topics for Discussion:

Discuss why other villagers laughed or shook their heads when Kondi said he planned to make a galimoto. Invite students to share their experiences of occasions when others thought they couldn't do something, but they proved them wrong in the end.

Talk about the qualities that Kondi possessed that enabled him to successfully make his galimoto. For example, he was persistent (he never gave up trying to obtain materials), resourceful (he saw possible uses in different types of materials), and creative.

Although students will be able to identify many ways in which their lives are different from Kondi's, also discuss the similarities between Kondi and themselves. Ensure that students realize that the story is set in contemporary Africa.

Curriculum Extension Activities:

Before viewing the program, brainstorm a list of items that are made of wire or that have wire as a part. Retain the list to refer to after watching so that students may add to it.

Obtain some samples of different types of wire (a local electrical supply company may have some scraps) and have students examine them. Some wires are actually made up of smaller wires.

In the story, Kondi collected scrap wire and made a toy vehicle—a “galimoto.” Have students use all sorts of recyclable materials to create their own galimoto. Collect materials such as cardboard rolls, toothpicks, popsicle sticks, twist ties, bottle caps, and the like, for students to use. Display all the creations.



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Invite an electrician into the class to discuss the importance of safety around electrical appliances, wiring, and electricity in general.

Kondi is a contemporary African boy. Locate Africa on a world map. On a map of Africa, locate Malawi, the setting for this story. Discuss the great variety in the geographical regions of Africa, i.e., desert, rain forests, Nile River valley, etc. To lead the students into some research, make a K-W-L chart with them about Africa. Start with a brainstormed list of what they know (K) about the continent. Have them think of the questions they have about Africa (W) and record them on the chart. After the students have completed their research, record what they have learned (L) on the chart. Work with the media specialist to find both fiction and nonfiction books about Africa to assist students with their research. Students may wish to do a creative project that shows what they learned through their research.

Give students a length of wire and have them make a wire sculpture. Stipulate that they may bend, twist, or shape the wire in any way they choose, but they may not cut it. Display their creations. *Note:* Eighteen-gauge aluminum wire is easy for students to manipulate. Galvanized or annealed steel—also 18-gauge—is somewhat stiffer, but may also be handled fairly easily.

Supplementary Booklist:

At the Crossroads by Rachel Isadora

Masai and I by Virginia Kroll, illustrated by Nancy Carpenter

Mirette on the High Wire by Emily Arnold McCully

Related Themes:

- imagination
- world cultures

Related Reading Rainbow Programs:

- Program #81 — Tar Beach
- Program #55 — Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters

About the Author: Karen Lynn Williams grew up in Connecticut and has a degree in deaf education. She has taught hearing-impaired children in the U.S. and in Malawi,



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where she lived for several years. Her fascination with the independence and ingenuity of the village children inspired the story of *Galimoto*.

About the Illustrator: Catherine Stock is the author and/or illustrator of numerous books for children, including *Emma's Dragon Hunt*, a *Reading Rainbow* review book. She typically travels to the location where a story she is illustrating is set to research the surroundings before she does her watercolor paintings.