



BROWARD
CENTER
— *for the* —
PERFORMING ARTS



STUDY GUIDE

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL • 4th GRADE

Why Mosquitoes Buzz

Fort Lauderdale Children's Theatre



Study Guides are produced in partnership with Broward County Public Schools.

Plot Summary

Why Mosquitoes Buzz is an African folktale created to depict how and why the mosquito lost its voice. These kinds of stories are called “*pourquoi tales*” (pronounced pour-kwah), which is French for “why.”

Pourquoi tales are stories that explain why something in nature usually happens. Throughout history different cultures have told *pourquoi tales* to explain things they didn’t understand, such as why the sun comes up, why the camel has a hump, or how an elephant got its trunk.

These types of stories are passed down from generation to generation. In Africa, stories were told around the fire every evening, not only as entertainment, but to teach the children of the village what is important to the culture. This story’s central message is that one small action can cause an unexpected series of other actions and have serious consequences.

Listen for these African words and phrases:

- **Agbara** – the Yoruba word for “Power”
- **Jambo** – Swahili for “Hello”
- **Hongera** – Swahili for “Congratulations”
- **Karibu** – Swahili for “Welcome”
- **Kwa Heri Ya Kuonana** – “Goodbye, ‘til we meet again”
- **Safari Neema** – “Have a safe trip”

Note: This story is a resource for teachers to teach the skill of ‘cause and effect.’ The idea that the mosquito is to blame for the unfortunate death of the owlet is one example. The actions from the other animals also offer more examples as each animal does something that causes the next animal to do something.

Theatre Etiquette

(Before the Show)

It is often helpful to remind students of appropriate audience etiquette by explaining and discussing **why** these rules of behavior are important.

Audience members should:

- *listen carefully to the ushers, your teachers – this gets everyone to their seats quickly and ensures a pleasant experience*
- *walk single-file and hold hand-rails as you use steps – this also keeps everyone safe*
- *listen carefully to the performers – they are working hard to entertain and inform you with lots of clues about the story*
- *refrain from talking – this allows everyone to enjoy the performance without being distracted*
- *laugh if something is funny, but not too loudly – you don't want to miss any dialogue*
- *pay attention to the lighting, scenery, costumes, and music – all of these elements help provide more details to tell the story in an interesting way*
- *applaud at the end – this shows the performers that you respect and appreciate their work*

Teacher Instructions (After the Show) – *Choose from the activities listed on the following pages to extend student learning.*

Science and Social Studies Connections

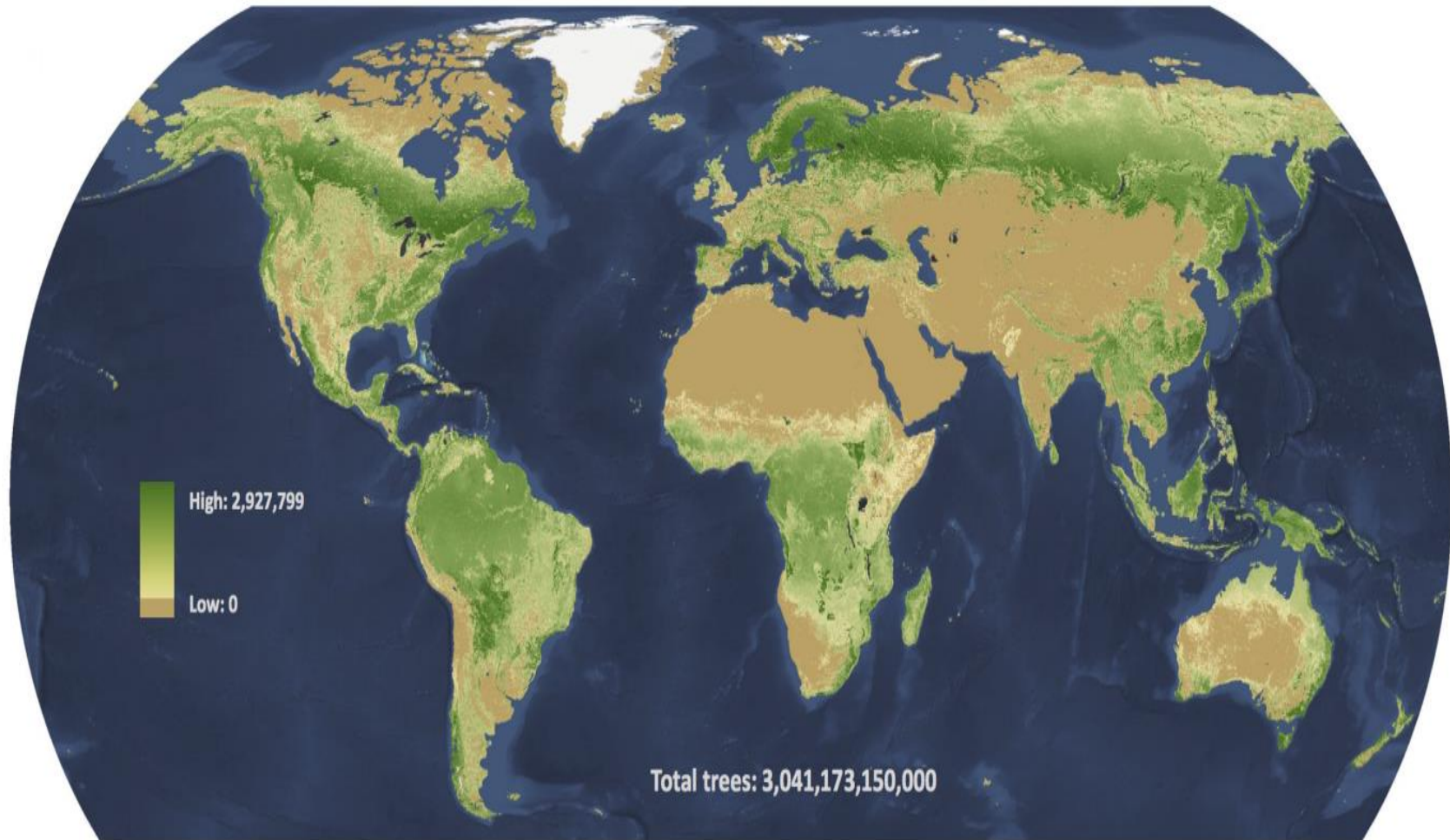
(SC.4.L.17.4, SS.4.G.1.4)

Teacher Directions: Project the World Map on the board.

Locate North America and Africa on the World Map. Focus in on Florida and West Africa in order for students to have a frame of reference of where they live and where the story takes place.

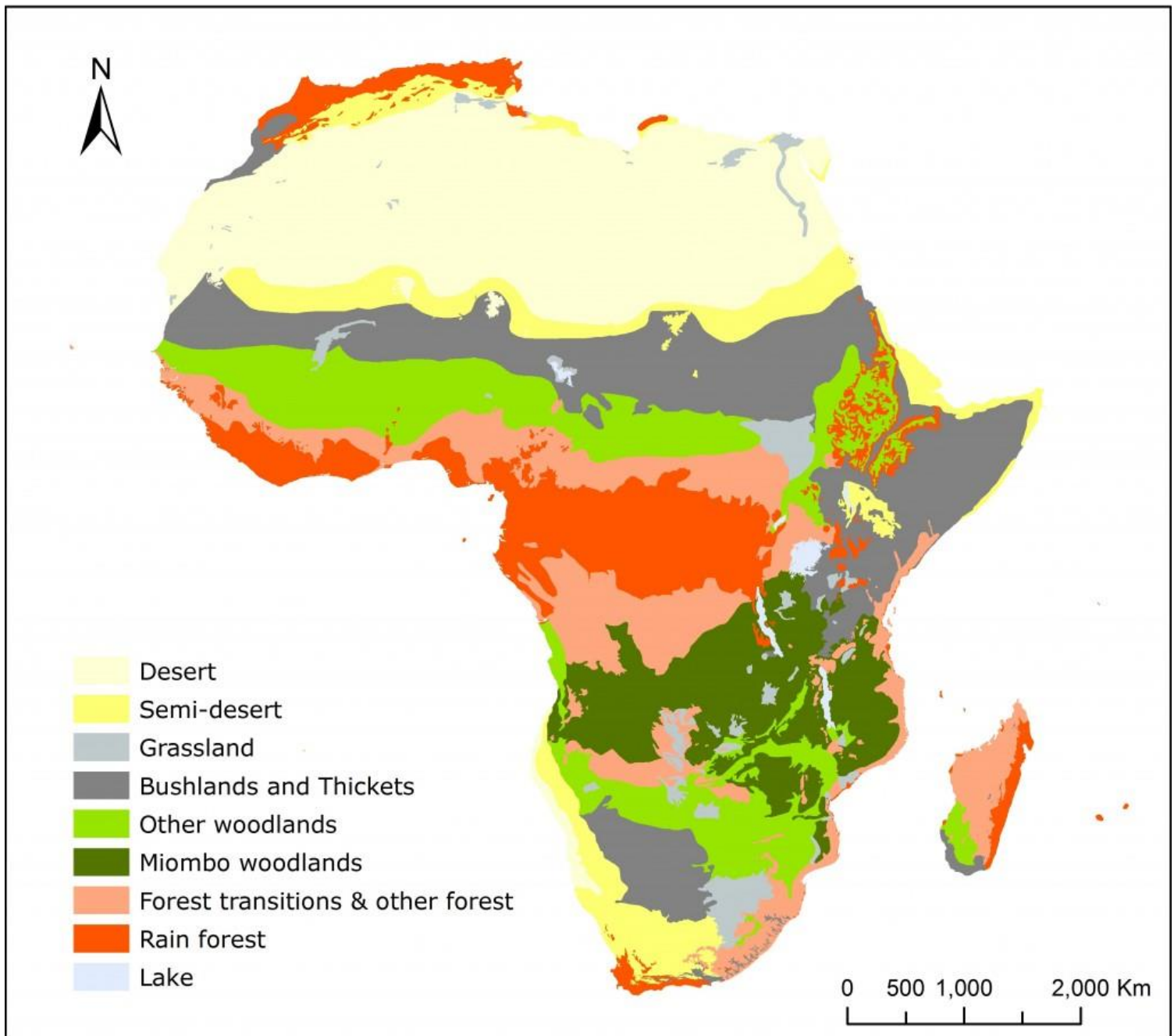
- Point out that the blue part shows the ocean, the green part of the map shows forests, and the brown part of the map shows land.
- Discuss the story location (Rainforest of West Africa) on the Ecosystem Map of Africa and the importance of how the sun, climate, animals, and plant life all work together to remain in balance. (Project the Ecosystem Map so students can see it).
- Point out that the rainforest, home to half of the continent's animal species, is being destroyed by the progress of road construction and rubber harvesting

World Map



Locate North America and Africa on this world map

Map of Africa's Ecosystem



Read the map legend to understand the ecosystems in different parts of the continent of Africa. Our story takes place in the rainforest of West Africa. Discuss the climate, animals, vegetation, and the importance of the sun for the ecosystem.

Name: _____

Think about the major characters in the story and the part they played.

Choose two to three characters listed above. Write about some events the characters experienced and challenges they faced in the story. LAFS.4.RL.1.3

Crow	Iguana	King Lion	Monkey	Mosquito
Mother Owl	Owlet	Python	Rabbit	Sun

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.

Arts Integration

Creation / Improvisation (TH.4.C.1.1)

In pairs, improvise a scene based on two friends who have a misunderstanding where one action leads to a bad situation. Try two different ways to respond to the situation and then talk about the best result possible and what could have prevented the situation in the first place. Remember to speak clearly and express your characterizations through your tone, facial expression, and movements.

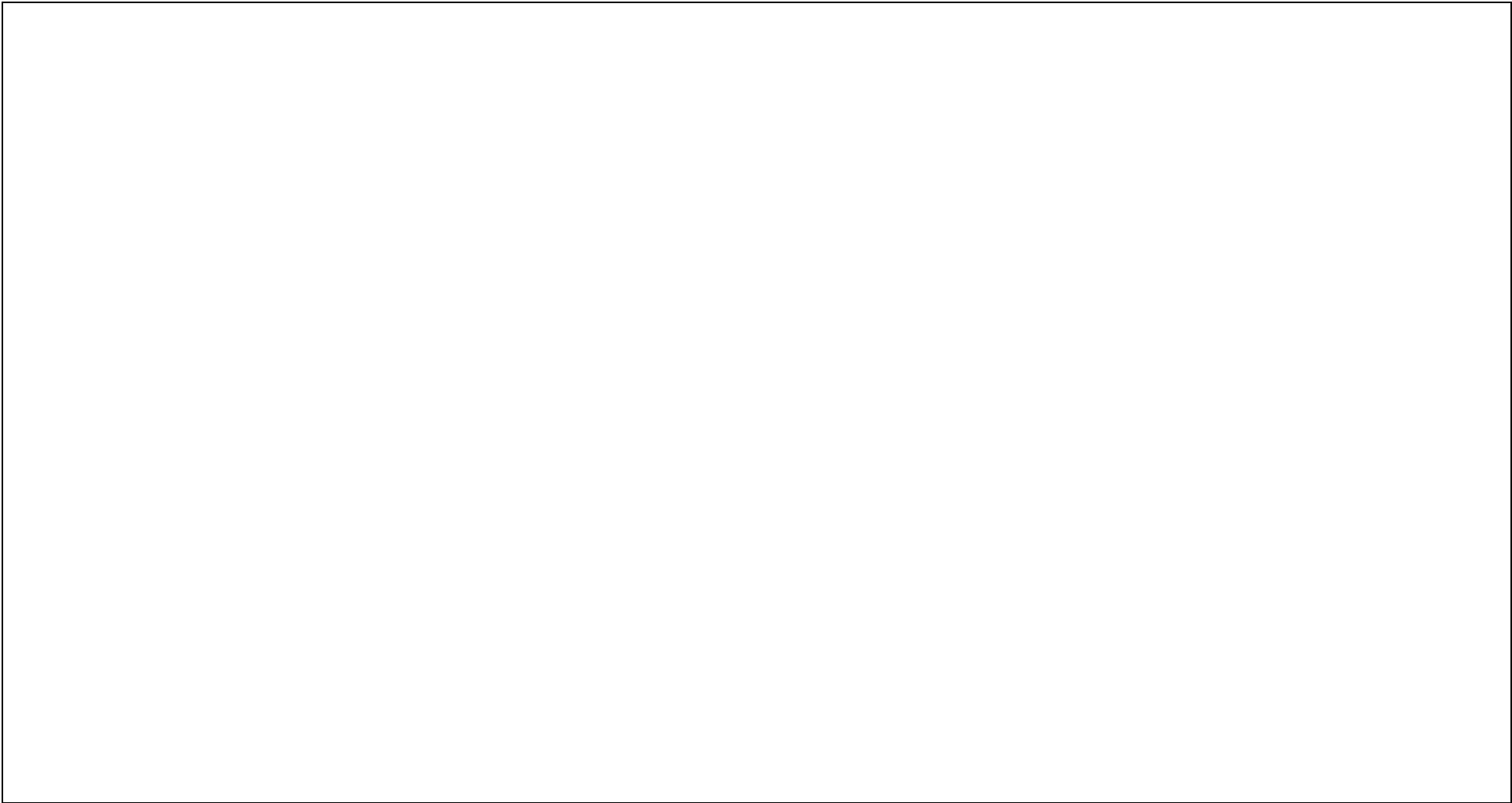
Reflection (TH.4.S.1.3)

Have a class discussion about the performance. Encourage students to address specific elements that worked well and those that could use improvement including using theater vocabulary such as characterization, choreography, and production elements.

Creation (VA.4.S.1.3)

Have students create their own artwork that reflects the setting (tropical rainforest) with all the different creatures from the story. Ask students to title their artwork (like a caption beneath the picture) that reinforces the theme of the story.

Draw a picture of the tropical rainforest of West Africa and include the creatures from the *Why Mosquitoes Buzz* story.
(VA.4.S.1.3)



Artwork Title

Artist Signature

Academic Vocabulary

- **Cause** – something that make something else happen
- **Effect** – what happens as a result of the cause
- **Deforestation** – cutting down trees
- **Ecosystem** - a large community of living organisms (plants, animals and microbes) in a particular area.
- **Harvesting** – removing (e.g. taking rubber from trees)
- **Map Legend** – words and symbols included as a key to help the viewer understand the details of a map
- **Rainforest** – a dense forest found in tropical areas with consistently heavy rainfall and a wide variety of plants and animals

Arts Vocabulary

- **Adaptation** – alter a text to make it appropriate for the stage
- **Characterization** – use body, voice, and movement to create a representation of a person or animal
- **Choreography** – movements that are combined into a dance
- **Production Elements** – costumes, lighting, props, scenery, and sound that contribute to a production
- **Storyboard** – graphic representation, drawn in sequence, of the major events in a play or movie
- **Pourquoi tale** – French term for stories that explain why something in nature usually happens

Standards Alignment: The activities in this study guide are aligned with the standards listed below. When teachers incorporate the arts, they increase student engagement, offer multiple points for students to access the curriculum, and provide alternative means for students to demonstrate what they know.

Language Arts Florida Standards	
Grade 4	
Reading Literature	
LAFS.4.RL.1.3	Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character's thoughts, words, or actions).

Florida Science Standards	
Grade 4	
Life Science	
SC.4.L.17.4	Recognize ways plants and animals, including humans, can impact the environment.

Florida Social Studies Standards	
Grade 4	
Geography	
SS.4.G.1.4	Interpret political and physical maps using map elements (title, compass rose, cardinal directions, intermediate directions, symbols, legend, scale, longitude, latitude).

Florida Visual Art Standards	
Grade 4	
Skills, Techniques, and Processes	
VA.4.S.1.3	Create artworks that integrate ideas from culture or history.

Florida Theater Standards	
Grade 4	
Critical Thinking and Reflection	
TH.4.C.1.1	Devise a story about an age-appropriate issue and explore different endings.
Skills, Techniques, and Processes	
TH.4.S.1.3	Use theatre terms to evaluate a live performance and discuss the qualities that directly impacted the audience's response to the production.

Cover Sheet

Please collect student work samples and attach it to this cover sheet. Pony all work samples to:

KCW – 3rd floor.

Attention: Lauri Foster

School Name: _____

SEAS Show: Why Mosquitoes Buzz

Grade: _____