



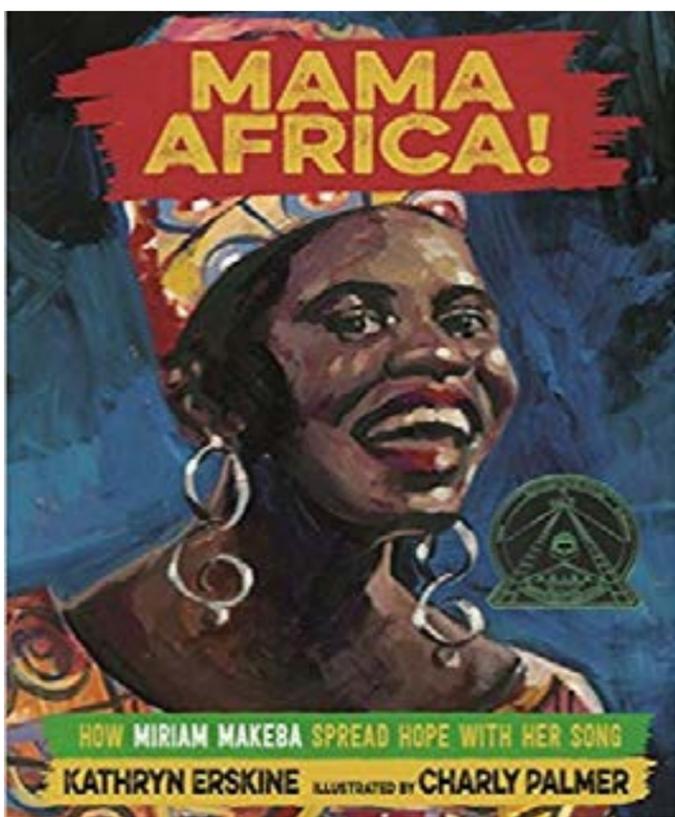
Bringing Africa to your Classroom

Mama Africa
by
Kathryn Erskine

Topics Covered | Things to Introduce:

- Protest songs
- Prominent Black female artists
- Liberation
- Segregation.

- Level: Primary, ages 6-10
- Country Focus: South Africa
- Language Focus: Xhosa



Miriam Makeba, a Grammy Award-winning South African singer, rose to fame in the hearts of her people at the pinnacle of apartheid—a brutal system of segregation similar to American Jim Crow laws. Mama Africa, as they called her, raised her voice to help combat these injustices at jazz clubs in Johannesburg; in exile, at a rally beside Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.; and before the United Nations. Set defiantly in the present tense, this biography offers readers an intimate view of Makeba’s fight for equality. Kathryn Erskine’s call-and-response style text and Charly Palmer’s bold illustrations come together in a raw, riveting duet of protest song and praise poem. A testament to how a single voice helped to shake up the world—and can continue to do so.

From Author’s Blog: About Kathryn Erskine

“I grew up in Europe, Africa, Canada, and the United States, and was a lawyer before I figured out what I really wanted to be when I grew up—a writer! I take my inspiration from the world around me and from my personal experiences, including my childhood attending 8 different schools.

I travel a fair amount, give speeches, visit schools, etc. and try keep up my website in between. Writing time is precious -- I’m currently working on several novels: middle grade, young adult, and even adult, and some picture books. My latest novel is *THE BADGER KNIGHT*, an adventure. My newest (and first) picture book, *MAMA AFRICA*, the story of Miriam Makeba, South African civil rights activist and singer, is due to publish in 2017.”

Discussion

Learning options:

Mama Africa! contains strong and power themes, all of which are of value to student learning. Teachers can either choose one or more of these themes when introducing Mama Africa! to their students.

- Language and ethnic diversity, with a specific focus on South Africa's diverse languages and population.
- Segregation history as shaped by South African politics, including a focus stalwards such as Nelson Mandela, Desmond Tutu, and Walter Sisulu;
- The social power embedded in music making, focusing specifically on women music legends such as Billie Holiday and Ella Fitzgerald.

Activity Suggestions/ Resources

General lesson sequence: Show students where South Africa is; Tell them more about segregation and the country's history of apartheid.

Visit these sites for imagery on South Africa

Additional resources:

For background on Myriam Makeba's life, see:

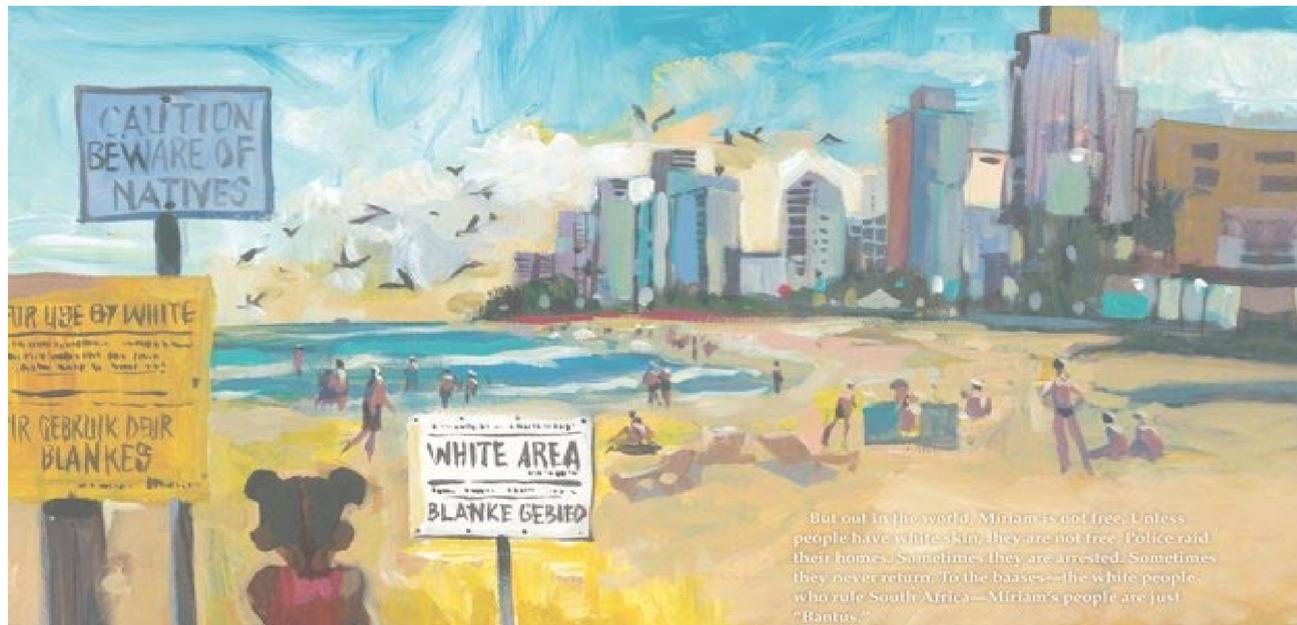
<http://www.sahistory.org.za/people/miriam-makeba>

For a soundbite of her most love songs, see Pata-pata:

https://www.google.com/search?rlz=1C1GGRV_enUS758US758&q=milk+%26+sugar+hi-a+ma&-stick=H4sIAAAAAAAAAAONgFuLRT9c3LDTNMkovqqhSAvOKDUzzKsyrqrS0spOt9HNLizOT9YtSk_OLUjLz0uOTc0qLS1KLrPJLMIKLFMpSi4oz8_OKAc3SCYJKAAAA&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwje4o-o1YjcA-hUogKOKHaJZALsQri4ISTAH&biw=1103&bih=768

The Click Song - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=onBLru8SfOk>

Senzeni Na - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5fDU1PYWT8A>



Country Fact Box: South Africa

Capital:

Pretoria

Population:

58 Million People

People from South Africa are called:

South Africans

Main Languages Spoken in South Africa:

Zulu, Xhosa, Afrikaans, English, Northern Sotho, Tswana, Southern Sotho, Tsonga, Swazi, Venda, Southern Ndebele



Language Box: Xhosa

How many people speak Xhosa as their mother tongue?

8.2 Million

Practice some Xhosa

Hello.	<i>Bhofa</i>
	<i>Hamba kakuhle</i> (to the person leaving), <i>sala kakuhle</i> (to the person staying).
Good bye.	
Please.	<i>Nceda</i>
Thank you.	<i>Ndivabulela, enkosi.</i>
Excuse me	<i>Uxolo</i>
Yes.	<i>Ewe.</i>
No.	<i>Hayi</i>
Mother	<i>Umama</i>
Father	<i>Utata</i>
Child	<i>Umntwana</i>

For more information on Xhosa and what it sounds like, visit

<http://aboutworldlanguages.com/Xhosa>