

Everyone counts

How to share your food so everyone gets enough to eat



A Children for Health book



REPÚBLICA DE MOÇAMBIQUE
GOVERNO DA PROVINCIA DE TETE

Acknowledgements

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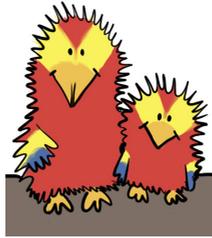
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Characters



ZuZu and ZaZa



Mama Ruth



Papa Geraldo



Mika



Christina



Baby Sylvia



Dona Matilde

New words list

10 words in the story that may be new

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| 1 Favourite | A person or thing which a person likes best. |
| 2 Squawked | A loud cry from a bird. |
| 3 Tapped | To hit softly with a sound many times. |
| 4 Paid no Attention | To give no thought to. |
| 5 Persuade | To ask a person to do something by giving good reasons. |
| 6 Wonders | To think about. |
| 7 Shiny | Bright and light. |
| 8 Modern | New or linked to the here and now. |
| 9 Without a doubt | Surely. |
| 10 Worried | Feeling something is not right or not in order. |

One Saturday, ZaZa the parrot and her big brother ZuZu were sitting in the tree watching their favourite family. There was a very good smell coming from the house where Mama Ruth was cooking. Papa Geraldo was outside talking to his friends. Christina was also outside, doing the washing. Her big brother Mika was sitting nearby with a notebook and pen, frowning.

'What is Mika doing?' asked ZaZa. 'What are all those strange marks in his notebook?'

ZuZu hopped down a branch to look closer.

'He is doing his mathematics homework, ZaZa. He is learning to do division.'

'What is "division"?' asked ZaZa.

ZuZu flew back and sat beside his sister. He loved his little sister but she did ask a lot of questions.



'Well, let's say you are eating seeds and another hungry parrot comes and wants to eat some too, then you would share them with him, wouldn't you? You would divide the seeds between you. That's division.'

'Oh no I wouldn't,' replied ZaZa, 'I'd fly away and find some other seeds to eat up by myself.'

She sometimes thought her elder brother did not know as much as he liked to think he knew.

ZuZu tries to explain to ZaZa about division as they watch Mika doing his maths homework.

Just then, Mika gave a big sigh. He took his notebook over to his younger sister.

'Christina, you are good at mathematics. Please can you help me do my division homework?'

'Okay, Mika. I'll do your homework.'

'Really?' Mika could not believe his ears.

'But only if you help me wash the rest of the clothes. We can share our work. That way you can practise your division.'

She was smiling. Christina liked to tease her brother.

'What!' said Mika. 'Washing is girls' work!'

ZaZa squawked with laughter. ZuZu also thought this was funny.

Mama Ruth came out of the house with a pot of delicious smelling food. Baby Sylvia followed behind, clapping her hands. ZaZa and ZuZu watched Papa Geraldo and the men sit down to eat. Mama Ruth went back inside.

When the men had finished, Mama Ruth called, 'Children, come and eat.'



The children ran and sat down, but there was not much left in the pot. When they had finished, there was only a tiny amount left. Then Mama Ruth ate her meal.

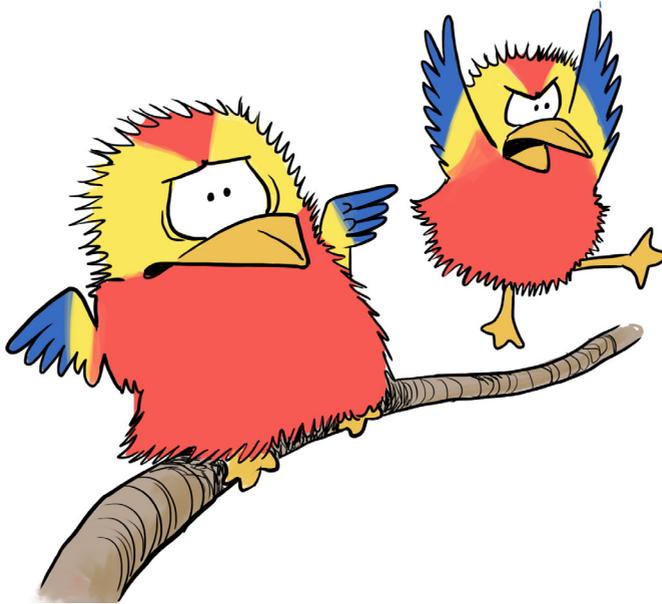
The men sit down to eat first. Afterwards, the children and Mama Ruth eat what is left, but it is not enough.

ZaZa was cross. She hopped up and down on her branch. 'Why did the men eat first and not share the food with everyone? Sylvia the baby got very little and Mama Ruth got even less.'

'It's just how they do things ZaZa,' explained ZuZu. 'Fathers always eat first, and if his friends are visiting, they eat with him.'

'But it's not fair. You told me last week that children need proper amounts of all different kinds of foods to help them grow and keep healthy and to...'

'I know, I know,' shrugged ZuZu, 'but that is the rule.'



'It is not a good rule if it means that children go hungry. Mama Ruth made a big pot of chima with cabbage and onions and tomatoes. There should have been enough for everyone.'

'Yes,' said ZuZu, 'but the problem is they did not divide it up first and then share it fairly.'

'Oh,' said ZaZa, suddenly excited, 'so that is what division is. It is about sharing things. You should have explained it to me.'

ZuZu laughed. 'Well, I wish the family understood division as well as you do, ZaZa. How can we find a way to tell the family they must divide the food so everyone has what they need?'

ZaZa is cross because the family did not share the food fairly. How can the parrots tell the family to divide the food and eat all together?

'Now I'm hungry too,' said ZaZa. Let's go to the market. There are always lots of seeds and fruits to eat there.'

The market was full of bright food and vegetables, and many interesting things for the house.

'What are these?' asked ZaZa. She flew to a tower of large, round shiny things and tapped one with her beak. The stallholder shooed her away.

'ZaZa come away! The plates will fall! Do you want the man to throw stones at you?'
'I'm coming. I'm coming,' said ZaZa, 'What do people want those for?'

'You can put food on them, silly,' said ZuZu. 'If you have four people and you buy four plates you can you put enough of each type of food onto each plate. Then each person eats off their plate and gets what they need, even the baby who eats slowly.'



'Oh,' said ZaZa, 'Then everyone has enough! And each person can eat the different colours too, like the teacher tells the children in school?'

'And you can tell if someone is not eating well and may be sick!' said ZuZu.

'So plates are GREAT!' said ZaZa. She gave a happy squawk. 'We must find a way to tell Mika and Christina about dividing and about plates. Come on!'

ZaZa sees plates at the market. How can the parrots tell the family that plates are great for sharing food so that everyone has what they need?

The parrots flew back to their favourite family.

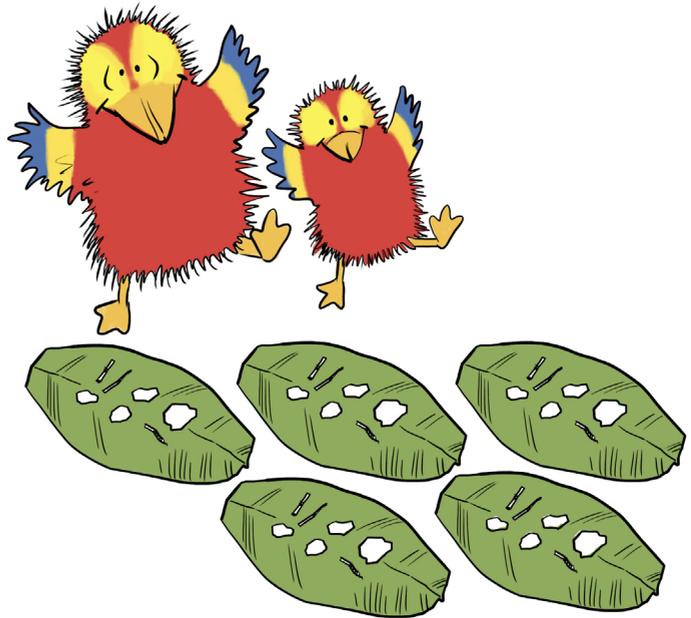
'OK, Miss Clever ZaZa!' said ZuZu. 'Now you are here, how do you think we can show the children about dividing and plates?'

'Oh,' said ZaZa in a small voice, 'I had not thought of that.'

Mama Ruth came out and began preparing some food. She counted out scoops of beans and put them into the pot. Suddenly ZaZa flapped her wings as if she were clapping.

'Counting things out! That's how we can show the children. I have an idea.'

ZaZa and ZuZu picked five big leaves. They collected lots of little stones, twigs and flowers. Then they started to share them out onto the leaves.



The children were busy playing and paid no attention to the parrots. But Mama Ruth noticed the parrots dropping twigs, stones and little flowers onto the five leaves placed on the ground.

'How funny!' she thought, 'there are five people in my family!'

Then the parrots started to fly around, squawking and returning to the leaves again and again. The parrots were getting tired now. How slow the humans were.

The children stopped playing and came to watch.

'They are trying to tell us something,' said Christina.

'Tell us what?' asked Mika.

The parrots use leaves as plates and share out stones and twigs to give the family the idea of dividing up the food, but the children do not understand.

'I think they are showing us how to share out our food at mealtimes.' said Christina, slowly.



Mama Ruth smiled. She had realised what the parrots were doing but she wanted the children to work it out for themselves.

'Look,' said Christina. 'The leaf is like a plate and the stones and twigs are like potatoes, tomatoes and onions, all divided up on separate plates.'

'But that is silly' said Mika. 'We don't eat like that. Father always eats first and we eat what is left over. And I am nearly old enough to eat with him,' he added with a smile.

'But perhaps we should share like this,' said Christina. 'Our teacher at school was saying how we all needed enough food to grow big and strong.'

Mika thought about it. 'Would father still be big and strong if he did not eat first?'

'It is not about eating first or later,' said Christina. 'It is about making sure everyone has enough.'

'Well I should always get enough because I am the boy.'

'That is not fair,' said Christina. 'I do more work in the house so I should get the same as you. Mama is looking after the house and the baby, and is doing a lot of work on the farm. Do you think she needs less food? Would you like to wait for food that is left and then not get enough?'

'Maybe you are right,' said Mika. 'Maybe the men eat more than they need to.'

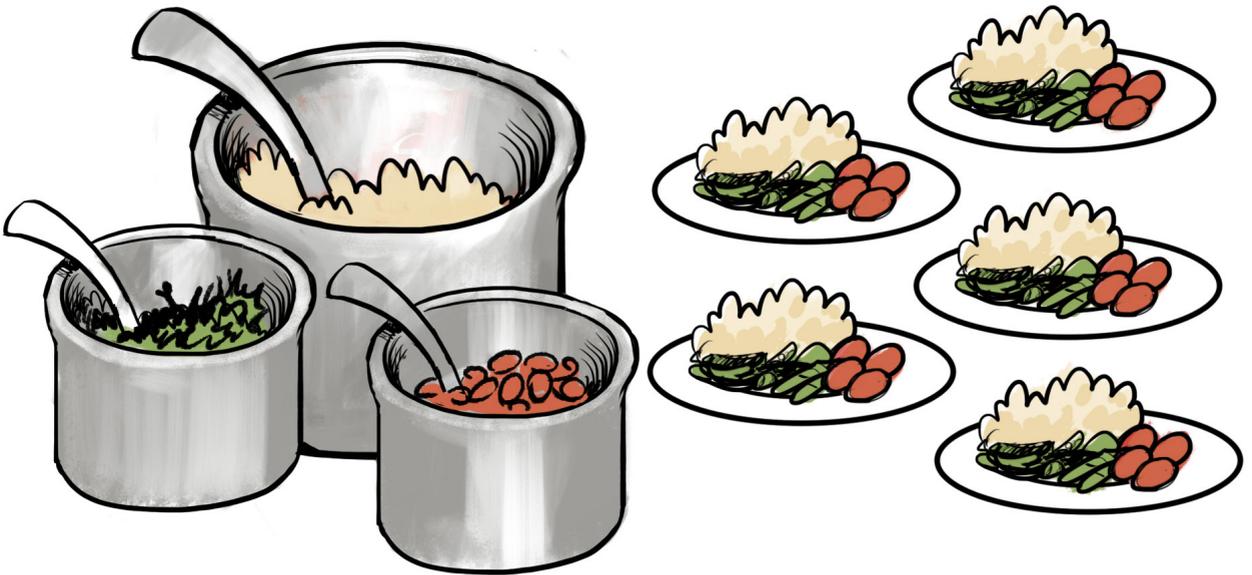
'Go and play,' said Mama Ruth. She did not want them to continue this talk. Mama Ruth knew that both children were right, and she knew it was not fair, but what could she do?

Christina and Mama Ruth understand what the parrots are doing. Cristina says the family should copy the parrots and share out food on plates so that everyone has enough.

She thought a lot about the children's discussion. She knew they were learning new and important things at school. She could see how her children thought about things now and talked about what they had learned. They did not just accept everything that anyone said. Things were changing, and Mama Ruth was proud of Christina and Mika. But school was school. Things were different at home.

'But it could change,' she thought. 'Our children and their children should not grow up with ways that are not good for their health. That is why we send them to school.'

But how could she change things? Her husband always helped himself to as much as he wanted before the rest of the family ate. This was the way in her village.



That night she lay and thought about how the parrots had put pretend food on separate leaves for each person. The parrots were right. If only she could persuade her husband to share things out as the parrots had shown her and the children.

Mama Ruth wonders how she can change the way food is shared without upsetting her husband.

At the market the next day, Mama Ruth saw the same pile of shiny plates that ZaZa had seen. She knew at once what they were and how she could use them. But would her husband agree?

'Look at those smart plates,' she said to Papa Geraldo. 'Think how good the family meal would look served up on them.'

Papa Geraldo looked at the plates and then at Mama Ruth. She smiled back at him.

'Mama Matilde has plenty,' she said, knowing that her husband was always competing with Mama Matilde's husband.

'Then we should have some too,' he said.

'Buy six.'

Mama Ruth was going to say they only needed five plates, but then she stopped. Her husband might think that she was saying he did not know how to count. And she wanted to buy the plates before he changed his mind. So she kept quiet and just paid for the plates. Six plates.

'It worked, it worked!' said ZaZa excitedly when she saw them bringing the plates home. 'Now everyone will have the chance to get the amount of food they need. It will be shared properly. It will be DIVIDED!' She was proud of the new word she had learned.

'Hmm,' said ZuZu. He was not sure how Mama Ruth's husband would feel about this. How would she make sure her husband did not feel that she had taken food away from him and changed their ways? But Mama Ruth had a plan.



Mama Ruth sees the plates at the market and shows them to Papa Geraldo. He tells her to buy six plates.

Mama Ruth took out the plates from the newspaper when they got home.

'Shall we try them out today?' she asked her husband. 'And we can use them next time we have guests at home. They will look so good.'

Mama Ruth put the food out onto the plates, dividing the different types of food into the amount that was right for each person, potato here, cabbage there, some onion and a fruit for everyone too. But she was careful to leave the large pot in front of her husband with lots of food still in it, even after she had put some on his plate. That way, she made sure that Papa Geraldo felt that he had enough and was still in charge of his family. After all, he was a good husband and always kind to the children.

At that moment, Mama Ruth's old neighbour, Dona Matilde, came in. Mama Ruth did not know what to do. Her husband did not like this neighbour but Dona Matilde was old and sometimes she did not think about the time when she visited.

'Come in, come in!' said Papa Geraldo, 'Come and eat with us. Christina, bring out the other plate.' And to Mama Ruth's surprise he took some of the food out of the pot and put it on the sixth plate for the neighbour.

'And what is this?' said the old lady sitting down. 'We don't eat before the men in my house. Now you are becoming modern, eh?' But she took the plate, and began to eat as well.



Papa Geraldo shook his head and laughed. 'Well now,' he said. 'We are all eating together you see? How many families do that? I bought the plates because I want you all to grow up big and strong, even you Dona Matilde.'

Mama Ruth smiled, 'Yes, that was a very good idea. And you even got one extra for a guest. You are so thoughtful, my husband.'

Papa Geraldo is proud that he is modern and that he thought of buying plates. He invites their neighbour to eat with them. Everyone has a plate and has enough food, even the baby. Everyone has enough of all the different types of food.

Mama Ruth's husband felt good. Mama Ruth smiled. 'If my dear husband wants to feel proud and big, that is fine,' she thought.

But she knew that it was she who had managed to make the idea work in the family. She had kept the old ways and she also had made some things change. And those clever parrots had without a doubt, helped the family.

She looked at her children, happily eating enough from their new, smart plates, even the baby. Everyone counts, she thought, whether they know about division or not.



Mama Ruth is happy because everyone is eating enough and can grow strong and healthy. She is glad she was clever enough to change things without making her husband feel worried. And it was thanks to the clever parrots!

Activities

The story *Everyone Counts* is for children aged 10–14, depending on their reading ability. They can also read it to younger children. Its focus is on creative thinking, problem solving and nutrition.

Ideas for using the story book

1. Ask the children to look at the cover. Ask them to guess what is the story about.
2. Read the story with them.
3. Ask the children to read the story to each other, or to someone at home.
4. Ask the children to share or act out the story with younger brothers, sisters or friends.

Talking about the book

Get the children into pairs or groups, ask the questions and then ask the children to discuss the questions in pairs or groups. Discuss the questions as a whole group at the end.

Ideas for questions

'Response to the story' questions

1. Did you like the story?
2. Which bit did you like the best? Why?
3. Do the pictures help to tell the story? How?

'Reading between the lines' questions

1. What words can you use to describe ZuZu, Mother Ruth and Christina?
2. What is Mother Ruth good at?
3. Why does ZaZa get angry? Does she get angry straight away in the story?
4. Why was their guest surprised?
5. How do the plates help baby Sylvia? How do they help sick children?

'Suppose' questions

1. Suppose you went home and tried to explain about plates to people in your family. What would they say?
2. Suppose you were Mama Ruth and were at the market with Papa Geraldo and you wanted him to buy plates. What would happen?
3. Suppose you were Christina and you wanted to explain to Mika why girls should eat with the boys. What would you say to him?
4. Suppose you were Mika and you were taking care of baby Sylvia. What games could you play to show her about sharing food?
5. Suppose a neighbour came to eat and she said it was wrong to eat on plates all together. What would you tell her?

'Linking the story to real life' questions

1. Do you think it is important for children to have enough food? Why?
2. How can you help your family to change old rules that are not good for children's health such as dividing food on plates?
3. How can you tell if your little brother or sister is sick?
4. Do boys and girls need the same amount of food?
5. Do adults and children need the same amount of food?

Ten comprehension questions

1. How many people are in the family?
2. At the start of the story, what are ZaZa and ZuZu looking at?
3. What is Mika doing for homework?
4. At the start of the story, why is ZaZa cross?
5. What does ZaZa see in the market?
6. How would plates help the family?
7. How did the birds show the family about sharing food?
8. How does Mama Ruth get Papa to buy the plates?
9. What does Papa say to the neighbour about the plates?
10. Why is it good to have different colours on each plate?

Activities to do in class or in an interest circle

1. In pairs, small groups or a whole-class group, children learn a message about nutrition. Then they create actions to go with the message. They share the message with friends and family.
2. In small groups children create a role play in which they learn a nutrition message at school, share it with friends and family, and then return to school to report on what they have done.
3. In pairs, children create a dialogue between a person who knows a nutrition message and a friend who does not (for example two mothers). They meet each other and the person who knows the message shares it with their friend. The person who does not know the messages gives reasons why they think message is wrong or difficult for them to follow. The other person gives reasons why the message must be followed.
4. Children think about one or two good questions they can ask their friends or family to start a discussion about how to follow the message. For example: What are the reasons that we do not share food fairly in some families? Can we change this? How?
5. Using the new words (see the list at the start of the story), children make new sentences using one or two of the words in the sentence. This can be done in pairs.

At community events children can show their nutrition dramas, dialogues and debates, and sing their nutrition songs. Community leaders and children can discuss together the answers to the children's questions.



Eight nutrition topics and messages

1. Hygiene
2. Balanced diet
3. Rainbow garden
4. Micronutrients
5. Sharing food fairly
6. Breastfeeding
7. Malnutrition
8. Growth monitoring

1. To wash hands properly use water and a little soap. Rub for 10 seconds, rinse and air-dry or dry with a clean cloth/paper, not on dirty clothes.
2. Energetic foods (Go) and body-building foods (Grow) and protecting foods (Glow) are good foods that keep your body and mind strong.
3. Eating from a rainbow garden helps to protect our health. Let's grow a rainbow garden.
4. Fruits and vegetables, red, yellow and green, are full of micronutrients, too small to see, but which make a strong, healthy body and mind.
5. Small children, boys and girls, pregnant and breastfeeding women, the elderly and children with special needs ALL need the right amounts of good food.
6. Breast milk is the only food and drink that a baby needs from birth to 6 months. It contains all the nutrients that a baby needs to go, grow and glow. It is always fresh and clean.
7. Malnutrition means 'bad nutrition'. This happens if we eat too little or if we eat too much junk food. Sharing the right amount of good food during meals avoids malnutrition.
8. From birth until 5 years old children must be weighed regularly at a health clinic to check they are growing well.

PCAAN is a programme in Mozambique. PCAAN stands for Children's Participation in Learning and Action for Nutrition. It has two aims: 1. That all children know these eight messages before they leave primary school; 2. That children have the skills and confidence to learn, share and discuss the meaning of these messages with other children.

About this book

This book was co-created with teachers and children from 15 schools in Tete Province Mozambique between January 2014 and December 2015. The schools are all part of a government pilot programme managed by the government's multisectoral team for addressing chronic under-nutrition in the under 5s (SETSAN). This programme is called Children's Participation in Learning and Action for Nutrition (PCAAN in Portuguese). It is an approach to nutrition education using pre-existing structures and systems. It seeks to mobilise primary school-aged children as advocates for good nutrition in their families. The PCAAN programme is one of the education sector's initiatives and it is supported by the Danish Government agency, DANIDA. This is one of four story books that have been created and there is also a children's recipe book, co-created by teachers and local cooks.

1. *Everyone Counts*
2. *How To Be Good At Football* (Why small things are important: A story about micronutrients)
3. *The Rainbow Garden*
4. *The Puzzle* (about hygiene)

There are eight nutrition messages at the end of the book and these messages form the basic structure of the PCAAN Programme. They are linked to learning priorities in the existing primary school curriculum of Mozambique.



ISBN