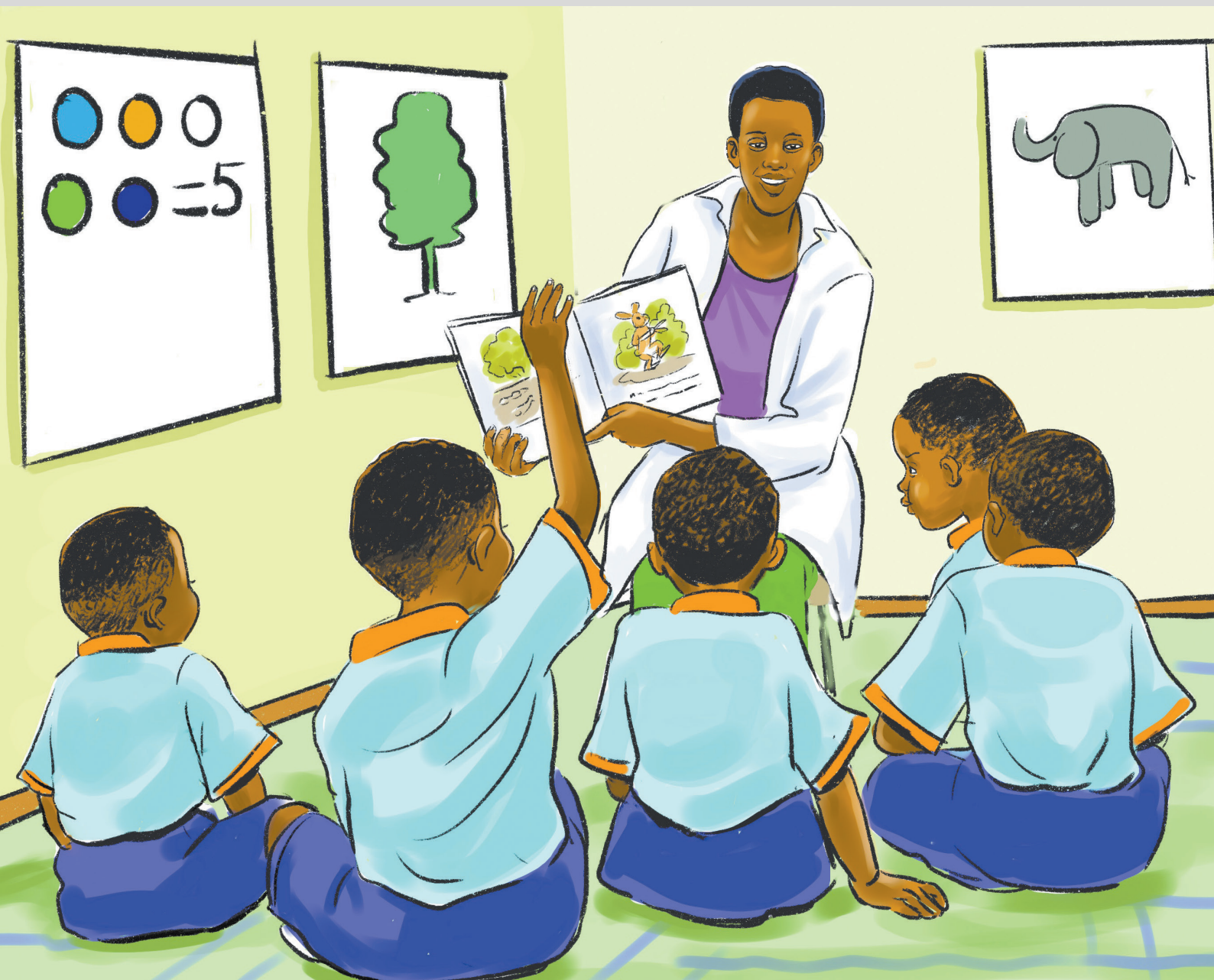


# GUIDELINES

## KINYARWANDA READ-ALOUD STORIES

### FOR PRE-PRIMARY



May, 2023

© Copyright 2023 Rwanda Basic Education Board

All rights reserved.

All parts of this publication are protected by copyright.

Any utilization of this publication in terms of reproductions, translations, microfilming, and processing in electronic form outside the strict limits of the copyright law without the express permission of the Rwanda Basic Education Board, Republic of Rwanda, is forbidden and liable to prosecution.

**Disclaimer:** This document is made possible with assistance from the American people sponsored by the US Agency for International Development (USAID). The contents are the sole responsibility of Rwanda Basic Education Board and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the US Government.



# Table of Contents

FOREWORD.....3

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....4

CONTEXT.....5

Quantity Matters.....6

How Books Are Read Matters .....6

Quality Matters.....6

Criteria for Quality Read-Aloud Books for Pre-Primary.....6

What is the Difference Between a Read-Aloud Book and a Leveled, Pupil Read-Alone Book? .....8

CRITERIA, KINYARWANDA PRE-PRIMARY READ-ALOUD STORIES .....9

**BIBLIOGRAPHY..... 12**

DOCUMENTS CONSULTED DURING THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CRITERIA FOR PRE-PRIMARY READ-ALOUD STORIES ..... 12

ANNEX A: EXAMPLES OF READ-ALOUD BOOKS FOR PRE-PRIMARY ..... 13

**Nursery 1 ..... 13**

1a. Icyari cya ntashya – Copyright REB. From REB Reach collection ..... 13

**Nursery 2 ..... 38**

2a. Inkima ziririmba – Copyright REB. From REB Reach collection ..... 38

**Nursery 3 ..... 43**

3a. Icumi – Copyright REB. From REB Reach collection ..... 43



# Foreword

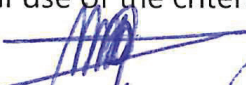
The Rwanda Basic Education Board presents the criteria for Kinyarwanda read-aloud stories for pre-primary. The criteria were developed collaboratively by teachers, curriculum specialists from the Rwanda Basic Education Board, and technical partners supporting literacy development in the early grades.

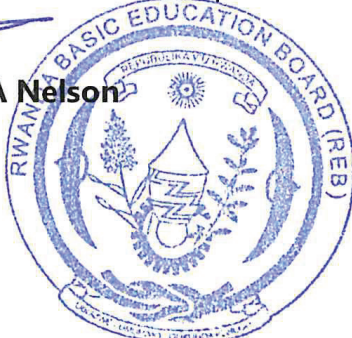
Strong Kinyarwanda reading skills are fundamental to pupils' future education. The development of those skills starts in pre-primary when children hear high quality, engaging, stories.

The criteria outline the key features of read-aloud stories young children should hear and engage with as they move through the three levels of pre-primary. The earliest stories read to children are very simple but engaging, with one or two sentences per page. As children strengthen their listening skills, and expand their vocabulary, and their understanding of the characteristics of a story, they need to hear stories or texts that are slightly more challenging. They are ready to hear short stories with multiple characters and an easy-to-follow story line. This transition from simpler to more complex is essential for scaffolding learners' oral comprehension skill development, fostering a love of reading, and instilling a culture of reading more widely.

The criteria outlined in this document will enable writers to develop interesting, creative, and age- and development-appropriate stories that capture the minds and imaginations of young learners. They will also allow parents, teachers, and librarians to identify books appropriate for children's cognitive level.

I would like to encourage publishers and authors of teaching and learning materials to make full use of the criteria to develop books that will nurture a nation of young readers.

  
**Dr MBARUSHIMANA Nelson**  
Director General, REB



# Acknowledgments

I wish to sincerely extend my special appreciation to everyone who played a major role in the development of the criteria for Kinyarwanda read-aloud stories for pre-primary.

I would like to acknowledge, in particular, the crucial role played by USAID-Tunoze Gusoma in facilitating the working sessions that resulted in the development of these criteria. The technical expertise provided enriched the discussions and debates.

Special appreciation goes to the classroom teachers, REB curriculum specialists, URCE reading specialists, and the representatives of Save the Children, World Vision, FHI 360, the World Bank, VSO, and BLF/British Council that participated in the working sessions. Their contributions are gratefully acknowledged.

**Ms. Joan MURUNGI**



Head of Department, Curriculum Teaching  
and Learning Resources, REB



# Context

There is a strong correlation between reading aloud to children and young children’s emergent literacy skills and their later success as readers (NICHD, 2005; Snow et al., 1998; Storch & Whitehurst, 2001). The more young learners are read to, the stronger their reading skills in higher grade levels (Payne et al., 1994).

Reading stories to young children has multiple benefits:

1. It develops their **vocabulary** (Isbell et al., 2004; Ninio, 1983). Books contain words that children are unlikely to encounter in everyday spoken language (Senechal et al., 1996). When children encounter these unfamiliar words, and an adult helps them understand what the words means, by using clues in the context or the illustrations, children learn new vocabulary. They also learn strategies for inferring the meaning of new words. This is important, as children who have a larger vocabulary and a greater understanding of spoken language have fewer difficulties learning to read (Ezell & Justice, 2005).
2. It develops their **understanding of sentence structure and grammar** (Purcell-Gates, 1988). The language modeled in the stories gives young children the knowledge they need to express their thoughts and ideas in new, more sophisticated ways.
3. It develops children’s **imagination and creativity**. When children listen to a story, they begin to imagine where the characters are and what they are doing. They are forced to interpret the characters and try understand who they are.
4. It allows young children to **understand different emotions** and how to deal with them. Hearing a story about a young child or a fictional character wrestling with different emotions provides children with an opening to discuss emotions and how to express them in contextually appropriate ways. This contributes to their social-emotional development.
5. It develops young children’s **understanding of story structure**. They learn, intuitively and through scaffolding provided by adults, that stories have a beginning, middle, and end, that there are always characters who encounter and eventually solve a problem. Developing an understanding of the structure of story helps children better understand stories when they begin reading them on their own.
6. It can **increase their general knowledge** of the world. This is particularly true when adults read factual text to children, for example, texts about the different people in their neighborhood, common animals they encounter, common modes of transportation, etc. Increasing children’s general knowledge better helps them understand texts when they start reading them independently.
7. It supports their **language and cognitive development**. Very young children who are read to and talked to score higher in language skills and in cognitive development skills like problem solving (Aisling & Egan, 2013).
8. It teaches children the **basics of how to read a book** i.e., that print represents spoken words, that words are made up of letters and are separated by spaces, that when we come to the end of a page we move on to the next page, etc. (Snow & Ninio, 1996; Bus et al., 1995).
9. **It** teaches children **logical thinking and other critical-thinking skills**. The more we read to young children, the more they grasp abstract concepts, recognize cause and effect, utilize good judgment, etc.

10. Finally, it develops in young children a love of story telling and reading (Arnold & Whitehurst, 1994).

## Quantity Matters

The benefits outlined above are more likely to occur when young children are read to on a regular basis. Setting aside time for daily read-aloud stories ensures that children have frequent opportunities to immerse themselves in language and story.

## How Books are Read Matters

Reese et. al. (2003) maintain that how stories are read has a greater impact on children’s language development than the frequency with which they are read to. Effective story reading styles include:

- **The describer style** – where the reader focuses on describing the pictures during a read aloud. This style is particularly effective when children have lower, initial vocabulary levels (Reese and Cox,. 1999).
- **The performance-oriented style** – where the reader focuses on discussing the meaning of the story after having read the story to children. This style is most effective with children who have higher initial vocabulary levels (Ibid.).
- **The dialogic reading style** – where the reader asks questions throughout the story, lets the child describe what is happening or might happen next, and provides feedback on the ideas presented. The use of a dialogic reading style correlates with children having better expressive language and using longer and more complicated words and sentences.

## Quality matters

The benefits outlined above are also more likely to occur when young children are captivated by the book and immersed, cognitively, and creatively, in the read-aloud experience. That is most likely to happen when the stories are engaging and intriguing, when the stories align with children’s interests and experiences, and/or when the stories contain predictive texts—repetitive refrains or choruses that the children can shout out as the story progresses.

The benefits are also most likely to occur when the stories read to children align with their level of cognitive development. Stories for very young children, for example, need to have the simplest of story lines, and bold illustrations with few details. Read-aloud stories for older pre-primary children need to have more complex story lines.

## Criteria for Quality Read-Aloud Books for Pre-Primary

The desire to ensure that children in pre-primary are presented with quality read-aloud books that are appropriate for their age/developmental level motivated REB to outline the characteristics of good Kinyarwanda read-aloud books for three levels: Nursery I, Nursery II and Nursery III. The characteristics are grouped around seven criteria inspired by the work of researchers in this field, namely: Clay, 1991; Fountas & Pinnell 1996; Hiebert 1999; and Rog & Burton 2002; and adapted to the Rwandan context by Rwandan teachers, REB curriculum specialists, and REB/MINEDUC technical partners supporting early grade literacy.

The seven criteria are:

- 1. Content** – Defined as the complexity of the concepts or ideas presented. Beginning read alouds merely label illustrations of objects or actions that are familiar to the reader or use repetitive vocabulary and structures to describe events or experiences common to most young readers, such as events at school. In Nursery II, the stories become less predictable as more characters are introduced and the reader needs to make inferences to follow the storyline. Texts at this level have a strong plot, individualized characters, descriptive language, and literary text structures such as “*Once upon a time...*” or “*There once was...*”.
- 2. Patterns in text** – Patterns or predictability refers to the presence of rhyme or rhythm patterns, or patterns created by repeating vocabulary, or sentence structures, or by the presence of cumulative or chronological text structures that make a text predictable (Clay, 1991). Predictability is an important characteristic of read-aloud texts. The presence of repetitive structures and vocabulary aids comprehension and enhances learners’ pleasure of reading (Martin & Brogan, 1971).
- 3. Illustrations** – The support provided by illustrations can make a read-aloud story easier or harder to understand. In Nursery I, illustrations often take up most of the page. They are simple and clear, with no unnecessary details, and match what is in the text. They provide a high level of support for understanding the text.
- 4. Print features** – Print features generally refer to the size and layout of text and illustrations. At beginning levels, the print generally appears in a very large font (24 point) and clear font that matches the print used in textbooks or by teachers on a black board (e.g., Andika). As readers move up the levels, the font gradually becomes smaller.
- 5. Readability** – Readability refers to traditional quantifiable criteria used to determine the level of difficulty of a text, for example, the average number of words in a sentence, the average number of sentences on a page, the average number of syllables in a word, the total number of words or sentences in a text. Although these criteria can give some indication of the difficulty of a text, the other criteria outlined above are a greater predictor of the level of difficulty of a read-aloud text (Hiebert 1999; Weaver, 2000; Murphy, 2013). That is the reason why readability appears as the second last criteria in the REB leveling framework.
- 6. Assessment of reading comprehension** – This criterion is not a leveling criteria per se. Rather, it outlines the type of oral listening comprehension questions a learner should be able to answer if he/she has understood a text at a given level. Teachers who participated in the development of the REB leveled text framework requested that this criterion be retained, and that read-aloud texts be accompanied, on the last page, by appropriate listening comprehension questions, as

**Textbox 1: Some strategies for to achieving predictability in read aloud texts (Bridge, 1996)**

- Use a common refrain, for example “Goodness, no” in the *Pete the Cat* stories
- Use compare and contrast (e.g., Gossie repeatedly says “Follow me!”, but Gertie follows other things in *Gossie and Gertie are Friends*)
- Use episodic or enumerative patterns (e.g., *On Monday, Cookie fell in a toilet, On Tuesday, Cookie knocked a plant off the windowsill, etc. in Cookie’s Week*)

well as questions to encourage the reader to make connections between the ideas in the text and his/her personal experience, or to make a judgment on the text (what they liked about the text, whether they thought a character was justified in taking a particular action, the moral or lesson in the story, etc.).

## Qualitative nature of criteria for read-aloud texts



It should be noted that the leveling criteria described above cannot be reduced to a simple formula. Educators trained in the REB leveling framework must draw on their knowledge of the guidelines, and their professional judgment, to come to consensus on the level of a read-aloud story. The debates and exchanges that ensue can only enrich our collective understanding of children's listening comprehension skills, and of the types of read aloud that will best support children to deepen their skills.

## What is the Difference between a Read-Aloud Book and a Leveled, Pupil Read-Alone Book?

Read-aloud books are books that a parent, teacher, or some other adult reads to children because the children do not possess the reading skills necessary to read it on their own. Leveled, pupil read-alone books are books that children can read on their own by using the reading skills they have developed.

A pre-primary read-aloud book can become a leveled, read-alone book once the child is older and has developed the skills necessary to read the book on his/her own.



**CRITERIA, KINYARWANDA PRE-PRIMARY READ-ALOUD STORIES**

	Nursery 1	Nursery II	Nursery III
<p><b>Content</b> Age and context appropriateness of themes addressed, and ideas presented; Number of ideas presented; Clarity of their organization; types of texts (story, factual, etc.) presented</p>	<p>– Stories dealing with topics and situations that children of this age can relate to, for example, family, sounds, emotions, with real or cartoon characters – Age-appropriate stories with fantasy, imaginary situations; with animal or cartoon characters – Stories with dialogue between two characters – Stories with a very clear beginning, middle, and end; one main event, few characters – Factual texts that address objects, animals, events common in the life of children this age (e.g., modes of transportation, people in my village)</p> <p><b>Genre</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Story books with large illustrations</li> <li>– Books with simple information about common objects or things in children’s lives and large illustrations</li> <li>– Simple rhymes and poems</li> </ul>	<p>– Stories dealing with topics and situations that children of this age can relate to, for example, family, sounds, emotions, with real or cartoon characters – Age-appropriate stories with fantasy, imaginary situations; with animal or cartoon characters – Stories with dialogue between two characters – Stories with a very clear beginning, middle, and end; one main event, few characters – Factual texts that address objects, animals, events common in the life of children this age (e.g., modes of transportation, people in my village)</p> <p><b>Genre</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Story books with large illustrations</li> <li>– Books with simple information about common objects or things in children’s lives and large illustrations</li> <li>– Simple rhymes and poems</li> </ul>	<p>– Stories dealing with topics and situations that children of this age can relate to, for example, family, sounds, emotions, with real or cartoon characters – Age-appropriate stories with fantasy, imaginary situations; with animal or cartoon characters – Stories with dialogue between two characters – Stories with a very clear beginning, middle, and end; generally, one main event and a limited number of characters – Factual texts that address objects, animals, events common in the life of children this age (e.g., modes of transportation, people in my village)</p> <p><b>Genre</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Story books with large illustrations</li> <li>– Books with simple information about common objects or things in children’s lives and large illustrations</li> <li>– Simple rhymes and poems</li> </ul>
<p><b>VOCABULARY</b> Familiarity, simplicity, complexity of vocabulary; level of repetition of vocabulary; use of abbreviations, contractions</p>	<p>– Familiar words; generally, up to 2 new vocabulary words per book</p>	<p>– Familiar words; generally, up to 3 new vocabulary words per book</p>	<p>– Familiar words; generally, up to 3 new vocabulary words per book</p>

	Nursery 1	Nursery II	Nursery III
<b>PATTERNS IN TEXT</b> <i>Presence/absence of patterns in vocabulary or sentence structure; degree to which story follows a predictable or linear structure.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stories that are fun to read aloud because of repeating sounds, refrains, sound effects, etc.</li> <li>- Stories with lots of words and sentences that repeat.</li> <li>- Mimicable stories, i.e., stories with repeating sounds, refrains, or sentence structures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stories that are fun to read aloud because of repeating sounds, refrains, sound effects, etc.</li> <li>- Stories with lots of words and sentences that repeat.</li> <li>- Mimicable stories, i.e., stories with repeating sounds, refrains, or sentence structures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stories that are fun to read aloud because of repeating sounds, refrains, sound effects, etc.</li> <li>- Stories with lots of words and sentences that repeat.</li> <li>- Mimicable stories, i.e., stories with repeating sounds, refrains, or sentence structures.</li> </ul>
<b>ILLUSTRATIONS</b> <i>Complexity and clarity of illustrations; choice and quality of colours; extend to which illustrations communicate what is in the text</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Illustrations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• with minimal detail</li> <li>• with minimal distractions</li> <li>• that reflect the character or the objects mentioned</li> <li>• that match the text</li> </ul> </li> <li>- More illustrations than text on a page</li> <li>- Vivid basic colours that a child knows (e.g., red, yellow, blue, and green)</li> <li>- For factual books the colours should be accurate (e.g., elephants are grey)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Illustrations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• with minimal detail</li> <li>• with minimal distractions</li> <li>• that reflect the character or the objects mentioned</li> <li>• that match the text</li> </ul> </li> <li>- More illustrations than text on a page</li> <li>- Vivid basic colours that a child knows (e.g., red, yellow, blue, and green)</li> <li>- For factual books, the colours should be accurate (e.g., elephants are grey); for fantasy books, the colours can be amusing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Illustrations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• with minimal detail</li> <li>• with minimal distractions</li> <li>• that reflect the character or the objects mentioned</li> <li>• that match the text</li> </ul> </li> <li>- More illustrations than text</li> <li>- Vivid basic colors that a child knows (e.g. red, yellow, blue, and green)</li> <li>- For factual books, the colours should be accurate (e.g., elephants are grey); for fantasy books, the colours can be amusing</li> </ul>
<b>PRINT FEATURES</b> <i>Spacing and placement of text and illustrations on page; spacing between words and sentences; wrapping or not of sentences; format of book; type and size of font; colour of font used; type of punctuation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Books with hard covers</li> <li>- Books with glossy finish</li> <li>- Books with big size for read aloud</li> <li>- Physical specifications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Format: A4 (297 x 210mm)</li> <li>• Cover weight: 300gsm minimum</li> <li>• Paper weight: 140 gm or more</li> <li>• Cover thickness: 0.34-0.38 mm</li> <li>• Laminated cover</li> <li>• Binding: Saddle stitched</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Font type preferably Andika or other similar fonts</li> <li>- Font size not less than 16 pt.</li> <li>- Generally, up to 16 pages per book</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Books with hard covers</li> <li>- Books with glossy finish</li> <li>- Books with big size for read aloud</li> <li>- Physical specifications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Format: A4 (297 x 210mm)</li> <li>• Cover weight: 300 gsm minimum</li> <li>• Paper weight: 140 gm or more</li> <li>• Cover thickness: 0.34-0.38 mm</li> <li>• Laminated cover</li> <li>• Binding: Saddle stitched</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Font type preferably Andika or other similar fonts</li> <li>- Font size not less than 16 pt.</li> <li>- Generally, up to 20 pages per book</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Books with hard covers</li> <li>- Books with glossy finish</li> <li>- Books with big size for read aloud</li> <li>- Physical specifications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Format: A4 (297 x 210mm)</li> <li>• Cover weight: 300 gsm minimum</li> <li>• Paper weight: 140 gm or more</li> <li>• Cover thickness: 0.34-0.38 mm</li> <li>• Laminated cover</li> <li>• Binding: Saddle stitched</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Font type preferably Andika or other similar fonts</li> <li>- Font size not less than 16 pt.</li> <li>- Generally, up to 24 pages per book</li> </ul>

	Nursery 1	Nursery II	Nursery III
<p><b>Readability</b> Word, sentence, and text length; number of words, sentences, pages</p> <p><b>Suggested reading comprehension activities</b> Appropriateness of proposed questions, including questions that invite the reader to make personal connection with text</p>	<p>Nursery 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Short simple sentences that reflect oral speech</li> <li>- Repeated words, repeated sentence structures</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Questions to reinforce literal and inferential comprehension</li> <li>- Questions that explore the different priority themes in the annex</li> <li>- Activities to do after reading (e.g., role play, storytelling)</li> </ul>	<p>Nursery II</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Longer sentences that reflect oral language</li> <li>- Repeated words, repeated sentence structures</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Questions to reinforce literal and inferential comprehension</li> <li>- Questions about how to infer meaning of unfamiliar words (strategies to use)</li> <li>- Questions that explore the different priority themes in the annex</li> <li>- Activities to do after reading (e.g., role play, storytelling)</li> </ul>	<p>Nursery III</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Longer sentences with more details that reflect oral language</li> <li>- Repeated words, repeated sentence structures</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Questions to reinforce literal and inferential comprehension</li> <li>- Questions about how to infer meaning of unfamiliar words (strategies to use)</li> <li>- Questions that explore the different priority themes in the annex</li> <li>- Activities to do after reading (e.g., role play, storytelling)</li> </ul>
<p>Example books for each level</p>	<p>Icyari cya ntashya 1 Icyari cya ntashya 2 Icyari cya ntashya 3 Icyari cya ntashya 4 Uyu ni nde</p>	<p>Inkima ziririmba Manzi azi kubara</p>	<p>Icumi Fora ndi he?</p>

# BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Aisling, M. & Egan, S. 2013. Does reading to infants benefit their cognitive development at 9-months old? An investigation using a large birth cohort survey. *Child Language Teaching and Therapy*, 30 (3).
- Arnold, D. S. & Whitehurst, G. J. 1994. Accelerating language development through picture book reading. A summary of dialogic reading and its effects. In Dickinson, D. K. Ed. *Bridges to literacy: Children, families, and schools*. Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell, 103-28.
- Bus, A.G., van Ljzendoorn, M. H., Pellegrini, A. D. 1995. Joint book reading makes for success in learning to read: A meta-analysis on intergenerational transmission of literacy. *Review of Educational Research*. 65 (1) 1-21.
- Clay, M. 1991. *Becoming literate: the construction of inner control*. Auckland, New Zealand, Heinemann.
- Ezell, H. K. & Justice, L. M. 2005. *Shared storybook reading*. Baltimore, MD: Brooks Publishing, 2005.
- Fountas, I., & Pinnell, G. 1996. *Guided reading: Good first teaching for all children*. Portsmouth, HG: Heinemann.
- Hiebert, E. 1999. *Text matters in learning to read*. (CIERA Report#1-001). Ann Arbor, MI: Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement, University of Michigan School of Education.
- Isbell, R., Sobol, J. Lindauer, L., and Lowrance, A. 2004. The effects of storytelling and story reading on the oral language complexity and story comprehension of young readers. *Early Childhood Education Journal* 32 (3),157-163.
- Martin, B., & Brogan, P. 1971. *Teacher's guide to the instant reader*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
- Murphy S. 2013. *Assessing Text Difficulty for Students. What Works? Research into Practice Monograph #44, Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat and the Ontario Association of Deans of Education*. January 2013. NICHD Early Child Care Research Network (2005). *Pathways to reading: the role of oral language in the transition to reading*. *Development Psychology*, 41 (2), 428-42.
- Ninio, A. Joint book reading as multiple vocabulary acquisition device. 1983. *Developmental Psychology*. 49, 445-51.
- Payne, A., Whitehurst, G. J., Angell, A. 1994. The role of home literacy environment in the development of language ability in preschool children from low-income families. *Early Child Research Quarterly*, 9, 427-40.
- Purcell-Gates, V. Lexical and syntactic knowledge of written narrative held by well-read-to-kindergartners and second graders. *Research in the Teaching English*. 22 (2), 128-60.
- Reese, E. & Cox, A. 1999. Quality of adult book reading effects children's emergent literacy. *Developmental Psychology*, 35, (1), 20-8.
- Reese, E. Cox, A. Harte, D. et al., 2003. Diversity in adults' style of reading books to children. In Van Kleeck A., Stahl S. A. & Bauer, E. B. Eds. *On reading books to children: parents, and teachers*. Mahwah, NJ. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. 37-57.
- Rog, L, & Burton, W. 2002. Matching Texts and Readers: Leveling Early Reading Materials for Assessment and Instruction. *The Reading Teacher*, 55, (4), 348-356.
- Sénéchal, M. LeFevre, J. A. Hudson, E., and Lawson, E. 1996. Knowledge of storybooks as a predictor of young children's vocabulary. *Journal of Education Psychology*. 88 (3), 520-36.
- Snow, C. D., Burns, S. & Griffin, P. 1998. *Preventing reading difficulties in young children*. National Academy Press: Washington DC.
- Snow, C. D. & Ninio, A. 1986. The contacts of literacy. what children learn from learning to read books. In Teslo, WH, Suddy, E. eds. *Emergent literacy, writing and reading*. Norwood, NJ. Ablex: 116-38.
- Storch, S. A. & Whitehurst, G. J. (2001). The role of family and home in the development of literacy in children from low-income backgrounds. In Britto, P. R and Brooks-Gunn, J. Eds. *New direction in child development: the role of family literacy environment in promoting young children's emerging literacy skills*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass/Pfeiffer, 53-71.
- Weaver, B.M. 2000. *Leveling books K-6: Matching readers to text*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

## **Documents consulted during the development of the Criteria for Pre-primary Read-Aloud stories**

- English and Kinyarwanda leveled text framework. 2012. Rwanda Education Board.
- Kinyarwanda leveled text framework, P1 to P3. Rwanda Education Board.
- Reach story book collection. 2022. REB. Available on REB E-learning portal
- Preprimary curriculum, Rwanda Education Board.



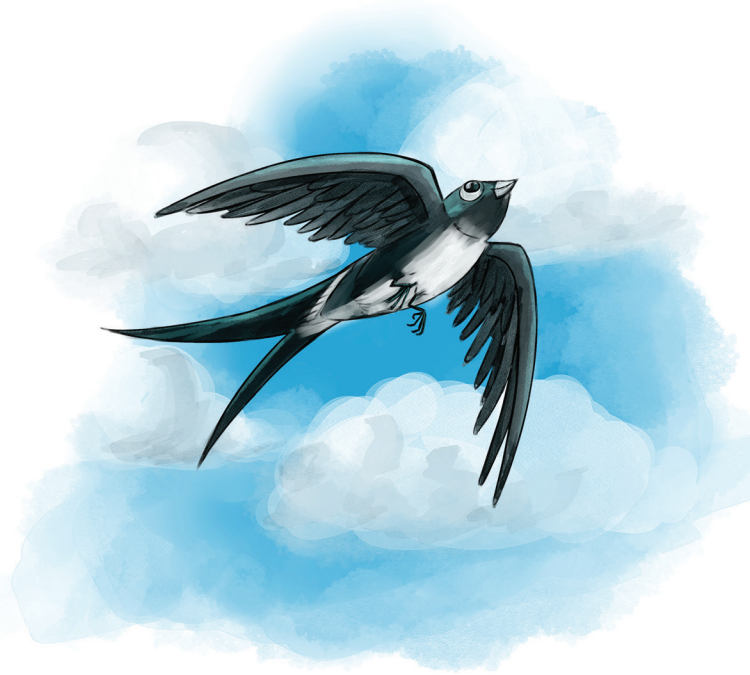
# ANNEX A: EXAMPLES OF READ-ALOUD BOOKS FOR PRE-PRIMARY

## Nursery 1

- 1a. Icyari cya ntashya – Copyright REB. From REB Reach collection  
Available on the e-learning portal

Icyari cya Ntashya 1  
Icyari cya Ntashya 2  
Icyari cya Ntashya 3  
Icyari cya Nyashya 4





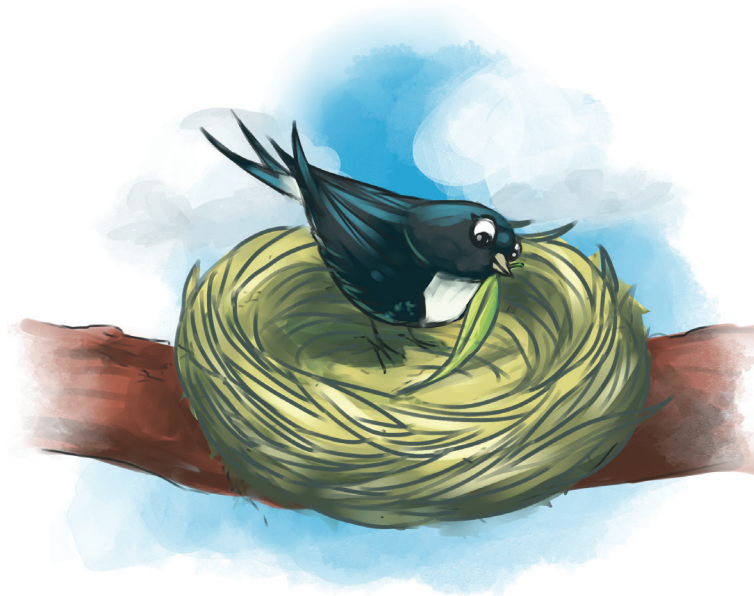
Ntashya yarazindutse.

1



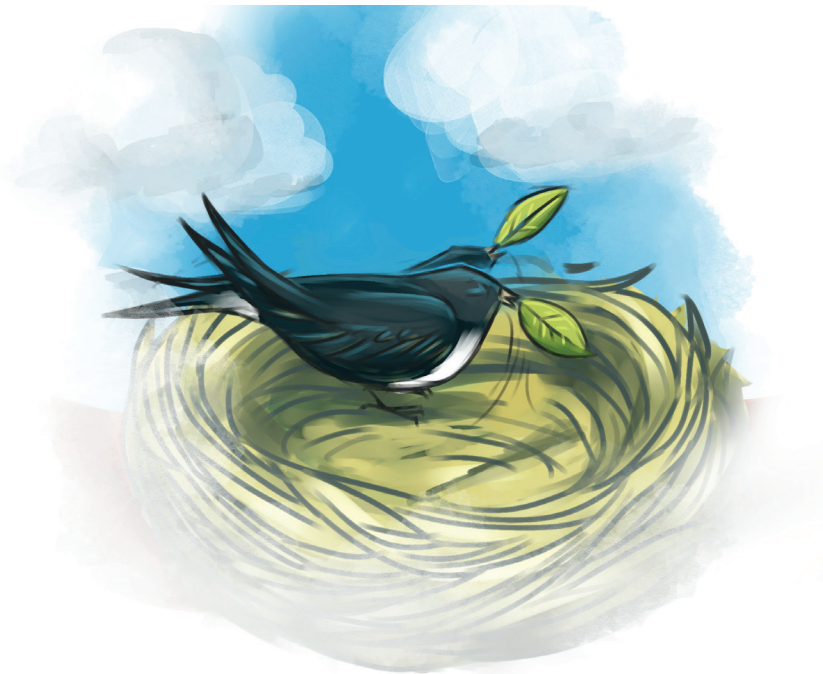
Asoroma utubabi.

2



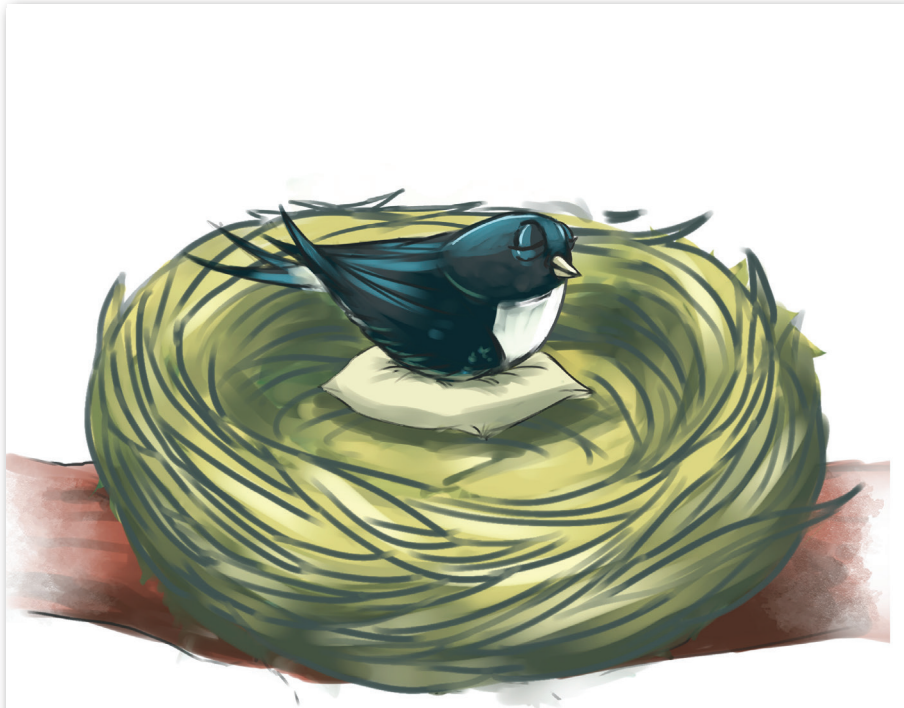
Aratuboha.

3



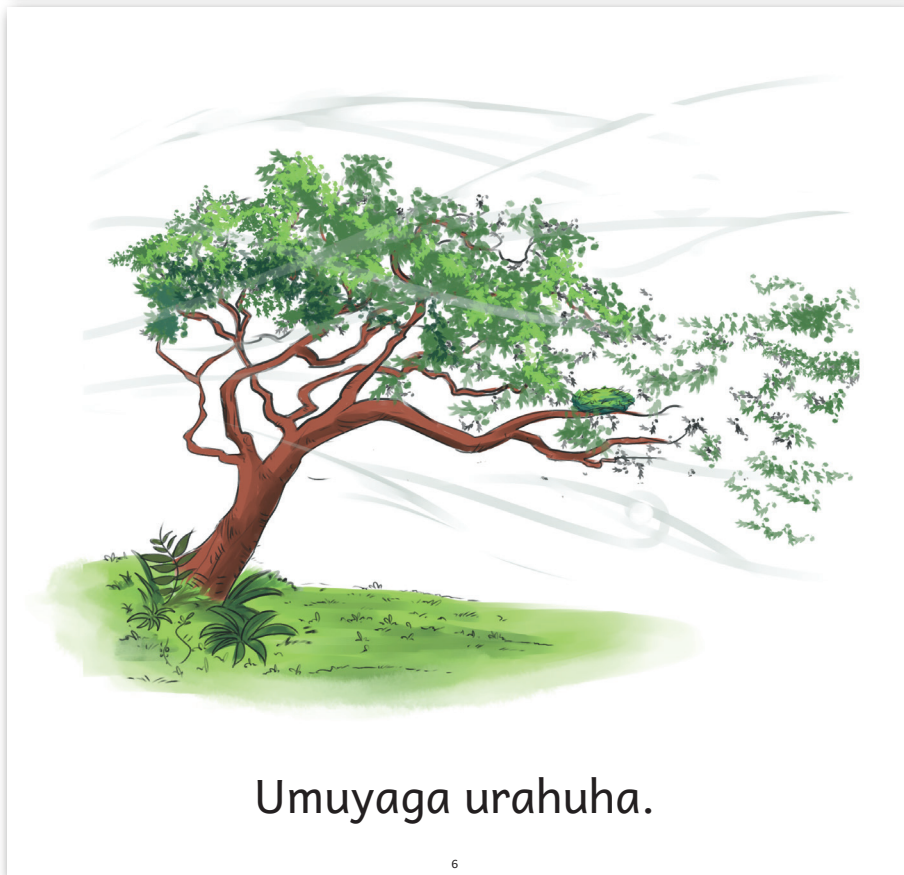
Yubaka vubavuba.

4



Yuzuza icyari.

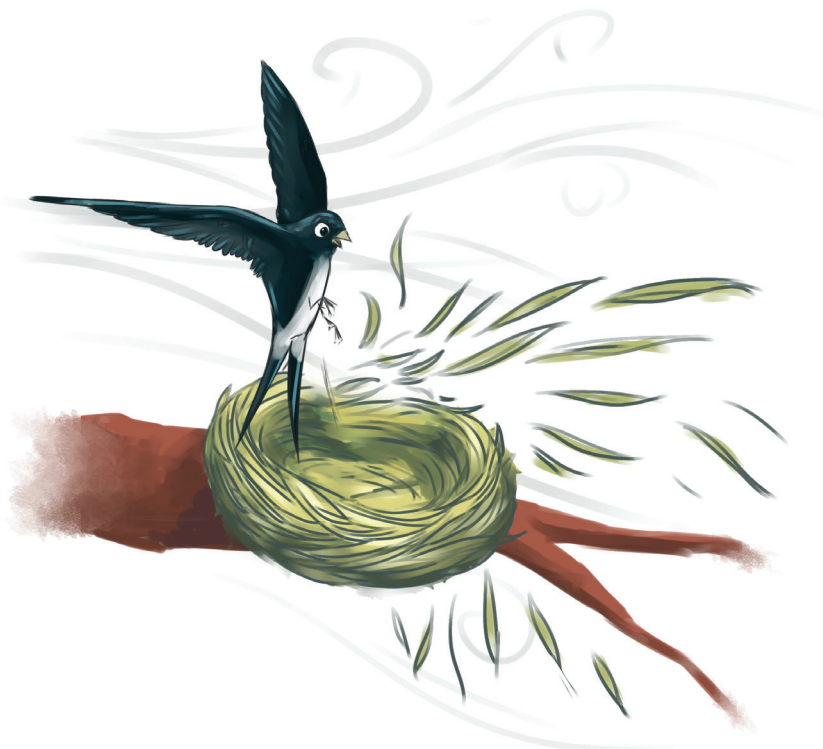
5



Umuyaga urahuha.

6





Usenya icyari.

7



Ntashya arababara.

8



Yibaza icyo yakora.

9



Araguruka.

10

# ICYARI CYA NTASHYA 2

Uduti

Amashuri y'inshuke



Yanditswe na: **Nshimyumukiza Eric**



Ishushanywa na: **Irudukunda Sebastien**



Ntashya yarazindutse.

1



Atoragura uduti.

2



Atubohera ku tubabi.

3





Yubaka vubavuba.

4



Yuzuza icyari.

5



Haza inkende.

6



Ikinira ku giti.

7





Icyari kirahanuka.

8



Ntashya ararakara.

9



Yibaza icyo yakora.

10



Araguruka.

11

# ICYARI CYA NTASHYA 3

Utwondo

Amashuri y'inshuke



Yanditswe na: **Nshimyumukiza Eric**



Ishushanywa na: **Iradukunda Sebastien**



Ntashya yarazindutse.

1



Atora utwondo.

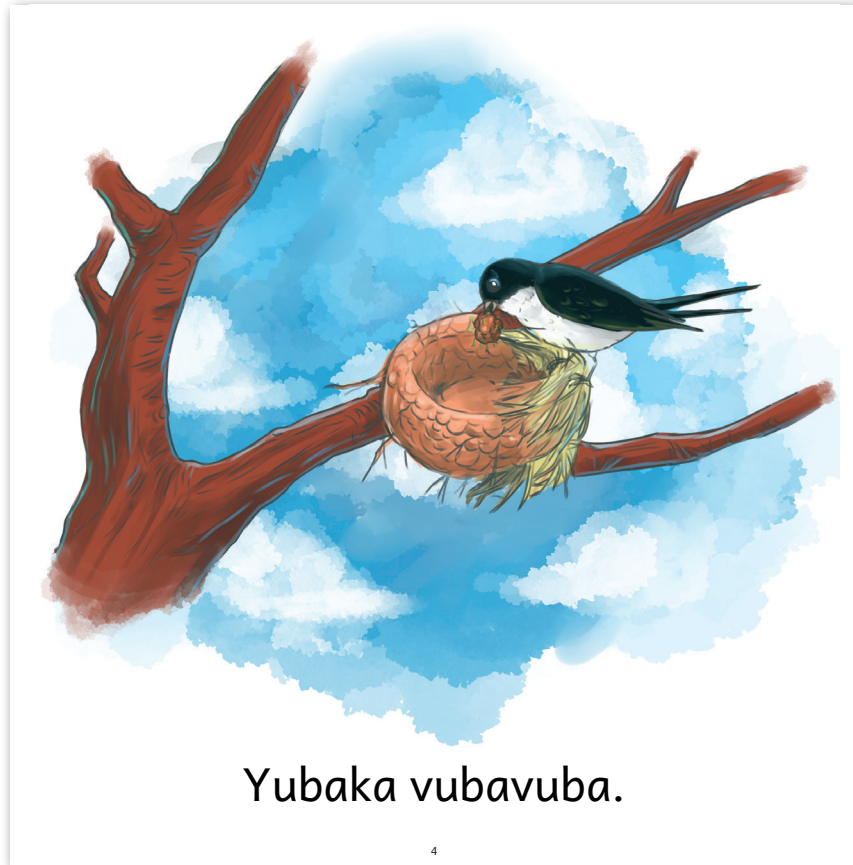
2



Atwomeka ku cyari.

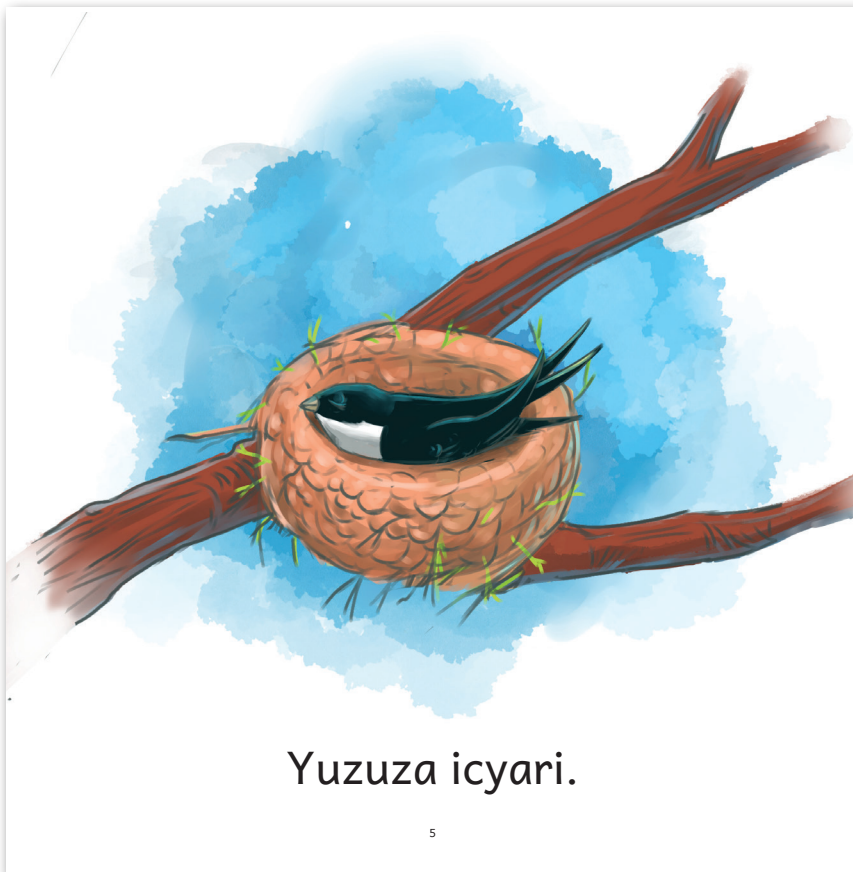
3





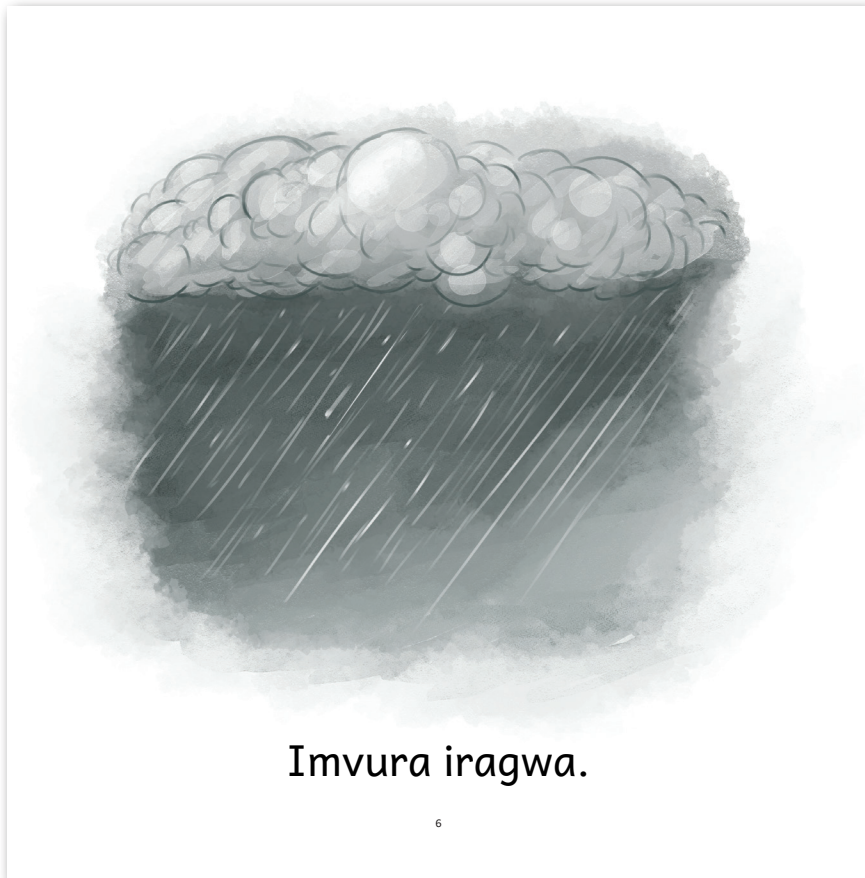
Yubaka vubavuba.

4



Yuzuza icyari.

5



Imvura iragwa.

6



Iragisenya.

7





Ntashya agira ubwoba.

8



Yitegereza hakurya.

9



Araguruka.

10

# ICYARI CYA NTASHYA 4

## Urutare

Amashuri y'inshuke



Yanditswe na: **Nshimyumukiza Eric**



Ishushanywa na: **Iradukunda Sebastien**



Ntashya ajya kugama.

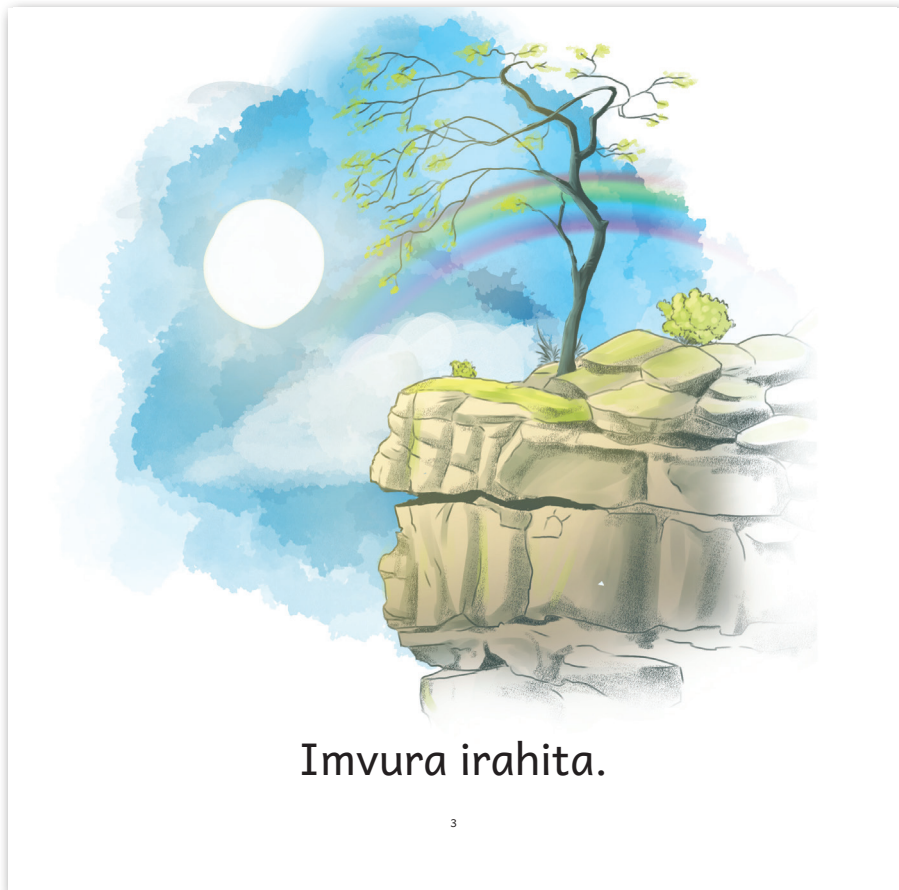
1





Yugama mu rutare,

2



Imvura irahita.

3



Yahira utwatsi.

4



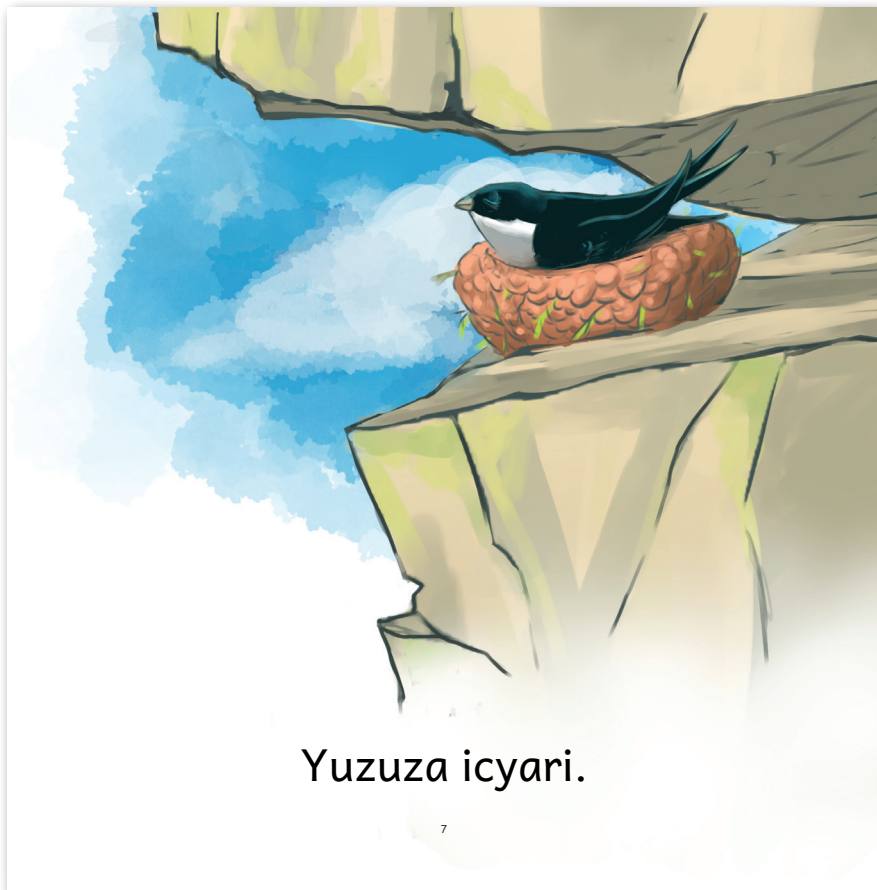
Atora uduti n'akondo.

5



Yubaka mu rutare.

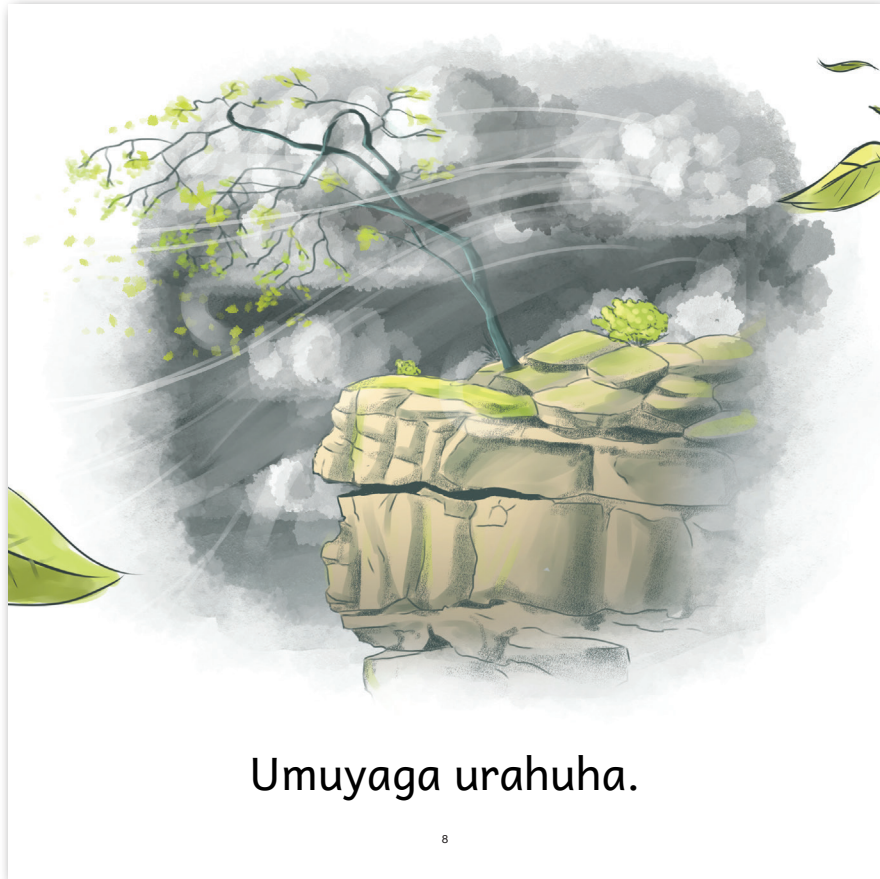
6



Yuzuza icyari.

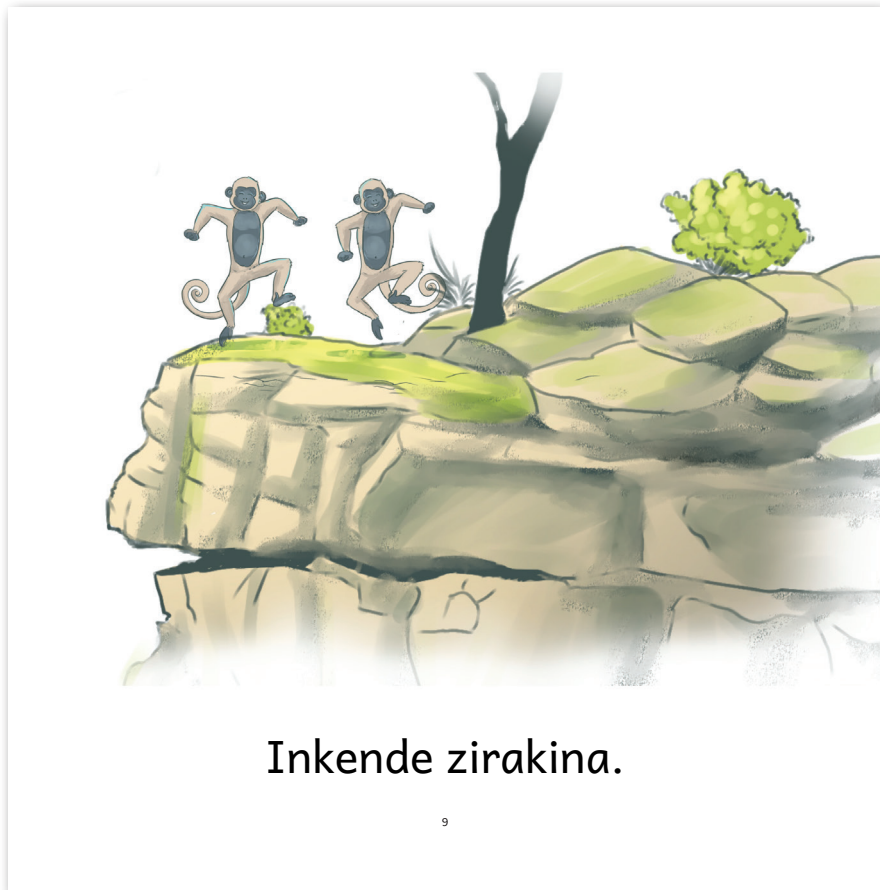
7





Umuyaga urahuha.

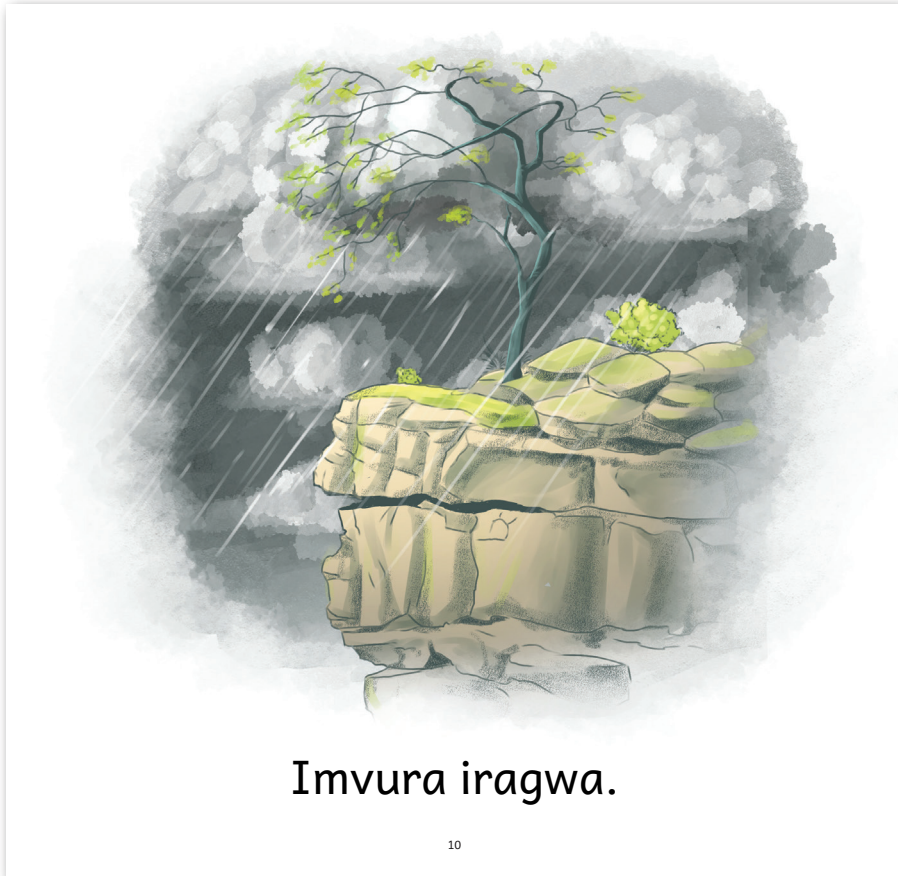
8



Inkende zirakina.

9





Imvura iragwa.

10



Icyari nticyasenyuka.

11



Ntashya arishima.

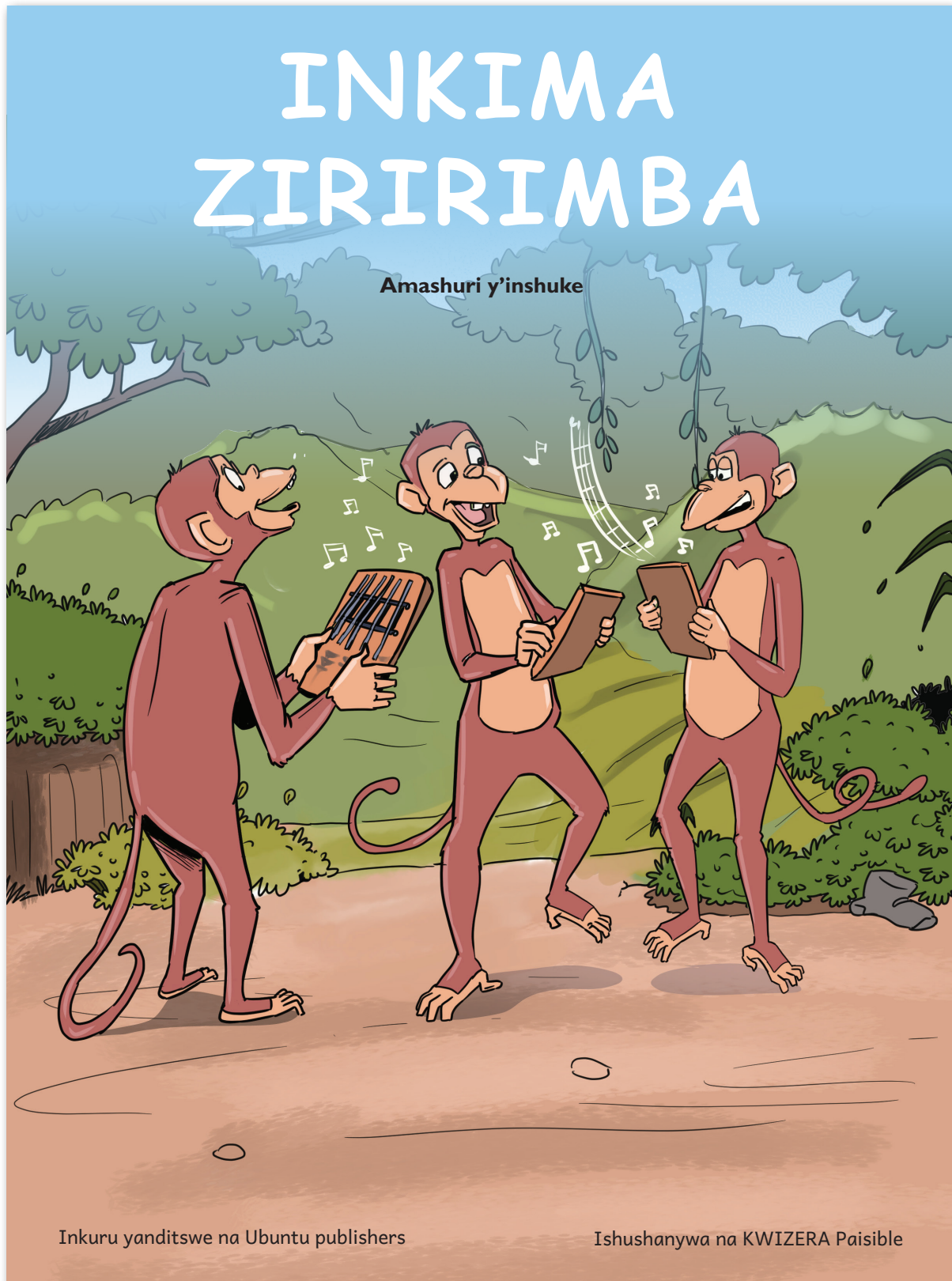
12

**Analysis: The stories in this series are good examples of a read-aloud story for Nursery 1 because:**

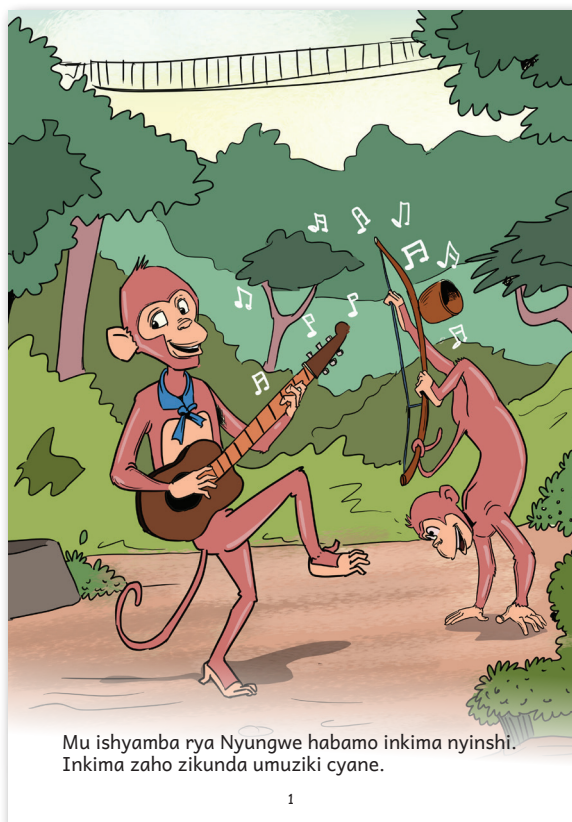
- The stories have a context that most children in pre-primary can all relate to.
- There is one main character in the story and one main event that is common to children in pre-primary.
- There is some predictability in the story, so the reader can guess what comes next.
- The words are all very familiar words children should have encountered in their day-to-day life or in classroom discussions.
- The story express different emotions that the character demonstrates in different situations.
- There are more illustrations than text on page. The illustrations provide high support for the text. The illustrations have minimal details.
- There are few words on the page with an accessible font (Andika).
- The story has short simple sentences that reflect oral speech.
- There are 2 or fewer new vocabulary words per book.
- Each book has up to 13 pages.

## Nursery 2

- 2a. Inkima ziririmba – Copyright REB. From REB Reach collection  
Available on REB e-learning portal







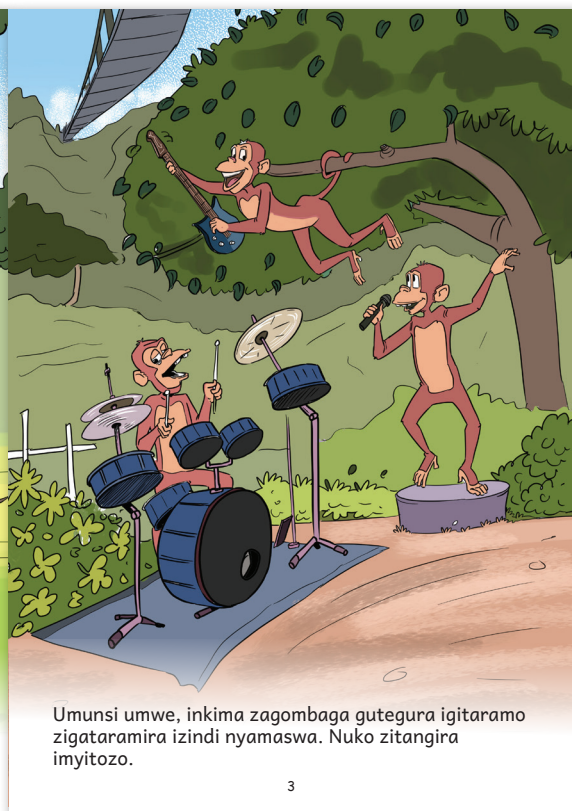
Mu ishyamba rya Nyungwe habamo inkima nyinshi. Inkima zaho zikunda umuziki cyane.

1



Uko zose ziba muri iryo shyamba zirizihirwa, zikabyina ndetse zikivuga ibyivugo bitandukanye.

2



Umunsi umwe, inkima zagombaga gutegura igitaramo zigataramira izindi nyamaswa. Nuko zitangira imyitozo.

3



Ku wa Mbere inkima imwe ivuza inanga.

4



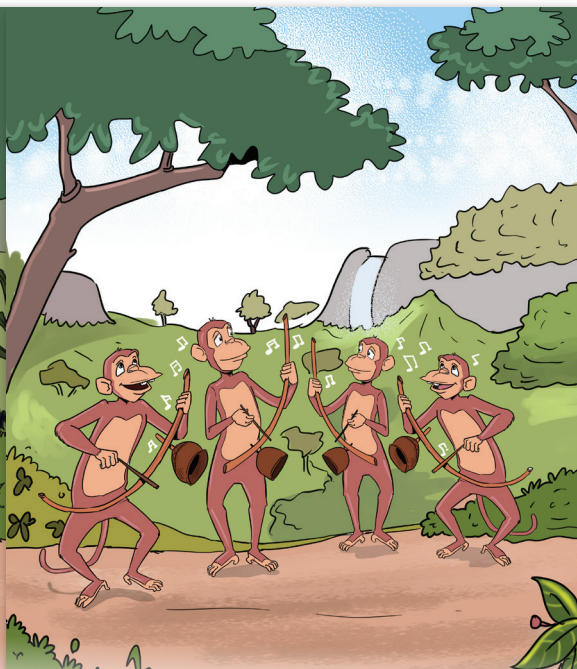
Ku wa Kabiri inkima ebyiri zicuranga gitari.

5



Ku wa Gatatu inkima eshatu zicuranga icyembe.

6



Ku wa Kane inkima enye zivuza imiduri.

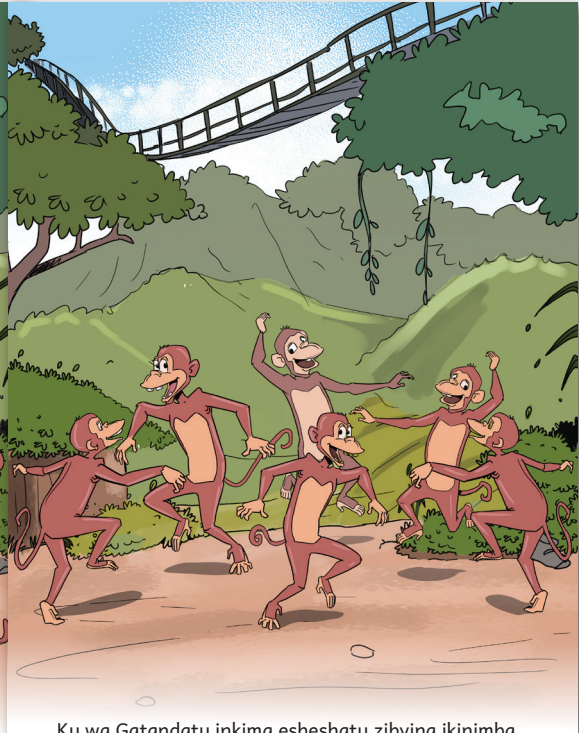
7





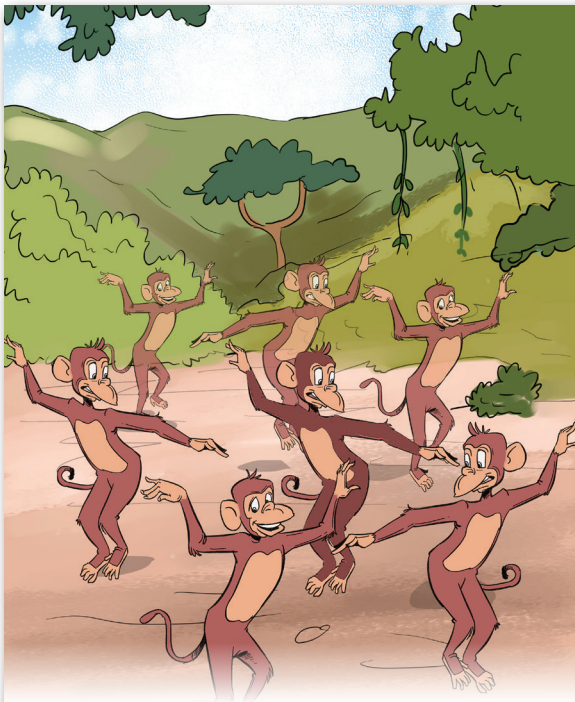
Ku wa Gatanu inkima eshanu zivuza imyirongi.

8



Ku wa Gatandatu inkima esheshatu zibyina ikinimba.

9



Ku Cyumweru inkima zirindwi zirashayaya.

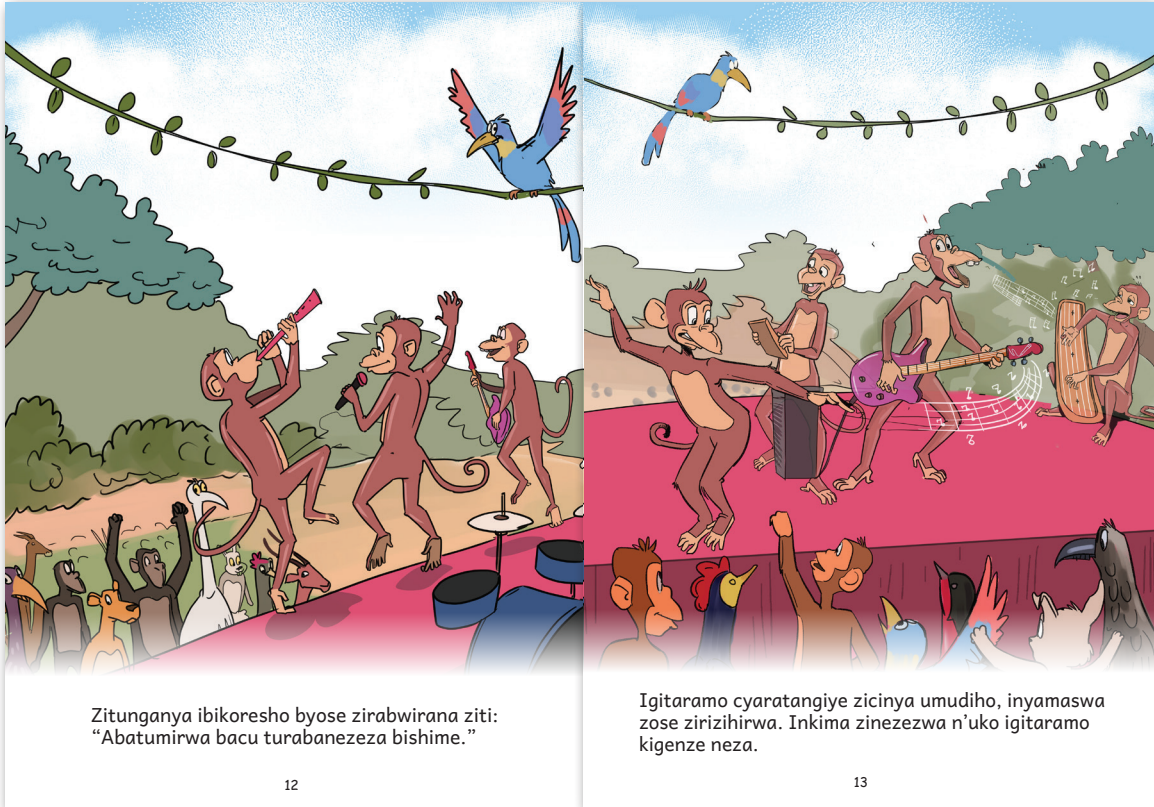
10



Umunsi w'ibirori ugeze, zijya ahabera ibirori. Buri nkima yitwaza igikoresho cy' umuziki iza gukoresha.

11





### Analysis: This is a good example of a Nursery 2 read-aloud book because:

- This story has a familiar context that most children in pre-primary can relate to.
- There is more than one character in the story, but the story focuses on a single event common to children.
- There is some predictability in the story. The children can guess what comes next.
- It is a fantasy story with animal characters, a genre that young children enjoy.
- The story is fun to read aloud.
- The words are familiar words that children should have encountered in their day-to-day life.
- There are more illustrations than text on page. The illustrations provide high support for the text. There are minimal distracting details.
- There are few words on the page. The text uses an accessible font (Andika).
- The story has long simple sentences that reflect oral speech.
- There are 13 pages in total.

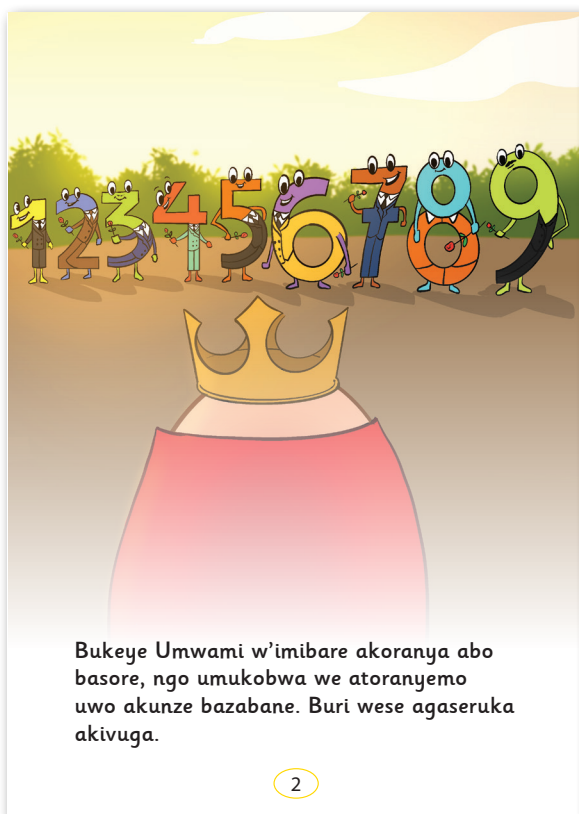
#### **Elements of the text that could be improved to better align with texts for nursery 2:**

- There are a few names of musical instruments that might be unfamiliar to children, e.g., umwirongi, icyembe and umuduri.
- It should be possible to add more repetitive patterns to the text by adding a song.

Nursery 3

3a. . Icumi – Copyright REB. From REB Reach collection  
Available on REB e-learning portal











Undi ati: “Nitwa Gatandatu. Murabona ko meze nk’ifirimbi. Nge n’umugore wange tuzajya twikinira umupira.”

8



Undi ati: “Nitwa Karindwi. Nsa na Rimwe ariko nge mpora nteze amaboko kuko nkunda kwibyinira. Nimunshyingira nzajya mbabyinira.”

9



Undi ati: “Ngewe ndi Umunani. Meze nk’amagi abiri agerekeranye. Norora inkoko. Nimunshyingira nzabahaza umureti.”

10



Uwanyuma ati: “Nge ndi Ikenda. Nsa n’umukobwa wanyu Zeru. Ni uko mfite ukuguru kurekure n’ikirenge. Nitubana tuzabyara abana beza.”

11







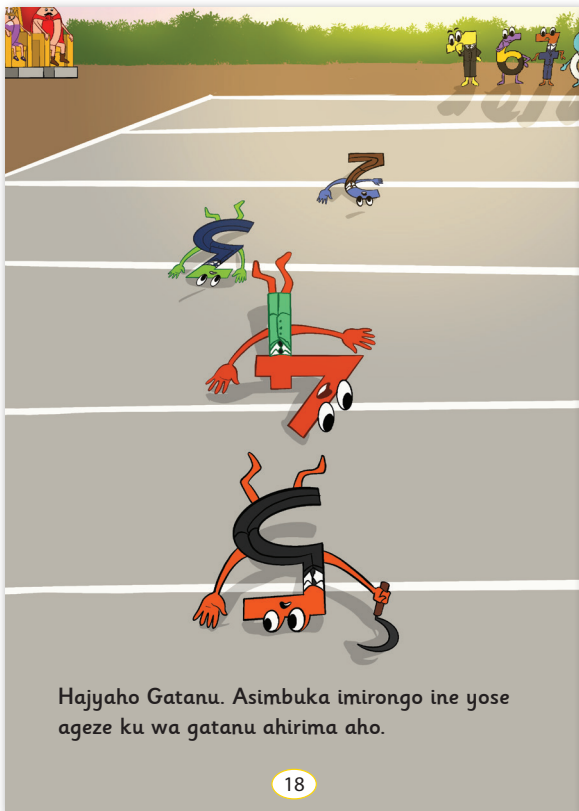
Gatatu araseruka, asimbuka uwa mbere, uwa kabiri, uwa gatatu uramugusha.

16



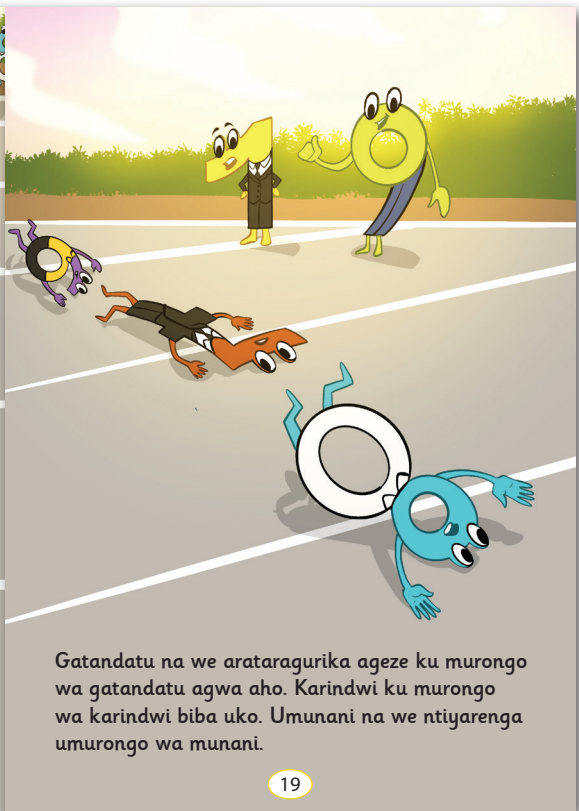
Kane na we ataruka umurongo wa mbere, uwa kabiri, n' uwa gatatu. Ageze ku wa kane aba araraniwe, aryama aho.

17



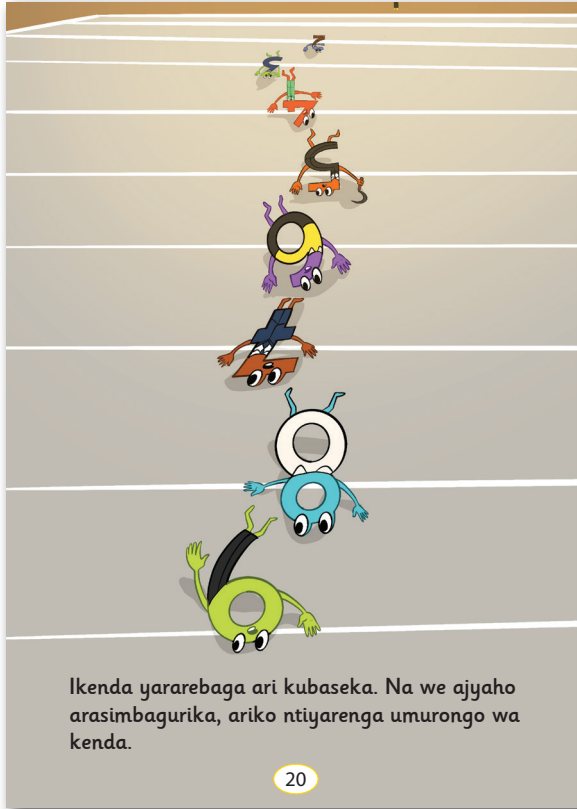
Hajyaho Gatatu. Asimbuka imirongo ine yose ageze ku wa gatanu ahirima aho.

18



Gatandatu na we arataragurika ageze ku murongo wa gatandatu agwa aho. Karindwi ku murongo wa karindwi biba uko. Umunani na we ntiyarenga umurongo wa munani.

19



Ikenda yarabaga ari kubaseka. Na we aiyaho arasimbagurika, ariko ntiyarenga umurongo wa kenda.

20



Hasigara rimwe. Mbere yo gutangira gusimbuka, arabanza aheka ba bagenzi be. Abajyana kwa muganga, ndetse abitaho.

21



Umwami ati: "Ni wowe umukobwa wange yashimye. Umusore mwiza, w'umunyamurava n'urukundo. Kandi guhera mukimara kubana, uzajya witwa Icumi." Nuko umuryango wabo uhinduka icumi utyo.

22

### **Analysis: This is a good example of Nursery 3 read-aloud book because:**

- This story has a familiar context to most children in pre-primary—choosing a partner—and they can relate to it.
- It has one event that is familiar to children in pre-primary.
- There is some predictability in the story. The reader can guess what comes next.
- It is a fantasy story with lot of characters.
- The story is fun to read aloud.
- The words are familiar words children should have encountered in their day-to-day life.
- There are more illustrations than text on the page. There is a lot of detail in the illustrations. The illustrations provide high support for the text.
- The text uses an accessible font (Andika).
- The story has longer, but simple sentences, that reflect oral speech.
- There are a few new vocabulary words in the text, but not an unmanageable number.
- The book is 22 pages in length.





