

# Discussion Guide

## *The Little Regent*

by Yewande Daniel-Ayoade and illustrated by Ken Daley

### About the Book

After the king of a West African village dies, his eight-year-old daughter Abioye is made the temporary ruler, or regent, until a new king is chosen. The chiefs scoff at this decision—a little girl can't be regent! Even Abioye herself doubts whether she's up to the task. But her late father's words of wisdom comfort and guide her: *Those who will rule must first learn to serve.*

The next day, amid meetings about taxes and titles, Abioye keeps her eyes and ears open for ways to serve her people. When she hears about their dried-up well, their leaky boats, and their hungry children, she decides to devote herself to helping the villagers instead of attending stuffy meetings with the chiefs. With her ideas and support, the village flourishes. But as the villagers praise her leadership, the chiefs complain that she is abandoning her duties and announce that it's time for a new king. When the time comes for the villagers to vote for their new ruler, they reject all the other candidates and crown Abioye instead, making her the first female king the village has ever had!



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Written by Yewande Daniel-Ayoade,  
illustrated by Ken Daley

### Before Reading

Help students understand the cultural context in which the book is written.

1. Read the author's note at the back of the book.
2. Help students research Nigeria. Here are some sample questions you can use to guide their research:
  - **Q:** What is Nigeria's official language?  
**A:** Nigerians speak over 500 distinct languages, but the official language is English.
  - **Q:** How big is Nigeria's population compared to other African countries? How does it compare to other countries around the world?  
**A:** Nigeria has the largest population in Africa and the sixth in the world.
  - **Q:** What does Nigeria's landscape look like?  
**A:** Nigeria has both rainforests and deserts.



#### READING LEVELS

**Grade:** 2+, **Fountas & Pinnell:** L, **Lexile® Measure:** AD620L **Common Core:** RL.2, W.2, SL.2, L.2

#### CURRICULUM LINKS

**Language Arts:** Reading, **Social Studies:** Local Community; World Traditions; Regency; Monarchy; Democracy



## Before Reading (continued)

- **Q:** What is the most popular sport in Nigeria?  
**A:** Soccer is the most popular sport in Nigeria.
  - **Q:** What is Nigeria famous for?  
**A:** Nigeria is one of the largest film producers in the world.
3. Help students research the Yoruba tribe and cultural traditions, including food, clothing, and language. Here are some sample questions you can use to guide their research:
- **Q:** Where do the Yoruba live?  
**A:** The Yoruba live in the West African countries of Nigeria, Benin, and Togo. Most of them live in Nigeria.
  - **Q:** Where in Nigeria do the Yoruba live?  
**A:** The Yoruba live in cities (like Lagos, Ibadan, Abeokuta), large towns, and villages.
  - **Q:** Traditionally, what work did Yorubas do?  
**A:** Yorubas were traditionally hunters, farmers, and crafters.
  - **Q:** What do Yorubas eat?  
**A:** Yorubas eat yams, cassava, cocoyam, plantain, rice, and a variety of leafy vegetables.

## After Reading

### What Is Leadership?

- What makes a good leader?
- Abioye's father said, "Those who will rule must first learn to serve." What do you think that means?
- In what ways did Abioye serve her people?
- Why did the chiefs think that Abioye was a bad leader?
- Do you think Abioye was a good leader? Why or why not?
- What is servant leadership? What does it mean to you?



### Can Kids Lead?

- In the book, a chief says, "A child cannot rule this village!" Why do you think he said that?
- Do you think kids can be leaders?
- Can you think of some examples of kids who have been leaders?
- Can you think of a time when you were asked to lead?
- If you were the leader of your city or town for a day, what would you do?
- Most people think political leaders like presidents, prime ministers, mayors, and others have all the power to lead, just like the chiefs of the village in the story did. Can you think of ways that you can lead even though you aren't an adult?



