

Subject
Language Arts

Grade 4- 5- 6

Summary

Explore in detail, the characters and artwork of the story, *The Nutmeg Princess*, by Grenadian storyteller and author, Richardo Keens-Douglas. The activities include role-playing, re-creating artwork from the story, sampling food or baking and banner-making using positive messages.

Overall Expectations

Students will read a variety of fiction and analyse and create media works.

Specific Expectations

Students will identify a writer's perspective or character's motivation.

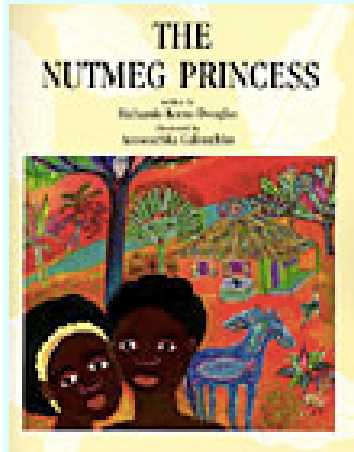
Students will analyse and assess a media work and express a considered viewpoint about it.

Author
Kim Saunders

The Nutmeg Princess: get to know her characters

BACKGROUND

Recently, FCP met with Richardo Keens - Douglas at his home in Grenada. In our conversation with the well-known storyteller, author and playwright, he told us about the inspiration for his story, *The Nutmeg Princess*. It was inspired by a young black girl. She was sitting in the audience of a group of children during one of Richardo's storytellings. His young friend asked if he knew any stories about black princesses. Richardo shook his head, replying "No". Recognizing how important this was to children, this was the inspiration for Richardo to write *The Nutmeg Princess*.



(ISBN:1-55037-236-X)

This Grenadian folktale takes place on the tiny Isle of Spice. Meet best friends Aglo and Petal, who go to the lake on the mountaintop in search of the legendary Nutmeg Princess.

ACTIVITY: Read the story, *The Nutmeg Princess*. Below is a selection of follow-up activities for your class or small group.

1. In the story, Petite Mama describes the Nutmeg Princess as "...the most beautiful princess you have ever seen...it's the kind of beauty you can't put words to. Her beauty flows from inside her soul." Petite Mama then tells "...when she came, she would sit in the middle of the lake on a pieces of bamboo tied together by straw and just drift, humming a soulful song. Sometimes it was sad, sometimes it was happy."
With a partner (or in small groups) create a skit or presentation based on the story. For example, imagine a cast of characters from *The Nutmeg Princess* have been invited to appear on **the** famous TV show, Oprah Live.
 - a) Oprah's questions to the Nutmeg Princess - *What are your beauty secrets? Are there special foods you eat or exercise routines you do? What songs do you hum? Are you thinking of recording your songs on CD?*
 - a) Oprah might enquire to Petal and Aglo about the estate they've inherited from Petite Mama – *Are you planning to build a resort on the property for visitors to see the famous lake?*

- b) Petite Mama is asked – *Is there any truth to the rumours that you are a witch or Obeah woman?*
2. The artwork by Annouchka Galouchko captures the essence of this story in a magical way. It's colourful like its characters and the Caribbean. The artist's details include using a variety of patterns and symbols in each drawing. Every illustrated page includes exotic and imaginary animals.
- Browse through the book, looking closely on each page. Choose one or two pictures or animals and replicate them. Make your own patterns.
 - Using your own style, illustrate your favourite part of the story.
3. The artist, Annouchka Galouchko illustrates some of the village people with animal faces. Look closely at the pictures to see if you can identify some of the animals.
- Are they real or imaginary animals?
 - How many do you see?
4. If you live in a community where grocery stores sell exotic fruit, find out if some of the fruit in the story are available for you to sample. This will help bring the taste of the Caribbean to you.
- Have a picnic with fruits such as sapodillas, mangoes, bananas, star-apples, guavas, oranges, soursops and plums.
 - If these fruits are not available, buy small quantities of spices such as nutmeg, cinnamon, ground ginger, and cloves. These are all grown in the Isle of Spice. Bake a favourite spice cake to include these yummy spices in your recipe.
 - Homemade nutmeg ice cream is a familiar treat you can buy on the streets in Grenada. You'll often see older ladies sitting under umbrellas with their ice cream makers next to them on a small table. If possible, try making this delightful treat. You'll need ice, rock salt, cream and of course, nutmeg.
5. At the conclusion of the story, the Nutmeg Princess shares her message of hope and love with Petal and Aglo. "...*You were unselfish, said the Princess. You didn't think only of yourself, but cared enough for your friend to bring him to safety. Take that gift of caring out into the world. Go now, follow your dreams and if you believe in yourselves, all things are possible.*"
- Make up banners and posters for your room or classroom with similar positive messages. You could include fun lettering using some of your patterns and symbols from the artwork in the story.
 - If poetry, rapping or chanting is your style, put your positive message in that format for your classmates or friends. Repetition and catchy melodies help others to join in and remember your message.