

Owls Want Loving

A READER

Produced by

THE ZAMBIAN ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

OWLS WANT LOVING

This is a special book. It is about a very special kind of bird called the owl. This book is also special because it has been written by children.

The study of birds is called "ornithology". The people who study birds are called "ornithologists". In Zambia there is society of people who study birds. The society is called the *Zambian Ornithological Society*.

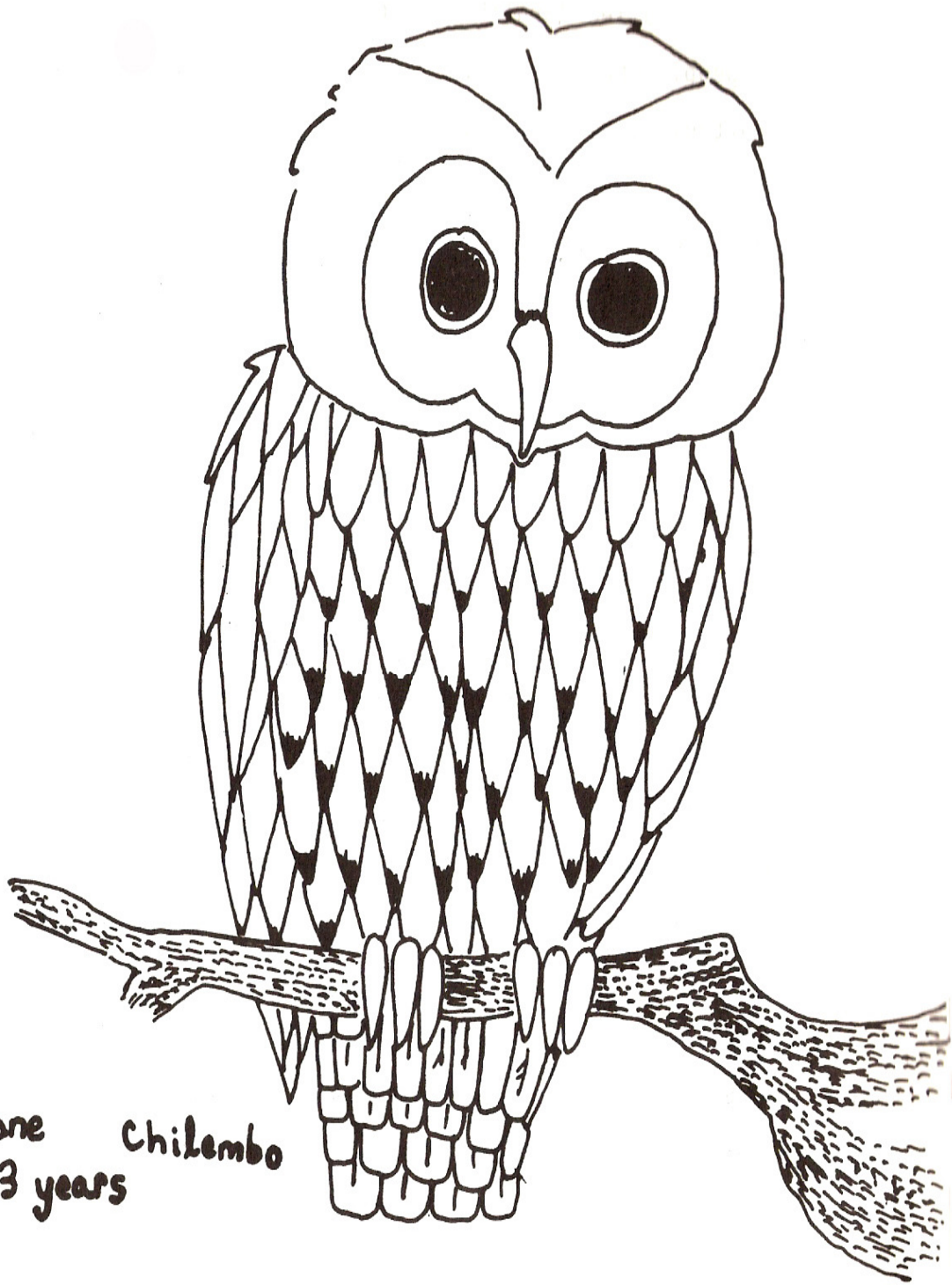
One day, members of the *Zambian Ornithological Society* had a meeting. They talked about owls. At the end of the meeting a project was born and it was called "***OWLS WANT LOVING SURVEY***". That name was chosen because the first letter of each word spells OWLS.

Owls are killed by all kinds of people. They are killed by farmers, villagers and townspeople. The ornithologists wanted to know why. They wanted to know other things as well. Do all people have the same fear of owls? Do the people of Northern Province have the same fears as people from Eastern Province? Do people in Chipepo tell the same stories as people from Kasama? How could the ornithologists find answers to all these questions?

School children could help. During the holidays they could go home and ask their elders some questions about owls. The answers could be written down and sent to the *Zambian Ornithological Society*.

What about young children? Young children are not able to write a lot of things. Young children like drawing. They, too, could take part, by sending their drawings to the ornithologists.

This is how children from all over Zambia became a part of the **OWLS WANT LOVING SURVEY**. One result is this book, written by Secondary School pupils and illustrated by Primary School pupils.



Jane Chilembo
13 years

INTRODUCTION

People are afraid of owls because they fly at night. Owls have big eyes and which stare at you. They live in graveyards and old empty houses. These are a few of the reasons why people are afraid of owls.

Traditional stories are told of owls helping witches. These stories say that owls carry witches to faraway places. A lot of stories tell of owls crying out when a person is about to die. People believe these stories. Many people kill owls because of these stories. Are these stories true?

If the stories are NOT true then owls should not be killed. Owls fly at night to catch food. Owls eat rats and mice, snakes and even bats. A family of owls living on a farm can eat over one thousand rats in a year. Rats eat maize from grain stores. Everybody knows that. Everybody wants to get rid of rats, ***AND OWLS GET RID OF RATS FOR YOU!***

Read this book. Some of the things you will read are true facts about owls. The stories are made up by the children and are not true facts about owls. Can you tell what is true and what is not true in this book?

The true facts have to be known so that people will stop killing owls. The stories are a part of our traditional heritage. They must not be forgotten. When you grow up, tell your children the stories about owls. Tell them the truth, as well.



1. In our language, Toka-Leya, the Barn Owl is called "***Tumba***" because it has very big eyes. It is called Tumba in most of the languages which are spoken in the Southern Province of Zambia. The Barn Owl has different names in different parts of Zambia. In Chewa, in Eastern Province, it is called "***kadzidzi***". In Bemba, in Northern Province, it is called "***ichipululu***".

2. There are other owls which are bigger than the Barn Owl. These owls mostly live in the forests. These owls feed on bigger animals than the Barn Owl. The Barn Owl feeds on smaller animals like mice. One of these bigger owls is called "***Tumba wa mu sokwe Mupati***" in our language. This means: the owl that lives in the forest.

3. I asked my mother why people persecute* owls. She told me some of the things people believe about owls. They believe that if an owl sits on top of somebody's house that person will receive bad news after a few days. Or it may mean that there will soon be a funeral. People also believe that if an owl sits in the fields where you grow your food, the crops won't grow well. It is also believed that people who practise witchcraft use owls to help them. These witches send an owl at night to the person they want to bewitch. They give the owl, power kill someone. This superstition comes from Tako land, in Chief Musokatwane's area of Kabondo, in Kalomo district.

- persecute: to chase after and treat someone or something in a cruel way.

QUESTIONS

1. There are three paragraphs in this story. Some of them tell us facts about owls, that is, things that are true. One paragraph tells us superstitions about owls, that is, things that people believe traditionally, but which may not be true.

Which paragraphs tell us the true things about owls? Which paragraph tells us about superstitions?

2. Why is the Barn Owl, called "Tumba" in some languages?

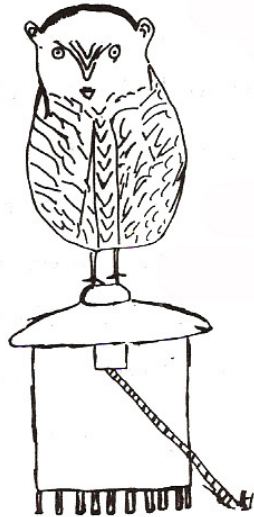
3. Why do you think this owl is called a Barn Owl in English?

4. How many different superstitions does this writer tell us about? What are they?

5. Paragraph 3 tells us that some people believe that owls:

- a. are friendly birds.
- b. bring good luck.
- c. bring bad luck.
- d. make your crops grow well.

Charles Simukwai
10 years
Nchenga
School.



CHAPTER TWO: by Coswell Banda

Matero Boys Secondary School

1. The traditional name for the Barn Owl around Katete, in Eastern Province, is "**kadzidzi**".

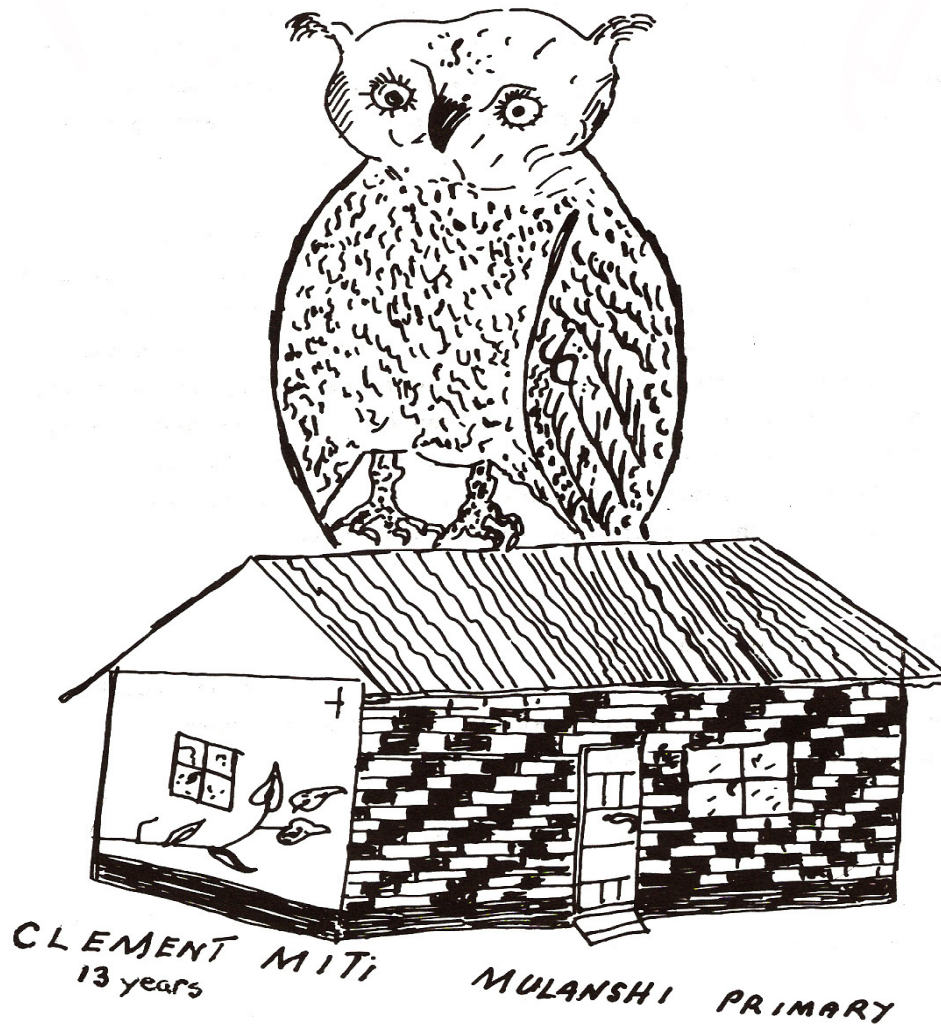
2. When I look at the Barn Owl, I see that it has a heart shaped face and a beak that curves* downwards. These birds hang around dark places like big tall, thick trees, sheltered corners, dark caves and tunnels in mines. Their diet* consists of small birds and rodents* among other things.

3. Barn Owls are feared and hated for many reasons which are baseless* and unscientific. Because they move at night they are thought to be birds used by witches and wizards on their witching expeditions*. They are feared because of the noises they make and because of their strange faces. They are believed to bring bad luck. For example, if an owl lands on your house, someone in the house will die soon after. It is also believed that the wicked spirits of people who did evil things while on earth go into these owls when the person dies.

- *curves: not to go straight.
- *diet: the things we eat.
- *rodents: small animals like mice and rats with strong teeth.
- *baseless: without reasons that are supported by truth.
- *expeditions: journeys away from home.

QUESTIONS

1. What reasons for fearing owls does this writer give that the first writer did not mention?
2. What do Barn Owls eat according to this writer?
3. There is another word that means the same as "evil" in paragraph 3. What is it?



CHAPTER THREE: by Douglas Thambe Tembo Luangwa Boys Secondary School

1. The owls which are found in the Chinyunyu area are commonly known as "*chipululu*" by the Soli people.
2. People say that owls fly at night because that is the time when witches practise witchcraft. They also say that if you come near an owl without noticing its presence, you will start shivering and your hair will stand on end in fear. However, if you see an owl, chase it and hurt it in the process, it will report the matter to its guardian*. Then its guardian will deal with you and make you die. But if you kill the owl, it is said that its owner will also die the same day. This is because people believe that witches exchange hearts with whatever animal or bird they use to bewitch other people.
3. Another belief is that the person who inherits* from someone who owns an owl, also inherits the owl. If that person refuses to give the owl what it wants, the owl will kill him. If there is nobody to look after the owl, it will kill all the dead person's relatives.

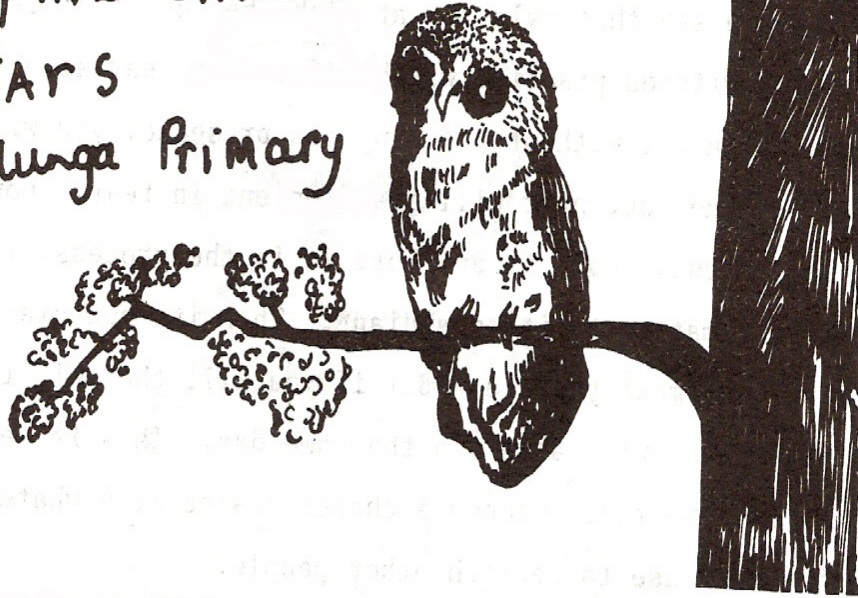
*guardian: a keeper, or protector.

*inherits: becomes the owner of all the things owned by someone who has just died

QUESTIONS

1. Look at this sentence: *"If you kill the owl, it is said that its owner will die the same day."* Do you think the writer believes this or not? Give a reason for your answer.
2. Why should the owner of the owl die the same day that the owl is killed?
3. How many different superstitions does this writer give us?

CHRISPINE CHEELO
14 YEARS
Mwinilunga Primary



CHAPTER FOUR by Aaron Banda

Kalonga Secondary School

1. In our language, an owl is called "***Manchinchi***". This bird is terribly feared. Traditionally, people say that these birds are feared because they move about and feed only at night. People believe that they are used by people who practise witchcraft as a means of transport. Witches are said to use owls to get from one place to another during the night. So that is why people fear them. That is, because they think they might be bewitched by the witchcraft that is in the owl.

QUESTIONS

- 1.** Does this writer give us any facts about owls?
- 2.** What new superstition does he tell us about?

CHAPTER FIVE: by Weaven Ngoma

St Paul's Secondary School

1. Owls are large-headed, hooked-beaked, large-eyed and soft-plumaged nocturnal* birds of prey*. Although there are many species of owls, only a few are known among the Zambian people. In my language, Tonga, the Barn Owl is called "***Tumba***".

2. Owls are feared among the Tonga people because they are suspected of having something to do with superstition. They are associated* with superstitious beliefs in two ways. The first one has to do with the appearance* and the behaviour* of owls. The Tonga people say that the owl has the head of a cat, and cats have been associated with witchcraft from the oldest times. Then there is the fact that owls like living in caves, empty houses and the darker places of forests. All these places are believed to be the homes of evil spirits, so the Tonga believe there is a strong relationship between owls and ghosts.

3. The second superstitious belief is the use of owls by diviners. Diviners find owls in the houses of wizards when they are witch-hunting. The diviners explain that wizards turn some of the people they kill into owls. These owls are then used as aeroplanes. The diviners also say that when an owl hoots* near somebody's house, the people in that house should know that bad luck is about to fall on them. However, when an owl is hooting it can be chased away by throwing a piece of burning wood at it. As the same method is also used for chasing away evil spirits, this strengthens the belief of the Tonga people that owls and evil spirits are closely associated.

*nocturnal: active at night.

* Birds of prey: birds that feed on other living things.

* associated: connected; two or more things having something about them which is the same.

* appearance: the way something looks.

* behaviour: the way something or someone acts.

* hoots: describes the kind of call which owls make.

QUESTIONS

1. What is the shape of an owl's beak?

2. What is another way of saying that an owl is "soft-plumaged"?

3. A "nocturnal" bird is one that:

a. moves at night?

b. moves during the day?

4. What does a bird of prey eat?

5. Paragraph 1 gives us facts about owls. Look at paragraph 2.

This is about superstitions. Are there any facts as well as superstitions in paragraph 2?

6. The Tonga people say that an owl has the head of a cat. Why does this make them associate owls with witchcraft?

7. One superstition mentioned by this writer is exactly the same as one mentioned by Aaron Banda. What is it?

8. How do people think you can chase away owls and evil spirits?

CHAPTER SIX: by Joe Mwela

Matero Boys Secondary School

1. In Chief Kalasalukangaba's area, where the language is Ichaushi, an owl is called "*ichipululu*". People of this area believe that owls are used by wizards to practise witchcraft. People believe that because owls have big eyes wizards use them to take photographs. They believe that the owl takes a photo of a person it has seen during the day. Then the wizard uses the photograph to bewitch the real person. So when people see an owl during the day, they stone it to death. When it is dead the wizard can't use it anymore to carry out his evil practices.

2. I asked the elders to tell me more beliefs about owls. They said that when you hear an owl making its noise at night near your house, you must throw a piece of burning wood at it to scare it away. If you don't scare it away but let it stay there until the morning, someone in the family will get sick and will probably die. The elders say that owls are afraid of fire and they advise us to throw burning wood at it. This way the owl will never come back to that particular place.

QUESTIONS

1. This writer mentions two superstitions. One has been mentioned before by other writers and one is new. Which one has been mentioned before? Which one is new?
2. Do you think the belief that wizards use owls to take photographs is very old, or is it a belief that cannot be more than 100 years old? Give reasons for your answer.

CHAPTER SEVEN: by Rammie Kapepeka

Nagoya Secondary School

1. I come from Chama District, from Chief Mulilo's area, Ng'anjo Village in particular, down the Luangwa Valley. The name for owls in my area is "*masisi*" because they like living in dark places, "*musitu*" where the branches of the trees and twigs are very close to each other.
2. In my conversation with my grandfather about owls, he told me that owls are birds which are tamed by witches. These witches use the owls as aircraft to fly to distant places. Witches also use owls to steal other people's food from grain stores and that is why they always fly at night. For this reason owls are very fearsome birds.
3. Owls are birds of prey which feed on little birds, rats and insects. During the night rats come out of their holes and start looking for food. Therefore owls, too, find this a good time for hunting for their food. It seems that on this point my grandfather's suggestion needs to be updated.

QUESTIONS

1. In paragraphs 2 and 3 two different reasons are given why owls fly at night. What are they?
2. Which reason seems to be fact and which is superstition?
3. Why does, the writer say that his grandfather's suggestion needs to be updated?



By Jessca Eathome Sakeji School

1. One summer evening when the sun had just set and the moon was rising from the eastern horizon, my three friends and I were sitting under a huge musuku tree. Suddenly, a huge bird came and settled itself on one of the branches. We looked to see what sort of bird it was, and we saw from its big, glittering* eyes that it was an owl.

2. I told my friends that we should carry out an experiment. I said we should watch the bird for the next two hours without thinking about our traditional beliefs, that owls are associated with witchcraft. This experiment was very interesting, because the bird behaved as if it knew we wanted to find out about its way of living.

3. We learnt that this bird could see-in darkness, for when it left the branch it was sitting on, it had no problems flying, although the tree was thick, and it was dark. From this tree it flew to another and settled on a much lower branch. We followed it so that we could see what it was doing. I told my friends to lie down so that the big-eyed bird could not see us.

4. While we were lying on the ground, we saw the bird descend* and begin to walk. It walked for a certain distance and then stopped and started beating its beak on the ground. It was eating. It was eating as if it had not eaten for a long time. When we thought it had eaten enough, we chased it away so that we could check what sort of food it was eating. One of my friends reminded us 'that traditionally it is said that owls eat human flesh. But this was proved wrong when we discovered that it had been eating a rat.

5. From these observations* we concluded* that for an owl to eat like that, it must go hungry during the day and only eat at night. So that is the reason why it moves at night. It has adapted* to moving at night by having big round eyes. And with such a hooked beak it must be a very effective* carnivore*.

6. This is how we learned that traditional beliefs are not true, but that owls move at night because that is when they find their prey*.

*glitter: shine brightly with flashes of light.

- *descend: come down.
- *observations: things you have noticed for yourself.
- *concluded: came to understand a belief through reasoning or from noticing something.
- *adapted: changed in a way that made you better able to meet a new situation.
- *effective: able to bring about the result you want.
- *carnivore: a creature which eats meat.
- *prey: an animal or bird that is killed and eaten by another animal or bird.

QUESTIONS

1. This account is different from all the accounts you have read so far. What is different about it?
2. Why does the writer conclude that the owl must be an "effective carnivore"?

CHAPTER NINE: by Oliver Madubansi

St Raphael's Secondary School

1. There are two kinds of owls: those which are active at night, and those which are active during the day.
2. All kinds of owl have their eyes in front of their flat faces. The eyes are usually large in both kinds but they are larger in those owls which are active at night. This is to enable them to see their prey clearly in the dark. Owls have powerful feet and claws, sharp beaks and specially made wings which don't make a noise when they fly. This helps owls to catch their prey more easily because the prey doesn't notice that an enemy is coming.
3. The most popular foods eaten by owls are shrews, rats and mice. These little animals move at night, probably because it is cool at night; also, because most of their enemies sleep at night, and because these animals eat insects which come out at night. So this is why owls also come out at night, to find their favourite food. The colour of owls also helps them at night. They are coloured in such a way that they cannot be seen.



Derick Kakusa
14 years Mano Primary School.

QUESTIONS

1. Do all owls move at night?
2. Why do rats, mice and other little animals come out at night?
3. What helps the owl to get to its prey unnoticed?
4. What colour are most owls? Why does this help them at night?

HERE ARE SOME MORE BARN OWL NAMES IN OUR LOCAL LANGUAGES

Peter Owa from Muyooma Primary School says that the name of this owl is "*kanamaja*" in the Ngoni language.

Estone Mwape from St Clement's Secondary School says that in the Ichibemba spoken in Mansa District the Barn Owl is called "*mwiina*". Joseph Kunda from Kalulushi Secondary School says that the Bemba-speaking people in Luapula Province call the owl "*fwifwi*".

Victor Kasanyola from Muyooma Primary School says that in Lenje the Barn Owl is called "*moma*". Wilson Phiri from Matero Boys Secondary School says that the owl is called "*fyololo*" in the Chewa language. The owl is called "*ikungu*", says Alick Makwa of David Kaunda Secondary Technical School. Alick comes from Zambezi District.

ACTIVITIES

1. How many different names for owls in the Zambian languages can you find in the book?
2. List as many superstitions as you can find.
3. Make a list of all the facts about owls you can find.
4. Do you believe the superstitions you have read? Do your friends believe them? Discuss.
5. What other animals and birds are believed to be used in witchcraft? Find out about them from your e elders.



CHAPTER TEN by Agnes Mushabati

Nyenyezi Secondary School

1. Once upon a time there lived Mr Snake and his family. Next to their house there lived Mr Owl and his family. This was the time when the world was still young and Mr Owl managed to fly during the daytime. He slept at night, waiting for morning.

Early in the morning the owl family used to hunt for rats and small birds' and the snake family would go looking for lizards' eggs. At this time the owl family and the snake family were great friends.

2. One day Mr Owl went to look for food. He hunted and hunted but could not find anything. He hunted until he could hunt no more but he still found nothing. He was tired and hungry so he went home. There, he found his family dying of hunger. So he decided to go and see Mr Snake.

3. When he got to Mr Snake's house he found nobody there except the snake children. Mr Owl decided to take the snake children but instead of taking them all, foolish Mr Owl only took three little snakes. One little snake escaped and hid in the house. Mr Owl left him hiding there.

4. When Mr Owl reached his home, he quickly killed the three little snakes and gave them to his family to eat. They ate them all up except for their bones. Mr Owl quickly took the bones and 'buried them in his back yard.

5. Soon after that, Mr and Mrs Snake came home. They found that all their children except one had gone. The little snake that had hidden was very frightened. He told his mother and father how Mr Owl had come and taken the three little snakes away. The Mr and Mrs Snake started shouting and crying. They went to Mr Owl's house and accused him of taking their children.

Mr Owl tried to deny this but Mr and Mrs Snake told him that their remaining child had seen him take the other little snakes away.

6. Mr and Mrs Snake were very angry. They spat* their poisonous saliva* into Mr Owl's eyes and he fell down in great pain. Then Mr and Mrs Snake told Mr Owl that they never wanted to see him again. The snakes went home and Mr Owl and his family moved from their house and went to live on Mr Man's farm.

7. From that time, Mr Owl couldn't see well in the daytime.

The bright light hurt his eyes. His eyes worked better at night so from that time he hunted at night. And that is why from that day to this, owls rest in the daytime and fly and hunt at night.

* spat: the past tense form of "spit".

* saliva: the liquid (like water) that we have in our mouths.

QUESTIONS

- 1.** At what time of day did owls hunt when the world was young?
- 2.** Why did Mr Owl kill the three little snakes?
- 3.** How did Mr and Mrs Snake know who had killed their children?
- 4.** How many children did Mr and Mrs Snake have before Mr Owl killed some of them?
- 5.** Why can't owls see well in the daytime now?

Choose the best answers to the next three questions.

6. "When Mr Owl went to Mr Snake's house he found nobody there 'except' the snake children."

This means:

- a.** none of the snakes were at home.
- b.** all of the snakes were at home.
- c.** the little snakes were at home.
- d.** Mr and Mrs Snake were at home.

7. "Mr and Mrs Snake 'accused' Mr Owl of taking their children." This means:

- a.** They said Mr Owl had taken their children.
- b.** They shouted because Mr Owl had taken their children.
- c.** They called Mr Owl a thief.
- d.** They said they would kill Mr Owl.

8. Mr Owl 'denied' that he had taken the snake children. This means:

- a.** Mr Owl agreed that he had taken the snake children.
- b.** Mr Owl said he had not taken the snake children.
- c.** Mr Owl refused to speak to Mr and Mrs Snake.
- d.** Mr Owl promised to take the snake children.

CHAPTER ELEVEN: by Israel Moonga

Matero Boys' Secondary School

1. Once upon a time, a bat, a rat and an owl were very great friends. They often used to meet each other in the forest and would talk all night long in the leaves where no one could find them. Whenever they met, they would pretend that they were brothers.

2. One day, however, they all had a terrible quarrel. They accused each other of doing bad things to each other. Rat accused Bat of stealing his babies, and Bat accused Owl of stealing his. Rat also accused Bat of being a bird and not an animal at all.

"Animals don't have wings and they can't fly," he said. Rat also said that Owl could not really be a bird because he looked more like a cat, and he accused Owl of stealing his babies.

3. So the three friends appeared to be friends no more. The quarrel went on for such a long time that the matter was reported to the hare. The elders arranged a meeting and Hare agreed to come and judge the problem. Rat was the host and Hare was the chairman. Rat started the meeting with a speech.

"My dear friends, I am pleased to welcome you to my house tonight. You all know why we are here, and I can only hope that we can come to an agreement and settle our quarrel once and for all."

4. The hare then stood up and asked each one to state his case clearly. So the three stood up and spoke, one by one. Hare and the elders listened but there didn't seem to be any way of solving the problem. In the end Hare stood up and said, "My good friends, I suggest that each of you must lead your own life. You mustn't bother each other any more. It is no good trying to be friends if you keep quarrelling and blaming* each other when things go wrong. From now on you must be separated forever* and live in different places.

5. "Rat, you must stay in the bush and long grass and never go near your former friends. You must tell your children always to hide themselves from the owl and the bat whenever they see them. As for you, Bat, you must hide in the tops of trees and in caves. You must never try to seek out* the other creatures' children."

6. Hare then turned to Owl. "My dear friend, Owl," he said, "from now on you must hide in the thick bush and trees during the hours of daylight. If any creature sees you during the daytime, I give him the right to attack you. Even other birds will turn against you if they see your face."

7. And that is why, from that day to this, Owl never comes out during the day. He only comes out and flies at night.

* host: a person who has visitors.

* blame: to say that someone is responsible for something that has happened.

* forever: from now on with no end, always.

* seek out: to look for.

QUESTIONS

1. What reason did Rat have for saying that the bat could not really be an animal?
2. Was Hare able to help the three friends put an end to their quarrel?
3. What did Hare say all the other birds and animals could do to Owl if he was seen during the daytime?



CHAPTER TWELVE: by Wilson Phiri

Matero Boys' Secondary School

1. Once upon a time, in the middle of Africa there emerged* an animal kingdom. This kingdom was so rich in everything that merchants came from overseas to trade with the King. The King wanted to make the social and political administration of his kingdom easy, so he decided to choose one type of creature from each group to represent the rest of the group. Kazizi, the owl from the birds' group, and the Sun, from the stars' were among the creatures delegated* to lead their groups.

2. One bright Sunday evening a conference* was held in the King's palace. This conference was held to appoint a new lieutenant for the kingdom's army. The owl expected to be appointed, but surprisingly, the Sun was appointed Lieutenant of the kingdom's army. As a result, Kazizi, the owl felt jealous of the Sun, and decided to oppose* each and every decision he would make.

3. The Sun usually sat on the King's right hand and it was with the Sun that the King made the rules and the laws of the kingdom. That made Kazizi so furious* that he almost swallowed his beak. His eyes grew bigger and rounder with jealousy and his eyeballs curled, too. Kazizi's friend, Mbewa, the mouse tried to reason with him many times, but Kazizi caught Mbewa and threatened him. He told him that if he continued to interrupt him, he would kill Mbewa and all his family. However, that threat did not stop Mbewa from rebuking* the owl. Because Kazizi had meant what he said, he killed and ate Mbewa. From that time Kazizi's diet changed. He became a carnivore and from then on he ate mice and other small creatures.

4. The King heard the sad news about Kazizi's changed habits and he was so angry that he ordered his Lieutenant, the Sun to capture Kazizi and kill him. Kazizi found out that he would die if he stayed around so he ran away. He flew into a deep, deep jungle where not even a ray of the Sun could reach him. To fetch food, he usually came out at night when the sun had gone down to the King's palace. In this way he was safe from the Sun.

He was safe, too, from the Corporal of the kingdom's army, that is the Moon, and from her watchmen, the Stars. They could do nothing to catch Kazizi because the owl was stronger than them. The owl associated* himself with other groups of animals like bats and small rodents which were active at night.

5. From that time to this, Kazizi has kept these same habits. That is, he is a carnivore and we see him move at night.

* emerge: come out, develop.

* delegate: appoint someone to represent a group of others.

* conference: a meeting where discussions take place.

* oppose: act against something *furious: very angry.

* rebuke: speak severely to someone; tell someone you don't approve of the way they are behaving.

* associated with: joined together with.

QUESTIONS

1. Why did Kazizi decide to oppose every decision the Sun made?
2. Do you think it was fair of Kazizi to kill and eat Mbewa?
Had the mouse tried to help the owl?
3. What led Kazizi to start eating other creatures? Do you think he had eaten other living creatures before he killed Mbewa?
4. Why do you think Kazizi ran away from the kingdom?
5. Why did he need to go into the deep jungle and only hunt at night?



Daina Banda
Kanyihampa
Primary School.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN: by Naome Musonda

Muyooma Primary School

1. Once upon a time there was an owl. This owl had very good eyesight, just like human beings. It was a good friend of humans. It helped them to find food and it helped them because it saw their enemies first, before they did.

2. One day a hunter killed an elephant and there was a lot of meat to eat. The owl usually only ate fresh, raw* meat. But that day, when he saw that there was a lot of meat, too much to eat at once, he wanted to dry it like humans did, to be eaten later.

3. Owl made a fire in his house and started cooking the meat but there was so much smoke that his eyes started to hurt.

However, Owl was not sensible. He did not put out the fire and wash the smoke out of his eyes. He was enjoying cooking and eating the meat so much that he continued all night. In the morning his eyes were still paining and he could not see well any more. He was also tired and wanted to sleep.

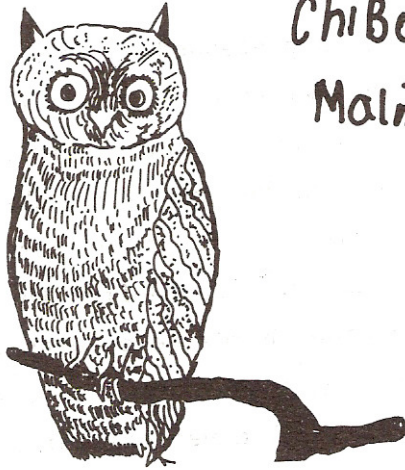
4. He slept all day and woke up at night, after it was dark. Then he discovered that he could see more clearly at night than he had ever been able to during the day. So, he said to himself, "Now I will be moving at night, rather than during the day."

5. This was what made owls to start flying at night. They can see more clearly and their eyes don't pain at all during the night.

*raw: something, like meat, which is not cooked.

QUESTIONS

- 1.** Has the owl always had bad eyesight, according to the writer of this story?
- 2.** Why didn't the owl put out the fire once his eyes started to hurt him?
- 3.** When did the owl find that he could not see well in the daytime?
- 4.** What made the owl decide to hunt at night?



ChiBooLa AUStEN
Malindi Primary School

CHAPTER FOURTEEN: by Weaven Goma

St Paul's Secondary School

1. A long time ago, all the birds lived in one kingdom. When they established* their kingdom they had difficulty in choosing a king. The different birds spoke in turn of their qualities* and gave reasons why they should be leader. But the other birds were not satisfied. None of the birds seemed fit to be leader, except Mr Owl, who argued that he was a special bird. He had horns on his head and a terrifying voice with which to threaten any intruder* to the kingdom. The other birds were convinced* by this argument and instantly agreed that Mr Owl should be their king.

2. Because he had such a responsibility, Mr Owl was exempted* from hunting. He remained within the kingdom and took care of the young birds while the others went in search of food. At times the other birds brought Mr Owl his food very late, and he got very angry. On such occasions Mr Owl preyed on some of the young birds that were left with him. Soon the other birds noticed that there were fewer chicks but that Mr Owl seemed healthier than ever before.

3. One day, the other birds pretended to go hunting and caught Mr Owl in the act. Mr Owl tried to explain and excuse himself, but the birds would not listen. Their angry questions pierced him from all sides. Mother birds attacked his body and took hold of him by the horns. To their surprise, the horns were only long feathers. Mr Owl escaped from them and went into hiding. Fearing that the other birds were going to kill him, Mr Owl started moving only at night while they were roosting*. And up to this very day, Mr Owl still moves only at night.

- * established: to set something up; to make it, or to found it.
- * qualities: good points of their character.
- * intruder: someone who goes somewhere without being invited.
- * convinced: persuaded.
- * exempted: not having to do something others have to do.
- * roosting: going to sleep (especially used for birds).

QUESTIONS

1. Why did the other birds agree that Mr Owl should become king?
2. Why was Mr Owl not obliged to go hunting with the other birds?
3. What was he supposed to do while the other birds were hunting?
4. What did he do instead?
5. How did the birds find out that Mr Owl's horns were not real?

CHAPTER FIFTEEN: by Estone Mwape

St Clement's Secondary School

1. Once upon a time, in the early days of creation, the owl had very dull eyes. Owl hated not being able to see well. In those days, the Eagle was the King of the Birds, so Owl went to Eagle and complained about his poor eyesight. Eagle not being God, referred the case to Almighty God instead.
2. The day of the hearing came. All the animals and birds went. It was as if God was sick and the whole of His Creation was visiting him in his courtyard. The owl had become very impatient* and anxious* over the days and wanted very much to know the result of his appeal* to God.
3. Almighty God appeared in his favourite court costume. There was dead* silence amongst the gathering, but Owl, eager to know the result of the proceedings* was bold enough to break the silence. He complained about his poor eyesight and said that his friends were eating more and better food than he was, simply because he could not see clearly. The Almighty, in answer, just nodded his head. The hearing was over.



4. As a result of the court ruling, the owl found himself now with very bright eyes. So, he was satisfied and left with an air of relief. But there was one peculiar* thing about the new eyes Owl had been given. Now he was able to see right through solid objects.

5. For a while all seemed to go well. A month went by without there being any bad news concerning the peculiar new eyes Owl had been given. But then the time came when things changed. Owl became greedy and jealous. He could not control his desire to have all the material things he saw with his penetrating* eyes. He wanted everything, even things which he did not have to work for, but only saw with his strange eyes. He began to steal everything he saw.

6. One day, Owl even stole fish from the King's barn. Unfortunately, he left the print of a claw on the earth around the barn, so the other birds were able to identify* him as the thief. A meeting was held in the King's palace to decide what to do about Owl and stop his evil deeds in the peaceful kingdom of the birds. Together, the birds decided that the perfect solution was to report the matter to God.

7. The day of the hearing came and every bird assembled* in God's courtyard. The atmosphere in the courtyard was as tense as the atmosphere at the death of a mystical* power. No one spoke. There was only the clicking sound of crying baby birds, calling their mothers to attend to them.

8. But things began to go wrong where the owl sat. The wooden chair he sat on turned into blood and from the One who sat on the Heavenly Throne, curses* could be heard coming in a loud, thunderous* voice, "You accursed* creature. From today for all time, 'night shall be your feeding and working time. Night is for evil as day is for righteousness*. You are evil and therefore your punishment shall be that night will be your companion*. People and other creatures shall fear you for no other reason than your greed and selfishness."

9. Commands were given to the King of the Birds to see that this rule was kept. And to this day, owls usually fly at night.

*impatient: not able to wait.

*anxious: worried.

*appeal: a strong request for help.

*dead: here 'dead' means complete; usually it means not alive.

*proceedings: things which are going on.

*peculiar: strange.

*penetrating: going into or through something.

- *identify: to show, or prove who someone is.
- *assembled: gathered together.
- *mystical: mysterious; cannot be explained.
- *curses: words calling for punishment or injury ~o happen.
- *thunderous: like thunder.
- *accursed: someone who has been cursed.
- * righteousness: good actions.
- * companion: friend.

QUESTIONS

1. What appeal did Owl make to Almighty God?
2. What strange thing happened when God agreed to improve Owl's eyesight?
3. What effect did this have on Owl?
4. How did the other birds discover that it was Owl who stole fish from the King's barn?
5. What was owl's punishment?
6. Why do you think the answer to 5 counts as a punishment?

CHAPTER SIXTEEN by Alick Makwa

David-Kaunda Technical Secondary School

1. Long ago, all birds lived in communities. They lived in one kingdom. They were very happy with the kind of life they led. It was a very harmonious* and happy life.
2. The Peacock family ruled the kingdom. The owls were the advisors to the King. All the birds believed that owls were the wisest of all birds, and so they were highly respected.
3. One day, Mr Owl received some very sad news. His brother, who lived far away, was very ill. Mr Owl requested permission to go and see him. Mr Owl hated travelling but he agreed to go on the journey because his brother was very ill. So the following day, Mr Owl went to seek the King's permission to travel to where his brother was. The King granted* him permission and wished him a safe journey.

4. Mr Owl left for his brother's home that very same day. When he had covered half the distance of his journey, he became very weary* and very hungry. He felt he could go no further. Then, as he looked around him, he saw some very appetising* fruits. He snatched at them, but unfortunately he was thrown into the air by a rope that gripped his leg. He was caught in a snare*. He struggled to get out of the snare, but failed.

Lance Goodfellow
Age: 14
Sakeji School



5. When the owner of the snare, a certain Fwiti came, Mr Owl asked him to spare his life. In return he promised to show him where the Kingdom of the Birds was. Fwiti was a witch. He agreed to spare

Mr Owl's life and they became friends.

6. Mr Owl led Fwiti to the Kingdom of the Birds and Fwiti attacked the birds at midnight when they were fast asleep.

He killed thousands of birds. The survivors* took refuge* in the King's palace.

7. The King was very shocked at hearing the sad news. He was suspicious* of how Man had discovered where his Kingdom was.

He ordered all the birds to gather at his Council. Mr Woodpecker was a talented* diviner. At the King's Council, the King asked him to use his power to find out who the traitor was. Mr Woodpecker found through divinity that Mr Owl was the traitor.

8. The King was very angry with Mr Owl. He ordered Mr Owl to be beaten. Mr Owl was terribly beaten. He was blinded. His beak and claws were cut off. He was cast out of the bird's clan. Mr Owl was very ashamed.

9. He went with his friend, Fwiti. Fwiti offered him shelter but Fwiti's relatives would not agree to have Mr Owl living among them. When the children saw Mr Owl, they laughed at his ugliness and hurled* stones at him. Mr Owl decided that the only time he could move was at night. Everybody except Fwiti was his enemy. He could no longer bear the embarrassment* of moving during the day.

10. This is why owls move at night. They are embarrassed at their ugly appearance and have become very shy. They see everybody and all other birds as their enemies. And for this reason they have developed very large eyes that enable* them to see in the dark.

*harmonious: in agreement; free from bad feelings between people.

*granted: gave permission; said 'Yes'.

*weary: very tired.

*appetising: something that makes you feel you want to eat it.

*snare: a trap for catching small animals.

*survivors: those who remain alive after some terrible happening.

*refuge: a safe' place.

*suspicious: have a feeling that something is wrong.

*talented: very clever.

*hurled: threw something strongly and with great force.

*embarrassment: a feeling of shame.

*enable: make possible.

QUESTIONS

1. Why were the owls advisors to the King?
2. Why did Mr Owl offer to tell Fwiti where to find the Kingdom of the Birds?
3. Which bird found out who the traitor was and why was he able to do so?
4. What was the result of Mr Owl's punishment?
5. Why have owls become very shy?

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN: by Elihu Mwaba

Ndeke Secondary School

1. Once upon a time, in the good old days, the owl was king of all the birds and small animals. Owl's kingdom included the parrot, the heron, the eagle, the swallow, the kingfisher, the tortoise and Mr Chongololo, Kalulu, mice and many others.

2. King Owl was a very greedy and lazy king. He ordered the animals to bring him the best food every day and threatened to kill anyone who did not carry out his instructions*. The other animals and birds were not at all happy with this.

"Why should we have to do such a thing?" cried the eagle, "giving him so much food everyday!" "I've never heard of such a thing happening in other kingdoms," put in the kingfisher. "I think I will leave this place and go and live elsewhere*."

3. After some time, Kalulu and Mr Chongololo became very concerned about the situation so they called for a private meeting. A meeting King Owl did not know about. "Everybody must gather under the big tree tonight," whispered Mr Chongololo to every bird and animal.

"We want to free ourselves from this slavery. We can't be living in this kingdom with such things going on. We must either have a new king, or leave this place," added Kalulu.

4. That night, it was a cool bright night, with the moon showing its silver rays over the beautiful land. Everybody gathered under the big tree, laughing and talking. "Yes," they were saying, "we need to be free. We can't be taking food to him everyday." Ssshhh! hush, the king will hear us. Remember that this is a secret meeting. We don't want the king to know about it." At once everyone fell silent.

5. Mr Chongololo explained the reason for the meeting and Kalulu asked them to come up with ideas and suggestions as to how they could be free. Ideas seemed to come from everyone. Some thought they should kill the king. Some thought Kalulu should be the king. Some thought that Mr Chongololo should be the king. Others thought they should flee* at night. As the saying goes, 'Too many cooks spoil the broth*', and the meeting ended in a quarrel. So Kalulu and Mr Chongololo decided to call the meeting off and call everybody together again at a later stage. The animals and birds dispersed* and went to their homes.

6. The rats and mice, however, were not happy with what Kalulu and Mr Chongololo were doing. "Rising against a powerful king is like playing with fire. We are just putting our lives in danger," thought the old mouse. "I will report this matter to the king at once."

7. Early in the morning" the old mouse arrived at the king's palace.

"You know, Your Majesty," he said, "Kalulu and Chongololo are organising a group so that they can rise up against you.

They called a meeting last night but it was unsuccessful. I thought I should tell you about it, Your Majesty." "Thank you very much, Old Mouse," said the King. "Guard, come here at once. Tell everybody that there is a meeting at my palace now. Everyone must attend without fail or they will feel the weight of my wrath*."

8. Everybody gathered very fast at the king's palace. The king shouted for silence and asked Mr Chongololo and Kalulu to step forward. They did so and knelt before the king.

"My people, do you think these two tiny fools can be your king?" asked the king. "I've heard the plans of these fools.

Do they really think I, the great King, don't know everything that is happening in this kingdom? Do you really want these fools to be your king?" For fear of the king, most of the creatures answered, "No. No. No.", although some said, "Yes." "And now these two traitors are going to live in exile* until I die.' If anyone wants to go with them, let him go without questions. And now you can disperse."

9. At this, everyone murmured because they disapproved of this decision. And, early next morning, when Mr Chongololo and Kalulu started off from King Owl's kingdom, almost everyone, except the rats and mice went with them. They found a beautiful land and settled there, peacefully and happily.

10. Meanwhile, back in Owl's kingdom, King Owl realised that he was all alone, except for the mice and rats. He was afraid, because now the kingfisher would no longer bring him fish, the eagle would no longer bring him chicks to eat, and so on. He knew that his kingdom was about to collapse*. The following day the mice and rats brought him food, but it was not enough. With each day that passed King Owl got thinner and thinner until at last he decided to feast on the mice and rats themselves.

11. The mice and rats were not at all happy about what the king was doing. They became fewer and fewer until at last there were only a few left. Finally, the old mouse who had reported the plan of Kalulu and Mr Chongololo to the king, decided to call a meeting to discuss what to do. At this meeting ideas were put forward for consideration*. Some wanted to kill the king but the problem was who was ready to face the dreadful* owl? The meeting led to quarrels, until a young rat asked permission to speak.

12. The elders laughed at him. "If we, with our ripe* years, cannot solve this problem, what idea can a young thing like you possibly have?i1 they asked. However, after all their ideas were exhausted* and no solution found, they asked the young rat to tell them his idea.

13. "Why don't we .. er ... er we ..." stammered* the young rat in embarrassment. "Why don't we start collecting plenty of food so that we have enough for a month or so and store it in our holes? Then we can stay in our holes for some weeks. The lazy king will have no one to give him food. Surely he will die?" "Yes. Yes. Yes. That's a very good idea," everybody shouted. So after collecting enough food to last them several weeks, the mice and rats went into their holes and did not come out again.

14. The king had no food to eat. He became very anxious and went to look for the mice and rats, but in vain*. He went back to his palace. As they say, a hungry man is an angry man, so he killed and ate his wife. The following day his babies were the victims and were killed and eaten.

15. Meanwhile, in their holes underground, the rats and mice thought the king must already be dead. So, one evening, they came out of their holes, making a lot of noise. Hungry King Owl who was now having sleepless nights, heard a noise and looked over the place in the dark. He looked and-looked until his eyes grew big and round, as they are now. At last he saw the rats and mice celebrating*. They did not know King Owl could see them. Suddenly he swooped down and caught one and ate it.

From then on, the owl hunts at night and sleeps during the day, because night is the time when the rats and mice come out of their holes.

*instructions: orders.

*elsewhere: somewhere else; not here.

*flee: run away; escape.

*broth: soup.

*dispersed: went away separately, not together

*wrath: anger.

*exile: sent away and not allowed to come back.

*collapse: fall apart; fall down.

*for consideration: to be thought about and discussed.

*dreadful: makes you afraid.

*ripe: here 'ripe' means very old.

*exhausted: very tired; here 'exhausted' means having no more ideas.

*stammered: spoke with hesitation

*in vain: without success.

*celebrating: showing that you are happy about something.

QUESTIONS

- 1.** Why are the animals and birds complaining?
- 2.** What solution to the problem did the animals and birds first suggest? (See paragraph 5).

3. Did they reach an agreement?
4. Why did the old mouse decide to tell the king?
5. What punishment did King Owl give Mr Chongololo and Kalulu?
6. Who remained in the kingdom with King Owl after Kalulu and Mr Chongololo had left?
7. Why was King Owl afraid after Kalulu and Mr Chongololo left with so many of the other animals?
8. How did King Owl get his food after they left?
9. What solution did the rats and mice find to their problem of being eaten by King Owl?
10. Did this solution turn out well or badly for King Owl?



CHAPTER EIGHTEEN: by Oliver Ladubansi

St Raphael's Secondary School

The reason why owls fly at night is traditionally explained by the following story:

1. Once, Owl and Tortoise were best friends. Tortoise seemed to be the more intelligent of the two. One day, Tortoise asked his friend Owl this question, "Which hen is more clever than the other, the black hen or the white hen?" Owl answered and said the black hen was cleverer. Tortoise did not agree. He said the white hen was the cleverer and that he even had proof* for his answer.
2. What is your proof?" asked the owl. "A white hen can lay an egg which resembles* it in colour," replied Tortoise. "A black hen is stupid because it cannot lay a black egg which resembles it. It can only lay a white egg which is the same colour as the colour of white chickens."

3. Owl was very boastful*. She said that she herself must be the most intelligent of creatures, because she could lay an egg that resembled her in colour. Tortoise told her to go ahead and lay such an egg. Owl looked for a nearby cave. She found one and flew inside. There she laid an egg, but to her horror* the egg was white, not brown like her.

4. Owl was so ashamed and embarrassed that she would not come out of the cave and report to Tortoise. She did not want to admit that she was not the cleverest of creatures, but just as stupid as the black hen. Tortoise waited and waited but Owl did not come out of the cave. At last, he gave up and went home.

5. Owl stayed in the cave until night came. Then she was hungry and came out to search for food. She found that rats and mice were moving around very much at night. Owl was not used to eating mice and rats, but because of her hunger she caught and ate them. She found that they were very good to eat.

6. From that day to this, owls eat a lot of rats and mice which they can find easily at night. Also, owls only move at night because they are afraid that Tortoise will see them during the day and laugh at them.

*proof: show clearly that something is true.

*resembles: looks like.

*boastful: to praise oneself and pretend to be able to do clever things.

*horror: great fear and shock.

QUESTIONS

1. Why did Tortoise say that a white hen is more intelligent than a black hen?

2. What was Owl's boast?

3. Did Owl lay an egg that resembled her in colour?

4. Why wouldn't Owl come out of the cave after laying the egg?

5. Had Owl been used to eating mice and rats before this time.

DISCUSSION

So far you have read traditional beliefs about owls, and you have read stories that other children have written about owls.

Have you noticed how all the stories say that owls do bad things?

Do you believe what you have read?

If you do believe what you have read then you do not yet know what stories are all about. Why do people tell stories?

Why do people tell stories to their children? Why are there so many stories about animals and birds?

Stories are an important part of growing up. Through stories children are made to understand what their life is all about. Stories have a meaning, a 'message' for young people.

Stories were never meant to be taken as truth.

Every culture, in every country of the world, has stories about clever animals, usually the hare (Kalulu). Kalulu stories are great fun to listen to, but you do not really believe that Kalulu is able to do all the things he does in the stories. There are stories about brave animals and cowardly animals, silly animals and wise animals.

You have to listen very carefully to traditional stories.

The message is always hidden. Kalulu stories are really saying that good people are better than bad people; sensible people are better than Silly people; wise people will give you good advice.

So, as you grow up, you will try to be like the good animals in the stories. You will try to be clever, and good, and wise.

You will try not to be like the bad animals in traditional stories. The good animals always win. The bad animals always lose.

What about owl stories? What is the hidden message behind owl stories? Maybe owl stories are told to stop children wandering far from home after dark. If you are afraid to go out after dark because of owls, then maybe the storyteller has succeeded with the story and has 'got the message across'.

The more you learn about the way nature works then the more you will understand why owls are not like other birds.

We all know that owls are awake at night. You now know the word 'nocturnal'. Nocturnal means to be active at night. Lots of animals and birds are nocturnal. There is the cat, the leopard and the owl. Think of a cat. A cat has got big eyes to help it see things in the dark. The leopard has got big eyes, too. So has the owl. They all need to see well in the dark.

Cats have eyes which face forwards. So has the leopard, and the owl. That is because they are all hunters. They have to be able to catch their food. Cats and owls eat rats and mice.

Leopards eat other things. The food of these animals moves.

Eyes facing forwards give them a better chance of catching their food.

Some people believe that owls steal grain from grain stores.

Why? Maybe it is because owls are often seen sitting on or near a grain store. What else could be stealing your grain? Yes, rats and mice. What do owls eat? Yes, rats and mice. So, just as you will go to a shop or vegetable market to get your food, so an owl goes to a grain store to find its food, AND IT IS NOT YOUR GRAIN, it is ... yes, the rats and the mice.

What about witchcraft, and death? Owls are often seen close to graveyards. Do you go near graveyards at night? No, you don't. A graveyard is a quiet place. Rats and mice like quiet places.

Could that be the reason why owls are seen there?

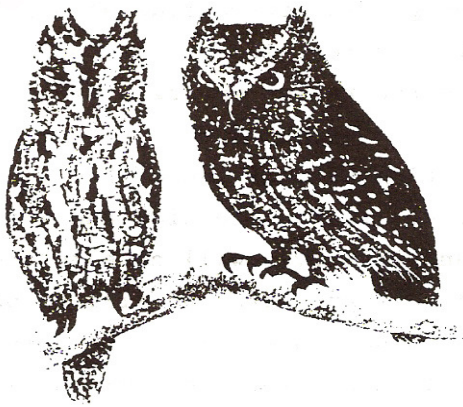
What about owls bringing messages of bad news? Let's think about that for a minute. If you are sick and lying in bed with a fever, your parents and relatives will come to look after you. In the night you will toss and turn and will be unable to sleep. Someone sits with you, also awake. You will both hear the sounds of the nocturnal animals and birds. An owl calls close by. Its sound will be heard, too.

But, if you are healthy and have played all day long, you will go to bed very tired. You will sleep the whole night through. When you are asleep you do not hear the noises of the night. You do not hear the owl calling.

What is all this we read about owls having horns? Other birds do not have horns. The owls' horns

must have puzzled many people, for there are many traditional stories about owls and their horns. Why do owls have horns?

Like all other living things, owls have enemies which will try to catch them. If owls are to be safe they must be able to hide away in the daytime when other animals and birds (and people) may see them. The horns of an owl help it to change its shape. Look at the picture of the Scops Owl. See how it makes itself look very different just by raising its 'horns'? The horns aren't really horns at all. Neither are they ears. They are only long feathers.



Drawings by KENNETH NEWMAN

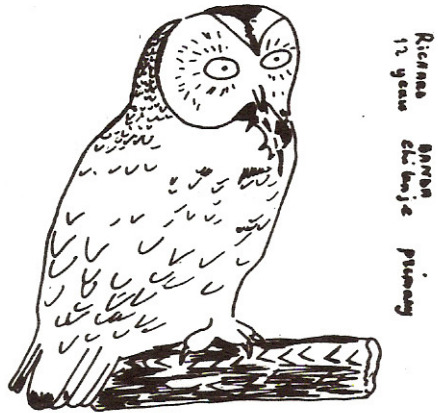
Do not be afraid of owls. Owls help you. They catch the rats and mice that steal your grain. Do not be afraid of owls. They will not harm you. Owls live the way they do because they are hunters of the night.

THE OWL PELLET

How do we know what owls really eat?

Owls have a very strange way of feeding. They will catch a rat or a mouse and eat it all up: fur, feet, tail, bones, everything. Only the meaty parts will be digested. The rest the fur, the feet and the bones are not good for an owl's stomach. The owl 'wraps' them up inside its throat, and coughs them out in a neat little package called a 'pellet'.

Owl pellets are not difficult to find. If you know where an owl roosts, search the ground under that place, very carefully, and you will probably find one of its pellets. If you break the pellet open you will see lots of bones and fur. There may even be a complete mouse skull inside, with the teeth still in it! There will be no grain or seed.



Do not forget to tell your own children the owl stories you were told as a child. Traditional stories are a part of our culture. They will help your children to learn to grow up. Do not forget to tell them the TRUTH as well.

THE END

FACTS AND SUPERSTITION

ANSWER KEY

ONE: Answers to questions on page 6

1. Paragraphs 1 and 2 tell us facts about owls. Paragraph 3 tells us some of the superstitions people have about owls.
2. Because it has big eyes.
3. The Barn Owl sometimes lives on farms and sometimes roosts in barns in Europe.
4. Four.
5. c. people believe that owls bring bad luck.

TWO: Answers to questions on pages 8

1. That when a wicked person dies, his spirit goes into an owl.
2. Small birds and rodents, e.g. rats and mice.
3. Wicked.

THREE: answers to questions on pages 9

1. The writer doesn't believe this. We can tell because he says: "it is said that..." This is a way of repeating what others say, without saying that you yourself think it is true.
2. Because it is believed that witches change hearts with owls.
Therefore, if an owl which has a witch's heart dies, the witch will die, too.
3. Four.

FOUR: Answers to questions on page 10

1. Yes. He says what its name is where he comes from.
2. That witches use owls as a means of transport.
3. Because owls come out at night, and night is the time when witches are believed to move as well.

FIVE: Answers to questions on page 11

1. An owl's beak is curved, like the shape of a hook.
2. "soft-plumaged" means an owl has soft feathers.
3. "nocturnal" means at night, so the answer is a.
4. A bird of prey eats other living things.

5. Yes. It is a fact that owls like living in dark places.
6. Because cats themselves are thought to be the companions of witches.
7. Both writers say that witches and wizards use owls as a means of transport, as aeroplanes.
8. By throwing a piece of wood at them.

SIX: Answers to questions on page 12

1. The superstition that has been mentioned before is the belief that owls bring bad luck if they come near your house, but that they can be scared away by a piece of burning wood. The new superstition mentioned is that witches use owls as cameras, to take a photograph of the person they want to bewitch.
2. This superstition was only invented about a hundred years ago.

SEVEN: Answers to questions on page 13

1. In paragraph 2 the writer says he has been told that owls fly at night because witches use them to steal food from people's grain bins. In paragraph 3 he says that owls seem to hunt at night because that is the time that rats come out. Owls-eat rats, therefore they fly at night to look for rats.
2. The first is superstition; the second is fact.
3. Because his grandfather's suggestion is not 'based on fact.

EIGHT: Answers to questions on page 16

1. Everything the writer says is based on personal observation, not on things he has been told or read.
2. Because it has a strong, hooked beak which can tear flesh easily.

NINE: Answers to questions on page 18

1. No. Some move by day, e.g. Pearl-spotted. Owlet and Barred Owlet.
2. Because it is cool, because their other enemies sleep at night, and because the things they themselves feed on, e.g. insects, come out at night.

TEN: Answers to questions on pages 20

1. In the daytime.
2. Because he and his family were hungry and he couldn't find any other food.

3. The fourth little snake, who hid, told them.
4. Four. (Mr Owl took three, and one hid).
5. Because Mr Snake spat some poison in Mr Owl's eyes so now owls cannot see well in daytime.
6. c. "except" means that something is left out.
7. a. "accuse" means to say to someone that you think he has done something bad.
8. b. "deny" means that someone says they haven't done the thing they are accused of doing.

ELEVEN: Answers to questions on page 25

1. The rat said the bat couldn't be a real animal because animals don't have wings and they don't fly.
2. No. All the three friends put their points of view but there was no solution to the problem.
3. The hare gave other animals and birds the right to attack the owl if they saw him during the day.

TWELVE: Answers to questions on pages 25

1. Because he was jealous that the King had made the Sun his lieutenant. Kazizi had expected to get this job.
2. No. It wasn't fair because Mbewa was trying to help Kazizi warning him about his bad behaviour.
3. Because he learned that the King had ordered him to be captured and killed.
4. Because the Sun was supposed to capture him, so he had to go where Sun's rays could not get to, and only go out at night when Sun was asleep.

THIRTEEN: Answers to questions on page 26

1. No. At first he could see just as well as human beings during the day.
2. Because he was enjoying cooking and eating the meat so much that he didn't want to stop.
3. When he woke up in the morning after cooking and drying the meat with smoke all night.
4. The fact that his eyes didn't hurt him at night and also that he could see more clearly at night than he had been able to during the day.

FOURTEEN: Answers to questions on page 28

1. The reasons were that Mr Owl had horns and a frightening voice so the other birds thought he could frighten away their enemies.
2. Because he was responsible for staying at home and looking after the kingdom.
3. He started eating the young birds when he was hungry.

4. They found out that they were not real horns when they took hold of them and they came away from his head. Then they discovered that the horns were only feathers.

FIFTEEN: Answers to questions on pages 31

1. Owl appealed to God to give him better eyesight.
2. The strange thing that happened was that with his improved eyesight Owl could see through solid objects.
3. This made him want to own everything he saw and he started to steal things.
4. They discovered who the thief was because Owl left the print of a claw on the earth around the barn.
5. His punishment was that he had to become the companion of the night.
6. Because night is associated with evil, so the owl is associated with evil, too.

SIXTEEN: Answers to questions on page 34

1. because they were thought to be very wise birds.
2. To save his own life.
3. The woodpecker, because he was a diviner.
He was terribly beaten. He was blinded and his beak and claws were cut off.
5. Because they are ashamed of their ugly appearance.

SEVENTEEN: Answers to questions on pages 37

1. They were complaining that they had to bring King Owl the best food every day.
2. They made the following suggestions: that they should kill the king; that they should flee; that Mr Chongololo should be king; that Kalulu should be king.
3. No. The meeting ended in a quarrel when they couldn't agree
4. The old mouse was afraid because he thought they were putting their lives in danger.
5. He sent them into exile.
6. The rats and the mice.
7. He was afraid because now there weren't enough animals and birds left to bring him nice food.
8. He started eating the rats and mice.
9. They stored enough food to last for some weeks in their holes so they didn't have to come out. In this way, King Owl couldn't catch them all and kill them.

10. In some ways everything turned out well for King Owl. His eyes got so big he could see easily at night. In this way he could see and easily catch the rats and mice who move at night.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN: Answers to questions on page 39

1. Because a white hen can lay a white egg. That is, it can lay an egg the same colour as itself. A black hen cannot do this.
2. Owl boasted that she could lay an egg that was brown in colour, like she was.
3. No. She laid a white egg.
4. Because she was ashamed to tell Tortoise that she had laid a white egg.
5. No. She discovered they were good to eat only when she started to move at night.