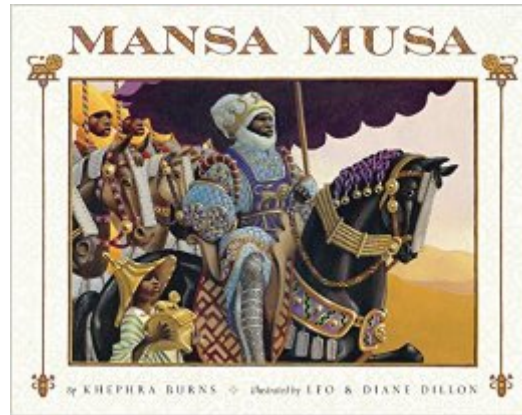


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Mansa Musa: The Lion Of Mali



Synopsis

When an evening celebration in his village is disrupted by the cries of slave raiders, young Kankan Musa runs to find his spear, but in a moment he is taken. Suddenly, the world he has known is gone. Is he to be a slave? Or will destiny carry this son of a proud people to a different future? Caldecott Medalists Leo and Diane Dillon capture the grandeur of Africa's ancient empires, lands, and people in stunning paintings as this richly imagined tale of the boyhood of Mansa Musa, one of Mali's most celebrated kings, carries us across the continent on a triumphant journey of self-discovery.

Book Information

Hardcover: 56 pages

Publisher: Gulliver Books; 1 edition (October 1, 2001)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0152003754

ISBN-13: 978-0152003753

Product Dimensions: 9.2 x 11.3 x 0.4 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.9 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (10 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #682,630 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #40 inÂ Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > Africa #305 inÂ Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Explore the World > Africa #834 inÂ Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Royalty

Age Range: 10 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

Customer Reviews

If you are looking for a strictly historical book, go elsewhere. The main story is entirely fictional. However, it is beautifully told and gorgeously illustrated, and it is well researched historical fiction. No, we know nothing of the childhood of the famous Mansa Musa--however, the portrayal of the cultures and ways of life of the people is vivid and accurate, and this legend-like tale will surely gain a deserving place in the canon of children's literature. For educational use, this is of fairly limited *factual* use because of the dearth of written accounts about Mansa Musa and his reign and, as a result, the fictional nature of the main narrative. However, the epilogue is factual (if not completely impervious to debate), and the entire book would be great as a fictional supplement to the study of

the Middle Ages, especially as it takes the point of view of a non-Western culture and focuses upon an important historical figure who is often glossed over (because of lack of information and his lack of impact upon the West) in typical courses of study. This book would be excellent for people of any background who enjoy history, good story-telling, and breathtaking illustrations. For other great, beautifully illustrated, African-oriented picture books, try these: *Why do Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears?* - an animal myth *The Marriage of the Rain-Goddess* - based on a South African myth, it contains many elements common to African folklore and fairytales (such as the substitute bride) *African Princess* - nonfiction about 6 royal women of Africa, from ancient Egypt to the 20th (and 21st) century. Painted illustrations are limited to one portrait per woman, but the book is fascinating and unusual, and photographs are skillfully chosen to complement the text. *African Princes* - Complement to *African Princesses*.

I checked this book out from the library and loved it so much that I'm going to purchase a copy to own. Other reviewers have covered the fiction/fact aspect of the book, so I'll limit my comments to the beauty of the story and the illustrations. Adult readers familiar with Joseph Campbell will recognize elements of the hero-tale framework in the narrative. The story itself is compelling and captivating to children and adults alike. My 5 1/2 year old son eagerly chose it as his bed-time story every night until we finished it. (It's a long read-aloud for one sitting -- too long for a 5 year old at bedtime.) My 7 year old daughter and I were equally enthralled. The illustrations are incredibly rich and detailed, with African-influenced stylization. They are fully up to the task of supporting the beautiful narrative. The paintings, along with some illustrative detail inserted into the text areas of the story give the book a regal, special feel, almost as if it should be handled reverently. This book would be a wonderful addition to anyone's book collection and would make a beautiful gift. I also recommend the book "*Sundiata: Lion King of Mali*" by David Wisniewski as a prequel. *Sundiata* is portrayed as Mansa Musa's grandfather in the Burns book -- a detail which may or may not be factual. Regardless, it's another well told and nicely illustrated Mali legend.

I bought this book for the illustrations, which I cannot praise highly enough. The text was a pleasant surprise. I would show this to children age 7 and up. I would leave it out for adults to look through. And I am resisting the strong urge to cut out two of the illustrations and frame them.

Great illustrations by the Dillons! They have won awards for decades! Bravo! Great Story line about Kanaku Musa and his 13th century pilgrimage to Mecca that amazed the civilized world. Africa

would now be on the map because of this Mansa and his empire of Mali.

My 1st grade son came across this book in the school library as he was preparing for a year end book review. It ended up that we both enjoyed reading it, so I am adding it to our collection at home. The illustrations are well done and the writing is superb, not to mention the historical links and paths that you can take to learn more about African and Middle Eastern cultures. Highly recommended reading.

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