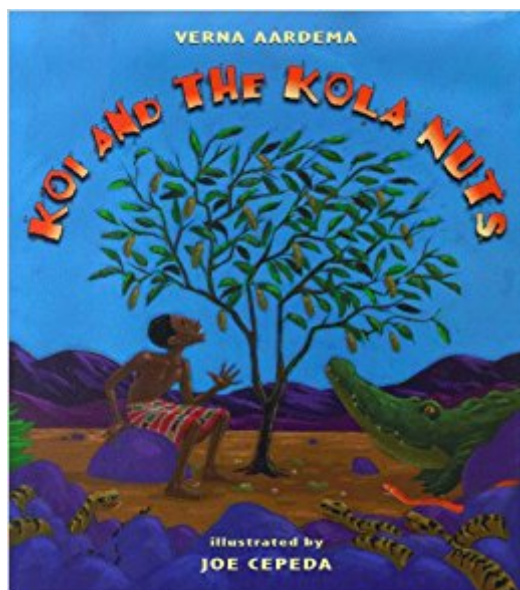


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# Koi And The Kola Nuts: A Tale From Liberia



## Synopsis

Meet a crocodile, a snake, and an ant who would do anything for some kola nuts. Meet a demanding chief who seeks a worthy husband for his beautiful daughter. Now meet Koi, a worthy young man who just happens to have inherited a seemingly useless kola nut tree, and has just set out in search of adventure and romance. Could Koi's kola nut tree possibly bring good to others? And could this good possibly come back to him in full measure? Read this delightfully spirited tale by the premier reteller of African folktales for children, illustrated with Joe Cepeda's boisterous paintings, to find out!

## Book Information

Age Range: 3 and up

Lexile Measure: AD550L (What's this?)

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Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 6 customer reviews

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## Customer Reviews

Kindergarten-Grade 4-Aardema first related Koi's adventures in *Tales from the Story Hat* (Coward, 1960; o.p.). Her revision is accompanied by Cepeda's ebullient oil paintings; his vivid colors, often presented in unexpected combinations and applied thickly, add texture to the already dynamic compositions. When Koi is cheated out of his inheritance by his older brothers, he leaves his Liberian village to seek his fortune elsewhere. He carries his only legacy: a bundle of kola nuts. Along the way, the young man shares his meager resources with a snake, an army of ants, and a crocodile. Koi is, therefore, empty-handed when he arrives at the next village and is challenged to perform three tasks to earn the chief's daughter's hand (and half of his kingdom). With a little help

from his friends, Koi succeeds on all counts and ruminates on a variation of the golden rule on his wedding day. Ideophones enhance the narrative, which is presented with Aardema's consummate ear for folktale rhythms and patterns. A helpful glossary provides pronunciation and background for unfamiliar words. Use this story in concert with John Steptoe's *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters* (Lothrop, 1987) to present a masculine and feminine version of goodness rewarded. Wendy Lukehart, Dauphin County Library, Harrisburg, PA Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.

An irrepressible youth turns a missed opportunity into good fortune in this frenetic retelling of an African folktale from Aardema (*This for That*, 1997, etc.). When his father, the chief of his people, dies, Koi is out hunting and so misses the division of property among his brothers (including the distribution of ivory tusks), leaving him with a lone kola tree as his inheritance. Undeterred, Koi sees this as a chance to explore the world. On his journey, he encounters several creatures who are in need of assistance: a snake with a sick mother, a frantic army of ants fleeing the Forest Devil, and a penitent crocodile facing the wrath of the Rainmaker, whose dog he ate. Koi's kola nuts are always the answer to the desperate animals' prayers. When he comes upon the realm of Chief Fulikolli, a ragged Koi accepts the challenge of winning the hand of the chief's daughter and one half of his chieftom. With the aid of the grateful creatures, Koi performs three seemingly impossible tasks. Laced with the liberal humor that is Aardema's hallmark, Koi's story and his sturdy spirit will draw readers in, as will the many uses of the kola nut and the lesson of doing good for others. In Cepeda's vibrant illustrations, the Liberian landscape glistens and its people dance across the page, while the last scene of Koi as a chief is a portrait of ebullience rewarded. (glossary) (Picture book/folklore. 4-8) -- Copyright ©1999, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.

My children loved the book. We especially liked learning the new words.

loved

This book was purchased to help stock Treehouse Books in Philadelphia. They grow and sustain a community of readers, writers and thinkers. The kids will truly love this tale!

I am a first and second grade teacher and I just happened to show the video of this book during a unit on Africa. What a fun story! The main character is a kind, generous person who feels he has been treated badly by the people of his village. The text is predictable so the children sort of know

what's coming and they love it! They particularly enjoy the large, fat lady of the new village who wants to eat Koi. All of Koi's kindness and generosity are repaid during the course of the story and the children become very involved in his plight. I would recommend this book for teaching story elements and characterization. It is also a very good story to use when teaching story mapping. I plan to use it often!

I remember my class listening to this story and all of us just LOVING it. It's right up there with Why do Mosquitos Buzz in peoples' Ears. I will always remember this book and highly recommend it to any teacher or parent with young children, and am very excited to share it with my own!

This book illustrates the blessings that come from sharing what you have with others even when you don't have much to share. It is a great lesson for kids 3 to 7 with fabulous artwork.

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