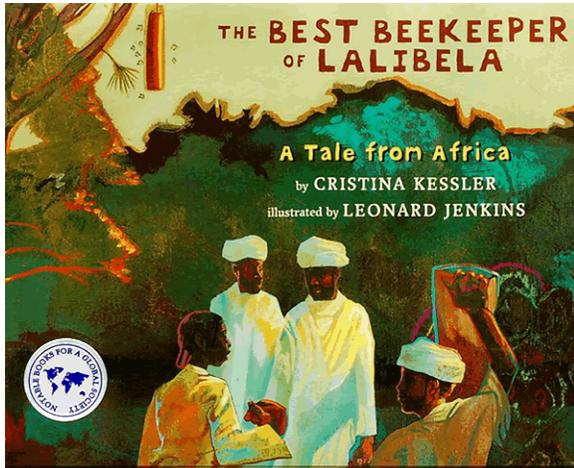




Cristina Kessler
Learning with the Books
The Best Beekeeper of Lalibela: A Tale from Africa



Parent-Teacher Guide

THE BEST BEEKEEPER OF LALIBELA

<https://www.cristinakessler.com/product/the-best-beekeeper-of-lalibela-a-tale-from-africa/>



During the two years I spent in Ethiopia I visited Lalibela two times, and each time I was amazed and humbled by the magnitude of the stone churches there. A legend explains their existence, but the reality of seeing them daunts the mind to imagine the work involved.

The Best Beekeeper of Lalibela provides many topics of discussion. There are issues like a “woman’s work” versus “man’s work”; determination; gender roles; and success. Almaz meets resistance and ridicule, and rather than accept defeat she triumphs. How does she do it? Why does she do it?

1. Possible discussion questions with kids are:

About Almaz:

1. What are her daily chores?
2. What happens when she tries to climb the tree?
3. Do you think she was smart to stop climbing the tree?
4. Who is her mentor in this story?
5. What gave Almaz the idea for her final solution?
6. Do you think Almaz was talking about honey, life or both when she says, “Life is sweet?”

About the men:

1. Do you think they were mean or rude to Almaz?
2. Why were they so adamant that girls can’t climb trees?
3. Would they treat their own daughters the same way?
4. Did they eventually learn a lesson too?
5. Do you think they were proud of Almaz at the end of the story?



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2. General discussion topics:

- Do you think boys and girls need to do only what their gender does?
- Would you be more determined to succeed, or give up if the first plan fails?
- Why do you think Almaz didn't give up?
- Do you think that this is a good example of the phrase, "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again?"
- Have you ever had a challenge that took several tries before finding a solution?
- What was it?
- Do you like a challenge?
- Do you have a mentor? Someone you go to for advice and help?
- Do you like honey?
- What do you use it for?
- Should traditions be open to change?
- Are there things that are different from when your parents were kids that you can do now?
- Have you ever worked with bees?
- Do you have secrets that you can rely on like Almaz who knows that "a steady hand and a clear heart" help her meet a challenge?
- Would you like to visit Ethiopia?
- What besides excellent honey makes Lalibela so famous?
- What does Lalibela mean?



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In many ways Almaz represents the 40,000 men and women that built these massive stone churches, and that's what inspired me to write this book. Persistence, belief, determination, and success are all great seeds to plant in a kid's imagination and I hope that Almaz inspires these traits in all kids who read this book.

Amessegenallehu for sharing this book with your students!

