

Chapter 12: The party

UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD ARTICLE 31: *Rest and leisure*



12: The party

ARTICLE 31 *Rest and leisure*

TABAN, 10 YEARS OLD SAYS:

“ A year ago my relatives had a big party. It was my grandad who wanted to see all his children and grandchildren. He wanted us, all the cousins to meet, so that we got to know each other. He thinks that is important because, if you get into trouble and need to ask for help, it is good to be able to ask your relatives. That is why he invited us all to a party.

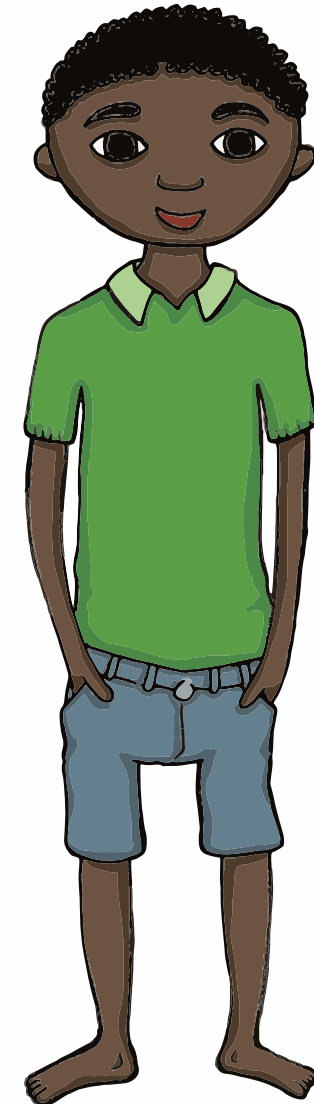
My grandfather has had two wives and he has all together 12 children. Among our relatives it is common to have many children and in each family there are between 5 and 10 children. That means I have many cousins. Since there has been war in the country and many of us have lived in Khartoum in Sudan for many years, we have not seen our grandad, who stayed in Lakamadi in South Sudan. When it was decided to have a party, many of my grandad's brothers, my dad's cousins and their families also wanted to come. And so there turned out to be hundreds of people coming. Then they realised that one cow would not be enough. Two cows were needed so that there would be enough food for everyone. Usually we eat mostly beans and vegetables, but for the party my grandad wanted to serve meat.

Two of my uncles went away to the villages in the surroundings to choose two fine cows. It was still more than two months before the party and they had to walk far away to find two cows big enough. Two weeks before the party the man who owned the cows and his son

started walking with the cows on a lead towards Lakamadi. They calculated it to take about a week to get there. One night they stopped by the road to sleep. They tied the cows to a tree and lay down under another tree to sleep. Suddenly a loud sound was heard from an animal in the woods. Maybe it was a leopard. The cows got so scared they broke loose and ran away. Of course the man and his son tried to run after them, but there was no chance they could catch up with them.

The next morning they rapidly walked to Lakamadi and told what had happened in great anxiety. The party was to take place a week from that day. All my uncles and cousins who were at home ran out to search, but no one could find them. When we arrived in Lakamadi it was only two days until the party was to start. Then my dad and my grandad decided that they had to find two other cows to buy. My dad and one of his brothers set off to the nearby villages and the rest of us had to wait. It took a week until they were back, but they brought two cows and everybody was happy. The cows were slaughtered, roasted whole and the party could get started.

When we had eaten and everybody was satisfied, we all started to dance. There was a band with five people, three had drums in different sizes and two played on different rhythm instruments made of calabashes or



tin jars with dried beans. One of my uncles performed a hunter's dance. He brought his bow and arrow along in the dancing and you could really follow the process of a successful hunt. Then we all danced in a big circle around the band. Some were leading the dance and they had special dresses.

Everybody can join in the dance and you keep on dancing for quite a long time. This is the traditional way the Moru people dance. When we all were tired from dancing one of the men took out his kudi, a traditional string instrument. He played and sang some melancholy songs. It was very beautiful and moving and everybody sat down quietly and listened.

Later on us boys got fed up with the dancing and gathered under a big tree a bit away from everyone else. One of my cousins had brought along a battery-driven cassette tape-recorder. He started the music and so we could do disco-dancing. When we got tired, us boy cousins went to bed in our hut. At night we wanted to sleep outside, but we were not allowed to because of the risk that dangerous animals might appear. The party continued for several days. It was the best party I have ever been to.



Facts



TRADITIONAL PARTIES

In Lui everybody knows that there is going to be a party three times a year. That is the 9th of July, the 10th of October and the 25th of December.

THE INDEPENDENCE DAY OF SOUTH SUDAN

On the 9th of July the independence day of South Sudan is celebrated. South Sudan has been an independent country only since 2011 and how it is celebrated differs between different places. In Lui many people gather under the big tree, The Lara tree and a lot of speeches are held. The speakers can be the Punjab (the mayor) of Lui or the Bishop. There will be music and dance performances. After that everybody dances together.

THE YOUTH DAY

On the tenth of October, the Youth Day ("Ten-Ten") is celebrated. On that day everybody who belongs to a youth group from all of parishes in Lui diocese gathers to celebrate the day when their youth group was established. All adults up to 40 years of age can be a member of the Youth groups. First there is a meeting with prayers and education on a current topic. In the evening a

party is held for all family members (children, parents and other relatives) with food and dancing.

CHRISTMAS DAY

On the 25th of December the birth of Jesus is celebrated. Everybody in the parish gathers in the church for worship, singing Christmas hymns, dancing and eating together, sometimes for several days. Preparations for the Christmas party go on for several weeks. It is important that there is lots of food, so that everybody can be satisfied with good-tasting food. In November extra collections are held to get money to buy food for the Christmas party. One way to get money is to arrange competition between men and women about who can collect the most. Those who volunteer to prepare the food for the Christmas party share the money collected, so that they can buy the ingredients they need. On Christmas Day they bring the food to church and a big Christmas table is set in the middle of the church. After the service you start eating and it can continue for hours. Then you dance and talk and after that you can eat again. Often there is food left when everybody has gone for the night. In that case the party

continues the next day and as long as there is food.

OTHER OCCASIONS

In Lui you don't celebrate your birthday like we do. Many children know what day they were born and think about it that day, but they don't have a party with the family or their friends. Baptism and confirmation are important occasions for all Christians in Lui and are celebrated in the church, but not in the home. Weddings can be arranged as a big family party in some families, but in most families in Lui they don't have a party.

TRADITIONAL COSTUMES

In 1985 there was an agreement about the African national costume for the south of Sudan. It originates in the Shilluk tradition. The women wear a piece of cloth, like a khanga. The cloth hangs down over the body and is kept together with a knot on one shoulder. The men wear a piece of cloth like trousers. You start putting the centre of the cloth

between your legs. Then you pull it up on the front and at the back. You keep it in place with a cord around your waist so that the cloth is hanging down over the cord. Men are stripped to the waist.

See illustrations in Suggestion 5.

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

Drums are the most common instruments and are made of wood and goat skin. There are drums of different sizes. It is most common is to play with your hands only, but sometimes you use sticks of wood as drum sticks.

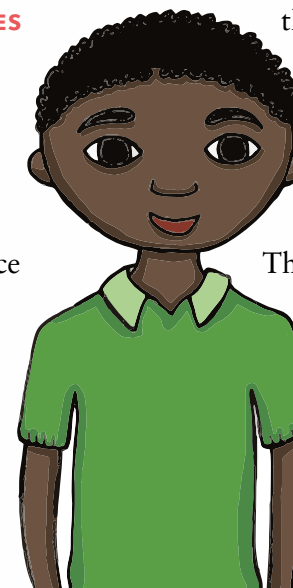
Maracas are made of calabashes.

A hole is made in one end of the calabash to put in small pebbles. The hole is closed with something like plaster, tape or a piece of cloth.

Rhythm instruments can also be made of tin.

The piece of tin is prepared by making lots of small holes in it. Two pieces of tin are put together with gravel inside. The instrument is shaken rhythmically.

Kudi is a string instrument. It looks like a lute and is made of animal skin. You tune it



Facts



on the neck of the instrument by winding the wires tighter or more loosely around pieces of cloth.

DANCE

Traditional Moru dancing is accompanied by drums and rhythm instruments. The musicians are standing in the middle and the dancers move in a circle around them. They often wear the traditional costume.

SOUND OF JOY

The women have a special way of expressing joy called 'ululating'. You make a very high pitch tone at the same time as the back part of your tongue vibrates rapidly. It is often used to strengthen the singing at the same time as others sing. The sound of joy is similar to the sound children do when they play Indians in Cowboys and Indians.





SUGGESTION 1

Conversation

CHILD RIGHTS CONVENTION

Article 31 in the Child rights convention brings out the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to respect and promote the right of the child to equal opportunities for recreational and leisure activity. In the story the children take part in a big family party and get the opportunity to meet their cousins and play with them.

Talk about parties and other leisure activities you have participated in.

What is different if children and adults are together or if you are all of the same age?

BASIC FEELINGS

Talk about the joy of going to a party and to meet your relatives; the sadness when being parted from your relatives because of war, or after a party when you have been together for several



days and you don't know when you will meet again; the anger when there is no food because the cows ran away; the fear for wild animals or of darkness.



SUGGESTION 2

Prayers

BIBLE WORDS

The wedding in Canaan
(John 2:1-12)

The reunion between Jacob and Laban (Genesis 31:43-55)

SONGS

Come on and celebrate His gift of love (CJP 325)

Come on let's get up and go
(CAHON 778)

I'm gonna click, click, click
(CJP 566, KS 150)

I will click my fingers, clap my hands (CAHON 843)

I will wave my hands in praise and adoration (KS 188)

PRAYER

Thank you God for all friends and for all the fun we can have together. God, let all children find someone they can call their friend, someone who cares about them. Amen



SUGGESTION 3

Make your own rhythm instruments

Use a plastic-bottle, an empty toilet-paper roll or any item with a hole that you can close. Put in peas, beans, rice, pebbles or something else. Close the instrument with tape or what is suitable. Shake the instrument rhythmically and listen!

Try different containers and different contents. The sound can also differ depending on how much you put in. You can also paint or decorate your instrument in beautiful colours and patterns.





SUGGESTION 4

Dancing

Arrange traditional dancing. Put together a band of people playing drums and rhythm instruments.

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Arrange disco dancing. Use your own music.

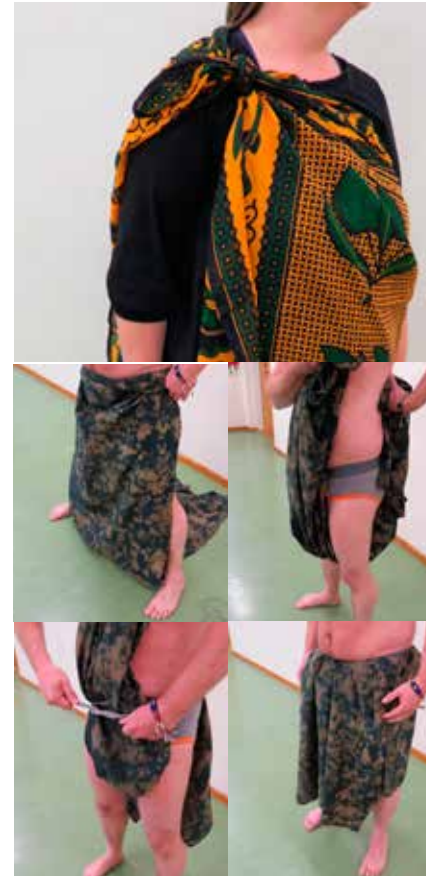


SUGGESTION 5

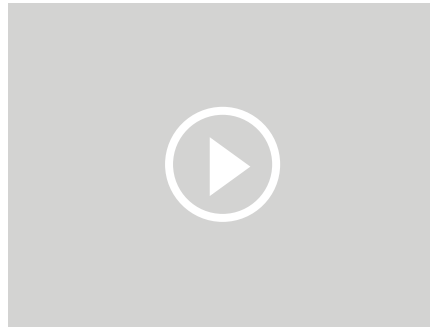
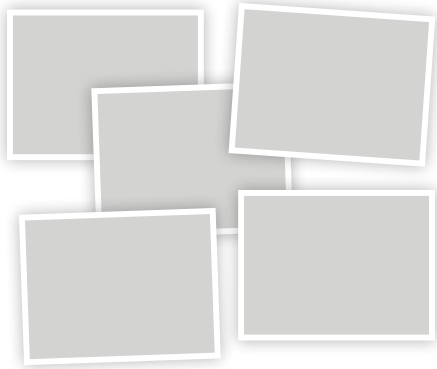
South Sudanese dress

Find a colourful piece of cloth and dress like in the traditional South Sudanese dress.

Read about Traditional dresses under Facts and look at the pictures of how to dress.



Resources



PICTURES

Traditional dancing

Disco dancing

Kudi, a string instrument

Kudi-player (2)

Cows, African

Cows on their way

Hunter (2)

VIDEO-CLOPS

Traditional dancing

Disco dancing

Kudi-player

