

# Anna Hibiscus' Song



**Creative activities  
for children and their grown ups**

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## **Grown ups guide to using this activity pack**

This pack accompanies Utopia Theatre's family show Anna Hibiscus' Song. It can be used to help prepare children for seeing the show or revisiting the story and characters. The activities in this pack are designed to be used by children with the help of their grown ups at home or in the classroom. Most of the things required for activities are easily available at home or school or can be bought at low cost. You can either follow the activities in this pack in order or choose those which you think will most interest your child. Many of the activities in this pack ask children to draw, write or colour in. If you are accessing the pack online, then you will need to print these pages.

A PDF of the pack is available to download from Utopia Theatre's website. All images used in the pack can be accessed separately in the Image Resource Pack, also located on the website. Teachers may want to use the photographs of the characters included in the pack to sequence the story.

Songs from the show are available to stream on Spotify, just search for Anna Hibiscus' Song original soundtrack.

### **Credits**

Activity pack created by Deborah Pakkar-Hull and Louise Clark

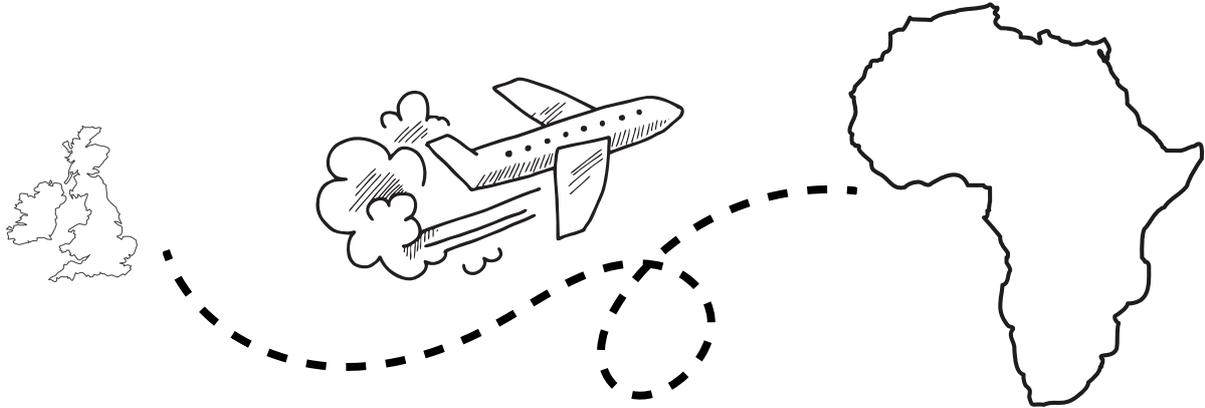
Consultant: Mojisola Kareem-Elufowoju

With thanks to teachers at Coop Academy Princeville, Bradford



# ANNA'S AMAZING AFRICA

Africa is very big and lots of people live there. There are currently 54 countries in Africa, all different to one another, with different food and languages. If you want to travel from Britain to Africa, you need to fly on an airplane and the journey will take all day.



Here's some pictures of different parts of Africa



city



savannah



desert



village compound



forest/mountains



coastline

**Where would you like to visit and why?**

Anna Hibiscus lives in Africa. She lives in a big white house with her Mama and Papa, her Grandmother and Grandfather, her Aunties and Uncles and all her Cousins. Outside the house there is a large garden with a high wall all around it, and outside the walls is the city.

The garden is beautiful, full of flowers and trees, some with fruit growing on them and one that has a rope tied to it so you can climb it. There are places in the garden to sit and rest, places to play and hide and places to park cars and make food. There are chickens in the garden and a small house for them to live in.

## Can you make Anna's garden?

### Instructions for grown ups

You will need a tuff tray; these are easily available to buy online. Alternatively, you can use a food tray, the lid of a storage box or even a shallow washing up bowl.

Gather a range of small objects from around your house, garden or classroom and help children to use them to create an environment on the tray - in this case Anna Hibiscus' home and garden.

Encourage children to play with what they have created.



### What we used to create Anna's home and garden

Empty food containers

Cardboard egg box

Empty matchboxes covered in tape

Greenery from the garden

Bird seed

Wooden forks and sticks

Toy animals and a toy car

Cupcake cases

Pincushions

Playdough

Scraps of fabric

Chalk



Photo Credit: Louise Clark



On hot days the Aunties hang out their clothes - which they call buba and wrapper - to dry in the garden. Their clothes are brightly coloured and covered in patterns like these

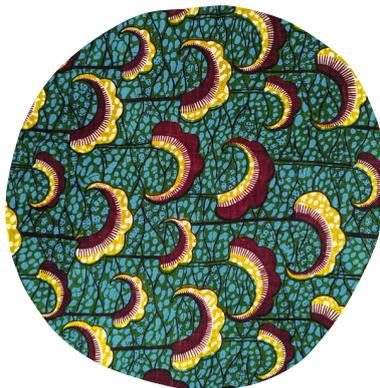


Photo Credit: Deborah Pakkar-Hull

*Can you see how the same pattern is repeated lots of times?*

## Would you like to have a go at making your own patterns?

### Instructions for grown ups

You will need one large potato, a knife, paint, a paintbrush and plain, light-coloured cloth such as an old pillowcase.

Cut the potato in half and carve two simple shapes into each half. Make sure that children are supervised when using a knife.

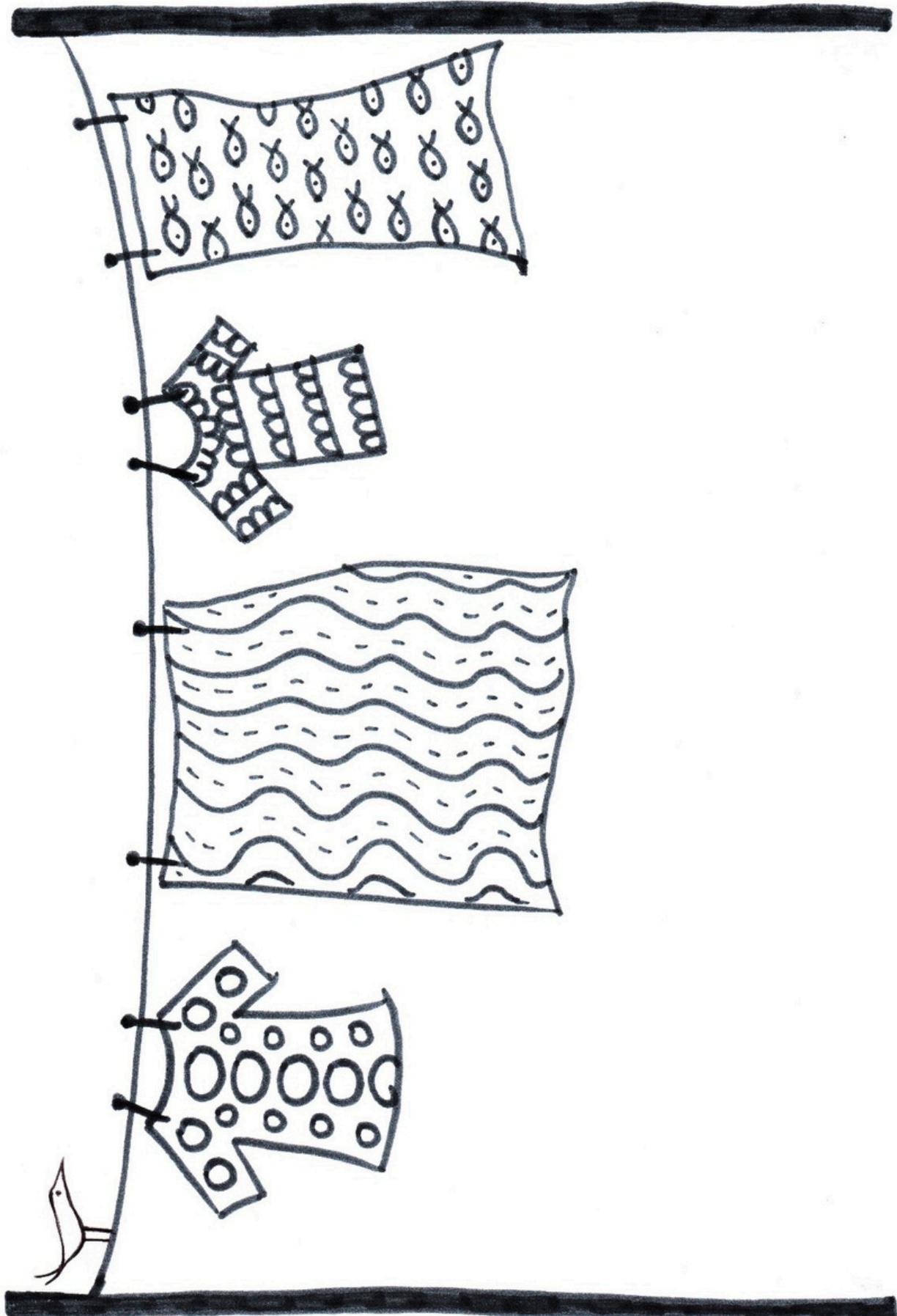


For smaller shapes you can reduce the size of the potato to help make printing easier and more precise. Using a paintbrush, add a layer of paint onto the two carved shapes.

Now you can begin to print onto your cloth - practice on paper first to help you decide what pattern you want. You will need to keep adding more paint to your potato shape as you print. If you want to try different colours, then simply wash the paint off your potato before adding another colour.



Colour in the clothes hanging on the washing line in Anna's garden  
using your favourite colours



The clothes hanging on the washing line are not the only colourful things in the garden, beautiful birds fly into the garden every day, just like these.



Roller



Beautiful Sunbird



Bee-eater

Photo Credits:  
Abyssinian roller by Dotun55, [Wikimedia](#), Image licensed under [CC BY SA 4.0](#)  
Sunbird by Nigel Vooden, [Wikimedia](#), Image licensed under [CC BY SA 4.0](#)  
Bee-Eater by Steve Garvie, [Flickr](#), Image licensed under [CC BY NC SA 2.0](#)

## Would you like to make a bird puppet that you can play with?

### Instructions for grown ups

Using a piece of fabric, about the size of a large handkerchief, help children to tie a knot in the middle to become the body, leaving the loose fabric to become the wings. If you did your potato printing onto fabric, then you can use this to make your puppet.



Photo Credit: Deborah Pakkar-Hull

Ask children to have a go at flying their bird puppet by holding onto the body and moving it up and down quickly so that the wings flap.

**Encourage children to fly the bird around the space, giving instructions to fly UNDER and OVER furniture and to perch ON or IN objects.**

**Find things around the home or classroom that they can use to make a nest for their bird, or to pretend to feed it.**

If children want to make a more sophisticated puppet, then they can use the same fabric to make a person.



Tie knots in two corners of the fabric to make the hands.



Gather up the fabric between two of the knots and using an elastic band tie it to make the head.



Tie the remaining two corners with elastic bands to make the feet.



Ask children to either work in twos or join in with your child - one person takes hold of the head and hands, and the other the feet.

Photo Credit: Deborah Pakkar-Hull

Put your puppet on top of a table or use a surface that you can freely move around. Start by simply turning the puppet's head to look around the room.

- Try walking your puppet around the tabletop.
- Can you make it jump and hop, can it do a handstand, or even a cartwheel?
- If you are working with more than one puppet in the room, introduce two puppets to one another.
- Can they play a game together, maybe you could try hide and seek?

**Living in Amazing Africa makes Anna feel very happy...  
so happy that she doesn't know what to do with her  
feelings. She decides to ask her family what they do  
when they feel happy.  
Follow her to find out what they say...**



## COUNTING AND CLAPPING

**Grandmother squeezes Grandfather's hand to show that she loves him. Grandfather counts all the reasons why he is happy. He uses his fingers to count.**



Photo Credit: Chris Saunders.  
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**Can you count how many fingers Grandfather is showing in each picture?**

You can count in English and any other languages you can speak.

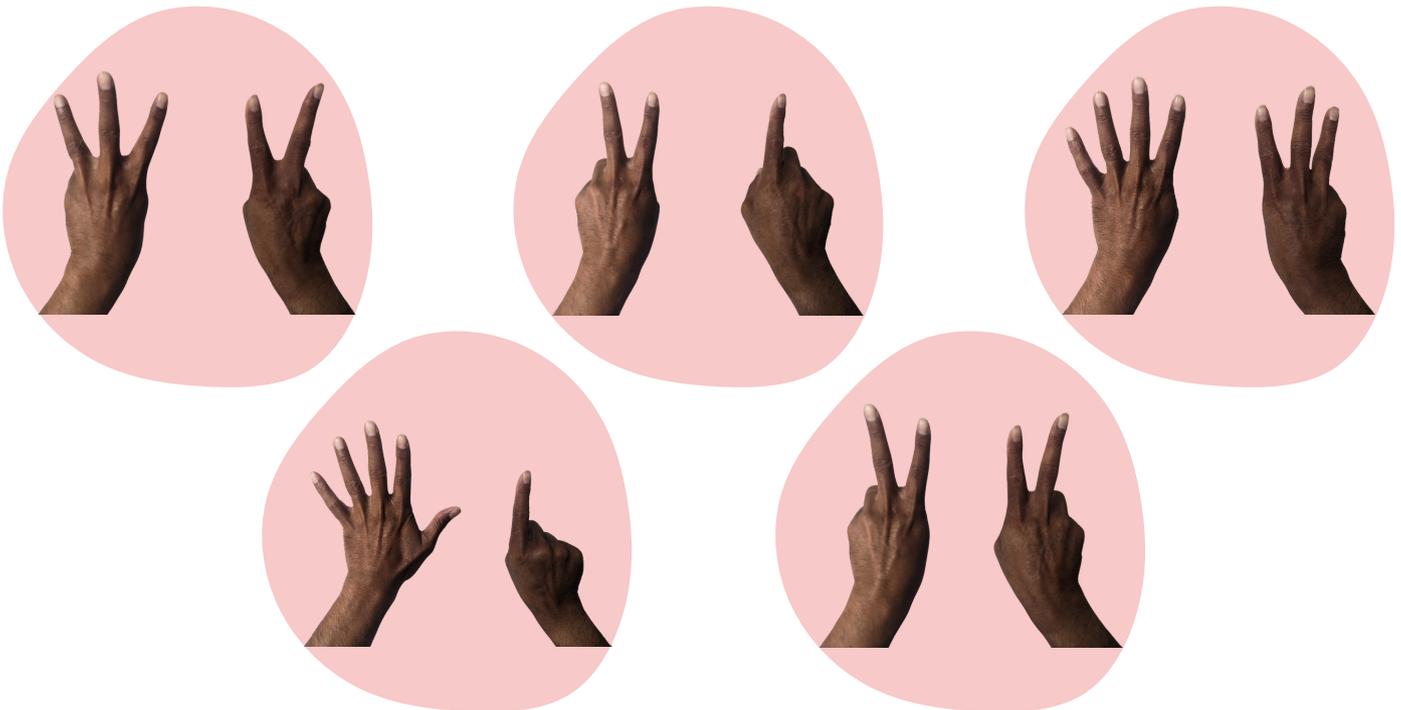


Photo Credit: Deborah Pakkar-Hull

***How high can you count using your fingers?***

**Would you like to play a clapping and counting game?**

**Instructions for grown ups**

1. Ask the children to clap the same number of times as you.
2. Clap twice.
3. Wait for children to copy you.
4. Continue playing using different numbers of claps each time (start with low numbers).
5. When children have mastered the game, they can have a go at leading it. You can also ask them to count out their claps.

## How about another game, this time clapping different rhythms?

### Instructions for grown up's

You will need four plates and up to 8 apples, oranges, or whatever fruit you have in the house or classroom. You might find it helpful to play a piece of music so that you have a rhythm to work with.

- Lay out the plates in a row.
- Add a piece of fruit to each plate.
- Ask children to clap once over each piece of fruit working along the line of plates.
- Practice a few times, trying to create a regular rhythm with your clapping.
- Take away a piece of fruit from one of the plates and tell children that when they get to that plate, they don't clap, instead they press their hands together and make no sound. Try to keep to the rhythm.
- Play a few times, taking fruit away from different plates.
- Finally add more than one piece of fruit to one of the plates. Tell children that when they get to that plate, they must clap once for each piece of fruit. Again, try to keep to the rhythm.
- Play a few times, adding fruit to different plates.
- Now you can have some fun mixing it all up!

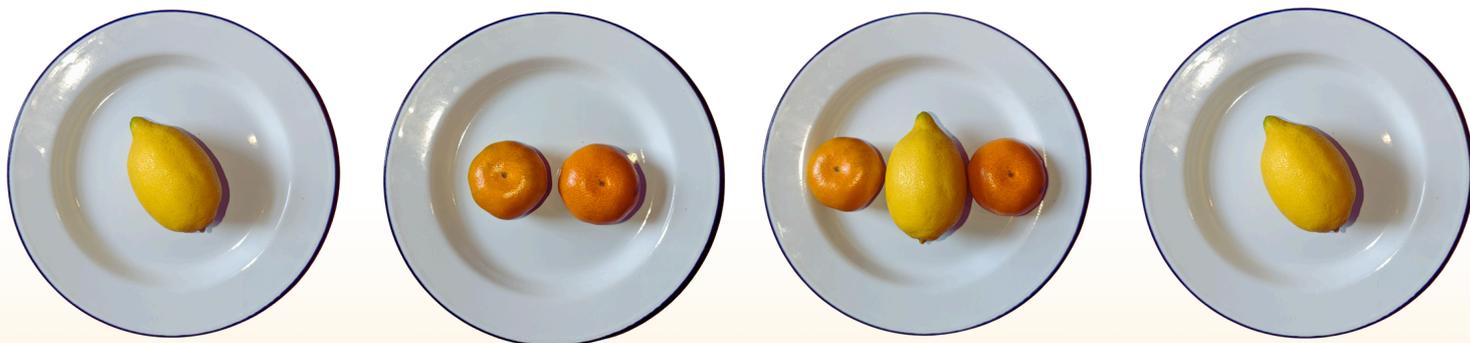


Photo Credit: Louise Clark

## POUND THE YAM

**Aunty Joli's happiness gives her strength to work which she uses to pound yam.**

Aunty Joli buys the yam at the market. This is called Yam in English and Isu in Yoruba, a language Aunty Joli speaks.

The market is full of amazing fruit and vegetables like mango, plantain and spinach which are called Mangoro and Ogede Agbagba and Efo by the people selling them.

**Do you have different names for these?**



Photo Credit: Chris Saunders.  
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plantain -  
ogede agbagba



Photo Credits:  
Mango: [Freesstockphotos](#), Image licensed under [CC0.1.0](#)  
Plantain photo credit: Deborah Pakkar-Hull  
Spinach leaves: [Pxhere](#), Image licensed under [CC0](#)



mango - mangoro

Aunty Joli cooks food with the other Aunties and sometimes Anna and the cousins help. One of their favourite meals is Fried Plantain.

**Would you like to try cooking it?**

**Fried Plantain recipe - instructions for grown ups**

- Always supervise children, especially when using sharp objects and hot oil.
- You will need: a frying pan, a kid-safe knife, a cup, and a chopping board.
- Ingredients: 2 ripe yellow plantains, half a cup of oil for frying and a little salt.
- Cut off both ends of the plantains and peel off the outer skin.
- Slice plantains into small coin-sized pieces.
- Sprinkle a little salt onto the pieces.
- Add oil to the frying pan and heat.
- Fry the plantain pieces on both sides until golden brown.
- Put pieces onto kitchen roll or a paper towel to soak up the extra oil.
- Eat with stew, beans or an egg!

If you are not feeling in the mood for food, then you can play at cooking instead.

### Instructions for grown ups

- Talk to children about what they want to cook.
- Help them to find a variety of utensils or things that can be played with in their imaginary kitchen.
- Offer a range of materials as ingredients. These could include cotton reels, buttons, bangles, stones, seashells, pinecones, conkers, ribbons, wool, sand, dried pasta and Lego pieces. Make sure to supervise young children with small objects.
- Introduce words and actions such as STIR, WHISK, POUND, ROLL, CHOP.
- Take your imaginary kitchen outside and encourage children to find everything they need in the garden, park, or playground. They can use leaves, sticks, mud, water, acorns.
- Finally, and most importantly, pretend to eat what children have cooked!

**Aunty Joli sang a song whilst she made food.**



**IF WE WANT FOOD IN OUR BELLY, WE HAVE TO WORK  
POUND THE YAM, POUND THE YAM  
OUR HAPPINESS GIVES US THE STRENGTH TO WORK  
POUND THE YAM, POUND THE YAM**



Now that you have done some cooking, can you add two new sentences to Aunty Joli's song? We've left a gap for you to write in.

**IF WE WANT FOOD IN OUR BELLY, WE HAVE TO WORK**



.....

**OUR HAPPINESS GIVES US THE STRENGTH TO WORK**



.....

## DANCING AND CARTWHEELS



Photo Credit: Chris Saunders.  
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**Anna's Cousins and Uncle Tunde move their bodies when they feel happy by doing cartwheels and dancing.**

### **What's your happy dance?**

#### **Instructions for grown ups**

Make sure that children have a clear space to move in. Invite children to join in with the following movements. It is helpful if you do them too.

- Make themselves really big by stretching their whole bodies.
- Make themselves as small as a mouse.
- Shake out their arms and legs one at a time, as if they are trying to shake off water.
- Jump on the spot like they have springs on their feet.
- Wriggle like a worm.
- Crouch down and on the countdown, launch into the sky like a rocket.
- Float like a bubble in the air.
- Now have some fun mixing the movements up and playing with speeding them up and slowing them down.

Put on some music and tell children that they are going to do a happy dance, just like Uncle Tunde did. They can decide if they want to do any of the movements they have already used, or they can make up new moves.

You can also use movement to support children's mark-making, helping them to make the shapes that they will need to learn to write in their given language.

- Focus each session on a specific movement such as zig zags, lines, waves, circles.
- Spend some time ensuring that children understand the movement by looking at stories, pictures and films together, for example a story about a dragon with zig zag teeth.
- Explore the movement physically to music, varying the scale and speed.
- Roll out a big sheet of lining paper across the room and tape it down with masking tape.
- Ask children to sit on either side of the paper and give them two crayons, one for each hand.
- Staying seated on the spot, ask children to draw the shape of the movement you have been focusing on, moving in the direction of their written language, for example in the case of English, from left to right.
- Make sure that they create a mark on the paper using their full range of arm movement, passing across the front of their body.

*(Credit: Write Dance in the Early Years)*

## Uncle Tunde's playlist

- Buga by Kiss Daniel
- Ijo Laba Laba by Crayon
- Killin Dem by Burna Boy
- Afro Juju by Sir Shina Peters
- Ijo Fuji by Adewale Ayuba

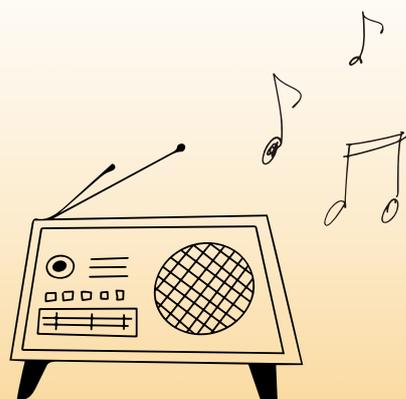


Photo Credit: Chris Saunders.  
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Please note that playing recorded music in schools requires a licence which can be purchased from PRS for Music.

## WHAT'S YOUR HAPPY?

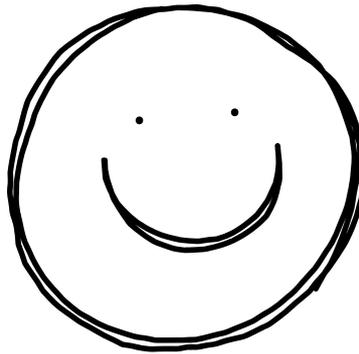
When Anna's papa is happy, he tells mama how much he loves her. When Anna's mama is happy, she sits very still and quiet and thinks about all the wonderful things in her life.

Anna's mama thinks about her family, her friends, her beautiful home and delicious food.

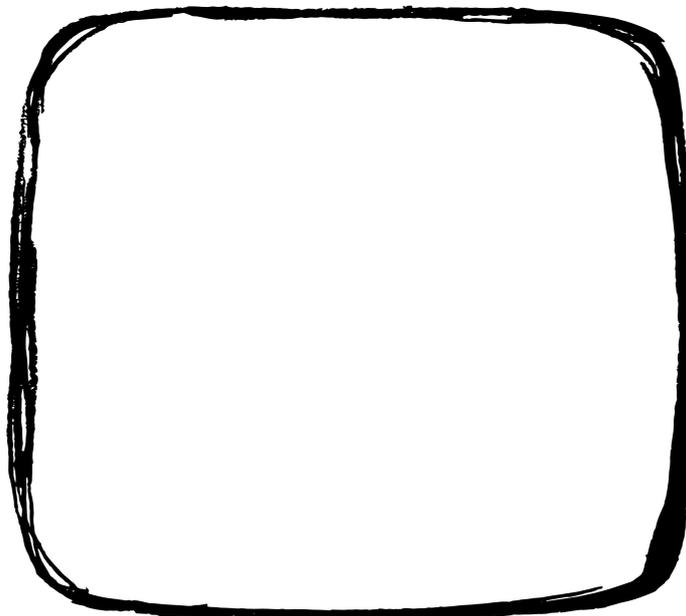


Photo Credit: Chris Saunders.  
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What makes you happy, can you draw or write it below?



Can you draw a picture of what someone who is happy looks like here?



## **You can use this to start to make a Feelings Tree.**

### **Instructions for grown up's**

- Draw a tree - we have provided a template that can be coloured in by children on the next page. You might want to make it larger, or draw it onto cardboard or even use a twig instead
- Ask children to name a feeling to add to the tree and help them to draw how someone feeling this way would look
- Ask children to tell you about when they had this feeling and then add their drawing to the tree using glue, pegs or tack
- Add as many feelings onto the tree that children want to
- Talk with children about how their feelings can sometimes be big and sometimes small, that they can sometimes feel everything on the tree all at once, and sometimes only one thing at a time.

Return to the tree any time you need to reflect with children on how they are feeling and continue to add to it as their understanding of their feelings grows.

**After asking all of her family what they do when they feel happy, Anna finds her own way to be happy – she sings!**



***What do you do when you feel happy?***

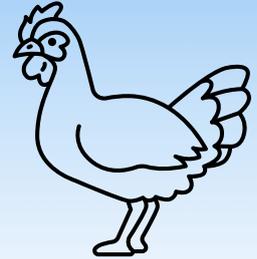
## My Feelings Tree



# WORDS AND PICTURES

We have used lots of new words in this activity pack and some of them are here. Can you match the words to the pictures?

Airplane

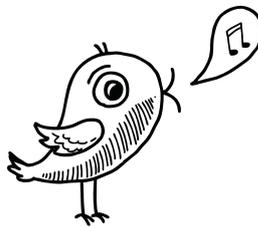


Garden

Pattern



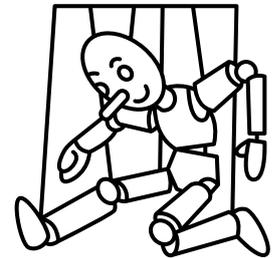
Clothes



Yam

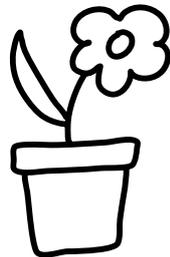


Puppet



Chicken

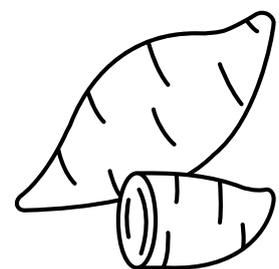
Dance



Song

Happy

City





Utopia Theatre was formed in 2012 by CEO and Artistic Director Mojisola Kareem-Elufowoju to create exceptional world-class African theatre. Synthesising African and Western performing traditions to celebrate the meeting of different cultures, the company is dedicated to demonstrating the rich cultural heritage of African theatre, and in so doing, dispel stereotypes and encourage authentic voices from the African diaspora.

For more information: [www.utopiatheatre.co.uk](http://www.utopiatheatre.co.uk)

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**Atinuke** is the author of the Anna Hibiscus series of books, including Anna Hibiscus' Song. She also wrote the No. 1 Car Spotter and Too Small Tola series; Africa, Amazing Africa; B Is for Baby; Catch That Chicken and Hugo among others. The Anna Hibiscus series tells stories of a little girl who lives in Amazing Africa with her African dad, Canadian mum and large extended family and is published by Walker Books. Atinuke was born in Nigeria and spent her childhood in both Africa and the UK.

For more information:  
[www.atinuke.co.uk](http://www.atinuke.co.uk)  
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