

Novel Resource #3

*Listening for Lions*  
by Gloria Whelan  
Published 2005  
Harper Collins Publishers



Gloria Whelan  
[www.gloriawhelan.com](http://www.gloriawhelan.com)

Other books by Whelan:

- *Burying the Sun*
- *Chu Ju's House*
- *The Impossible Journey*
- *Fruitlands*
- *Angel on the Square*
- *Homeless Bird*—winner of the National Book Award
- *Indian School*
- *Miranda's Last Stand*
- *Once on This Island*
- *Farewell to the Island*
- *Return to the Island*

Gloria Whelan visited Africa in preparation for writing *Listening to Lions*. She enjoys watching birds and other animals in her home in Michigan, a trait she included in the book.

**Genre:**

Family Fiction  
Historical Fiction

**Point of View:**

Third Person

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**Themes:**

British South Africa  
England  
Missionaries  
Orphans  
Ornithology  
Female Physicians

**Conflict:**

Rachel becomes an orphan in British East Africa after an influenza epidemic and is forced to impersonate another girl when sent to England. She faces internal conflict because she knows what she is doing is wrong, yet doesn't know of any way to fix it. She also faces external conflict when she arrives in England and must pretend to be someone else.

**Conflict Resolution:**

Rachel is accepted by her surrogate grandfather, sent to school, and becomes a doctor. Once Mr. Pritchard accepts Rachel, the internal conflict she feels begins to lessen. Although she continues feeling conflicted about her dream to become a doctor, she finds people to talk with instead of trying to solve her problems on her own.

**Characters:**

Rachel Sheridan- A twelve-year-old girl living in British East Africa who becomes an orphan after an influenza epidemic. She has red hair, something most people in Africa had not seen before and believed it was a type of sickness.

Kanoro-An African man who works for Rachel's parents. He takes care of her while her parents are working. He is known for saying exactly what he thinks, which Rachel appreciates. Though Rachel wants to live with Kanoro and his family when her parents die, he says this cannot be because the government would say he kidnapped her and would be arrested. When Rachel returns to Tumaini, Kanoro is still there with a grown son. Rachel is able to treat him for his malaria.

The Pritchards- a British couple sent to British East Africa after Mr. Pritchard gambled away thousands of pounds. When his father refused to give him more money, Mr. Pritchard stole some. His father sent him to Africa as a punishment and a way to get him and his wife away. In Africa, they did not change their spending habits or personalities and were greedy and rude. After their daughter Valerie died, the Pritchards quickly thought of the plan to have Rachel impersonate her. The Pritchards needed someone to be Valerie so that they could get more money from Mr. Pritchard.

Valerie Pritchard-A twelve-year-old girl living in British East Africa. Like Rachel, Valerie has red hair, but is plump and wears nicer clothes than Rachel. Judging by the letters she wrote to her grandfather, Valerie was very spoiled and hated everything about Africa. When she dies from influenza, her parents want Rachel to impersonate her.

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Grandfather Pritchard- a wealthy, elderly man living in an estate called Stagsway in England. One son died and the other gambled away thousands of pounds and was sent to Africa. His only grandchild is a girl named Valerie, who writes letters of how much she hates Africa. His main passion in life is birds. He enjoys watching and studying them. He keeps records of when certain types first appear and where they build nests. He left his estate to the Royal Bird Society.

Ellie- a young maid hired to assist “Valerie.” Her family has a little farm and rents the land and house from Mr. Pritchard. Though Ellie feels Valerie is much more sophisticated than she is, Rachel has more in common with Ellie than she knows.

Mr. Reginald Grumbloch—a barrister, Grandfather Pritchard’s solicitor, a bachelor. In the beginning he distrusts Rachel/Valerie and warns her not to hurt her grandfather or try to scam him. After Mr. Pritchard begins to suspect something isn’t right about “Valerie,” Mr. Grumbloch researches Tumaini and finds out more about Rachel. He is then assured that Rachel is not trying to take Mr. Pritchard’s money.

Frieda Grumbloch—Mr. Grumbloch’s single sister who is very independent and freethinking. She encourages Rachel to go to school and then encourages her to become a doctor. She dresses in flamboyant dresses and scarves—the complete opposite of her brother.

**Setting:**

British East Africa and England, 1918

**Interest Level and Reading Level:**

Interest Level: Grades 6-10

Reading Level: 5.7, Lexile 900 (<http://www.perma-bound.com>)

**Booktalk:**

It is 1919 and Rachel’s parents have died in an influenza outbreak in Africa. Now an orphan, she mistakenly puts her trust in some neighbors who come up with an evil scheme: she is to impersonate their dead daughter, travel to England, and convince a dying man to revise his will. Problems soon arise as Rachel tries to be honest and yet find some way to survive in a new country with no friends or family. In *Listening for Lions* we learn about two remarkable, but strikingly different countries Africa and England. For Rachel, both countries hold sadness and hope.

**Discussion Questions:**

**Ch. 1**

Pre-Reading

1. Based on the Anticipation Guide you filled out, what do you believe this book will be about?

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2. Look at the Table of Contents. Notice how the book is divided into three books. What are the three book titles? Looking at the titles, can you draw any conclusions?

#### During Reading

3. List four things we learn in the exposition of this chapter.
4. We are introduced to two tribes: the Kikuyu and Masai. How are they different? How are they similar?
5. It appears there is a division between Rachel's family and other white families in the area. How does Rachel's father describe the other white families? What does he mean by this?
6. On p. 10, we learn "Kanoro always said just what he thought." Rachel's parents, on the other hand "took a long time to think over something foolish or disobedient [she] had done. In which of these ways do you operate? Explain, giving at least one example.

#### Post Reading

7. Read the last two paragraphs of the chapter again. Explain the foreshadowing.

### Ch. 2

#### Pre-Reading

1. What do you think would be difficult about living in Africa?

#### During Reading

2. Even when Rachel hears about the influenza outbreak, she "was excited at the thought of this exotic and dangerous disease" (19). Why do you think she felt this way?
3. As Rachel's parents spend all their time at the hospital, Rachel's views about the influenza outbreak change. What changes her views? Are her worries realistic?
4. Instead of being gracious, Mr. and Mrs. Prichard insult Rachel and her father. List three ways they show their superiority.

#### Post Reading

5. What do you predict will happen to Rachel's father?

### Ch. 3

#### Pre-Reading

1. Rachel had to pick the place for her mother to be buried. Have you ever had to do something like this? (Maybe for a pet?) Is there a "correct" place to bury someone or something?

#### During Reading

2. As soon as Rachel goes to the Prichard house, she realizes, "However friendless I was, I was not sure the Pritchards were the friends I needed or wanted" (37). What does she mean by this?
3. The Pritchards expect Rachel to sleep in their daughter's room and wear her clothes. Why is this so difficult for Rachel?
4. Why would the Pritchards tell their guests that the missionaries and their daughter was dead? They know Rachel is alive and in their daughter's room. What reason could they have for lying?

#### Post Reading

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5. In just three chapters, Rachel went from being a happy young girl to being an orphan. What one thing do you feel might bring her some comfort in her grief? Explain your choice.

#### **Ch. 4**

##### Pre-Reading

1. In the pre-reading question for Ch. 2, you answered what would be difficult about living in Africa. Now that you've read a couple more chapters, would do you feel would be pleasant and wonderful about living in Africa?

##### During Reading

2. When Mrs. Pritchard explains her plot, Rachel's immediate response is negative. However, on p. 51, Rachel thinks, "It is not hard to silence a conscience." Why would this plan be beneficial to Rachel? What is the alternative for her?
3. On p. 54, Mrs. Pritchard tells Rachel, "There is no elegance here in Africa, no decent society." Based on what we have learned from Rachel, is this true? Why might Mrs. Pritchard feel this way?
4. While Rachel's parents probably would have wanted their daughter to stay with Kanoro in the event something happened to them, why does Kanoro believe this cannot happen?

##### Post Reading

5. What do you think is the main goal of the Pritchards? What do they want?

#### **Ch. 5**

##### Pre-Reading

1. We are now in Book 2, titled Valerie Prichard. Look back at the title for Book 1. Look at the title for Book 3. Why do you think the name changes again for Book 3?

##### During Reading

2. On p. 69, Miss Limplinger is described as "buzzing like a mosquito." Explain the onomatopoeia.
3. Explain why Miss Limplinger is compared to an egret.
4. When Rachel meets Mr. Grumbloch, she compares him to an animal. Why do you think Rachel is often thinking about animals and comparing people to animals? (It is also interesting to note the types of animals Rachel thinks about: she doesn't mention dogs or cats.)

##### Post Reading

5. Rachel is now at her "grandfather's" house. Why might it be difficult for her to tell him the truth?

#### **Ch. 6**

##### Pre-Reading

1. Have you ever been to a large mansion or estate? Think about the celebrity homes seen on shows such as MTV's "Cribs" or in celebrity magazines. Do you think you would feel comfortable being in a home completely different than one you're used to?

##### During Reading

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2. Find two similes or metaphors Rachel uses when exploring her new house, Stagsway.
3. Mr. Pritchard tells Rachel twice, “Not what I expected.” What do you think he was expecting?
4. On Rachel’s first night at Stagsway, she tells Mr. Pritchard about Africa, specifically the lions. “It is as if Africa itself were speaking,” she says (87). Think about your home and the city and state where you live. What sound(s) come to mind when you think about your home?

Post Reading

5. Was Mr. Pritchard like you had imagined? Explain.

**Ch. 7**

Pre-Reading

1. Rachel’s plan was to tell Mr. Pritchard’s solicitor the truth when she arrived off of the boat. Why do you think she stayed silent? Do you think she will ever reveal the truth?

During Reading

2. Unbeknownst to Ellie, Rachel actually has quite a bit in common with her. Give two similarities between the two young women.
3. While pretending to be Valerie, Rachel tells her grandfather about her “friend” Rachel and her “friend’s” parents. Why would she do this?
4. After the letter from the Pritchards arrives, Rachel realizes the awful trap she is in. Explain Rachel’s dilemma and how her “grandfather” complicates it.

Post Reading

5. Rachel realizes she has switched from calling Mr. Pritchard “the grandfather” and now calls him “grandfather.” What does this small change in language symbolize?

**Ch. 8**

Pre-Reading

1. One of Rachel’s tasks is to track and record birds on the estate. Is this something that would interest you? Why or why not?

During Reading

2. As Rachel tours her grandfather’s estate, she meets people who live on his land and pay him rent. Name two things Rachel learns about her grandfather from the people she meets. Do you think she would have found these things out from her grandfather?
3. What does the hoopoe bird symbolize for Rachel? What might it symbolize for her grandfather?

Post Reading

4. Rachel tells her grandfather she would like to go back to Africa and rebuild the hospital. Is that a realistic goal?

**Ch. 9**

Pre-Reading

1. Rachel knows her “parents,” the Pritchards, are coming. What conflicts and problems will their arrival cause her, her grandfather, and the staff?

### During Reading

2. When Rachel sees the Pritchards, she finds “all the loathing I felt for them was turned against myself, for hadn’t I let myself become a part of them” (117)? Is Rachel right to blame herself? What options did she have?
3. Grandfather tells his son, “I believe the Good Book says ‘A little child shall lead them’” (124). Why is this line ironic?

### Post Reading

4. When the chapter ends, Rachel packs a heavy sweater because she fears she will be sent to prison. What do you think Rachel’s punishment will be?

## Ch. 10

### Pre-Reading

1. If you were Rachel, what would be your biggest fear?

### During Reading

2. The taxi driver educated Rachel about the rules of tipping when he said, “It’s customary to add a bit to the fare to show your satisfaction” (130). Give four examples of when you and/or your parents/guardians might tip someone.
3. When Rachel tells Mr. Grumbloch the truth, she is astonished to find he already knows the truth. How did he find out she was really Rachel and not Valerie?
4. What does Mr. Grumbloch mean when he says, “I am a bachelor with no suitable lodgings for you, but I will phone my sister, Frieda” (134)? Why might it not be considered proper for a bachelor to have a young girl at his house? Do these same ideas continue today?
5. Give two examples of how Frieda Grumbloch is different from her brother.
6. Frieda believes “young women must have an education” (139). During this time period, this idea was not widely accepted. What do you think Rachel’s grandfather would think about her going to school?

### Post Reading

7. When Rachel sees her adoption papers, she is now Rachel Pritchard. Why might she be sad to lose the name Rachel Sheridan?
8. Why might Rachel be happy to lose the name Valerie Pritchard?

## Ch. 11

### Pre-Reading

1. This chapter begins the third and last part of the book. What do you anticipate will happen with Rachel and her grandfather?

### During Reading

2. According to grandfather, how did he know that she was not Valerie?
3. After talking with Ellie, Rachel “could not help wondering how many people like Ellie and me were not always who they pretended to be” (145). Why do people pretend to be different than they are? Give three examples of people pretending to be someone else. Also include why, or the cause of their pretending.
4. When Rachel prepares to go to school, her grandfather says, “As for things like numbers and science, girls needn’t worry about such things” (146). Do you think Rachel agrees with her grandfather? Do you think Frieda Grumbloch would agree with him? Why or why not?

5. List three subjects Rachel was behind in when entering Ditchley, her boarding school.
6. Rachel behaves very obediently and politely at school, believing “in pretending to be Valerie, I had already used up all my wickedness” (149). Do you agree with Rachel? Was she wicked when she pretended to be Valerie? Explain your thoughts.
7. What idea does Frieda Grumbloch put into Rachel’s head about returning to Tumaini?

#### Post Reading

8. The chapter ends with Rachel vowing to “learn to be a doctor if it killed [her]” (155). Do you think this is a realistic goal for Rachel? What are two obstacles that she might face?

### Ch. 12

#### Pre-Reading

1. Rachel’s first “official” schooling is at a boarding school. What were your first three schools? (You can include preschool, nursery school, and kindergarten.) Did those first schools help prepare you for middle school? Why or why not?

#### During Reading

2. What does grandfather call female doctors? (p. 159)
3. In your opinion, why did Rachel give up attending a university and stay with her grandfather instead?
4. As Rachel’s grandfather reached the end of his life, he said, “I think, Rachel, you will not be happy until you have returned to Tumaini” (162). Give one reason why he was correct and one reason why that statement was not true for Rachel.
5. Rachel insisted the Pritchards be allowed to come to the funeral. What does this tell us about Rachel’s character?

#### Post Reading

6. Rachel tells the mission society that when she is 21, she will return to Tumaini as a doctor. What are five possible obstacles she might face?

### Ch. 13

#### Pre-Reading

1. If you were Rachel, would you have wanted to continue your schooling or continue to live at Stagsway? Explain your answer.

#### During Reading

2. Give three examples of what schooling was like for Rachel at the London School of Medicine for Women.
3. After grandfather’s death, what happened to Stagsway?
4. Although Rachel was not happy to be assigned residency at Westminster Hospital, her teacher said, “It was our belief that of all the girls, you two could survive the difficulties” (177). What might make Rachel able to survive hardships at this hospital?
5. Rachel found herself frustrated with the way her male colleagues treated her. Her other female colleague, Janaki wasn’t bothered by the insults. Why not?

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6. What are two lessons Rachel learned through her years at medical school? Do you think those lessons could be learned anywhere else? Why or why not?

## Ch. 14

### Pre-Reading

1. Knowing this is the last chapter of the book, what do you predict will happen?

### During Reading

2. On p. 183, Frieda promises to visit Rachel. She says, “I want to see if Tumaini really exists.” Obviously, she knows Tumaini does exist—it’s what Rachel has talked about for years. What does Frieda mean?
3. Kanoro and his family have taken care of the graves of Rachel’s parents. Ngigi said on page 187, “For us a grave means little but with you it is different.” What do graves mean for people? Explain.
4. What do many people in Africa do with their dead bodies? Does this make sense to you? Why or why not?
5. Although Rachel knows Wangombe is lying when he gives his reason for his men not working, she doesn’t admit this. Instead, she bargains with him. Should she have told him she knew he was lying? Is she being weak by giving in to his customs? Does staying silent make Rachel stronger or weaker? Explain.

### Post Reading

6. Did the book end like you imagined it would?
7. Looking back at the book, what would you say was the climax of the book? Why?
8. Fast forward in Rachel’s life 5 years. What do you think will have happened to her, her village, and her hospital?
9. What is the significance of the title of the book?

## Language (Spelling/Vocabulary)

Definitions—found at <http://www.dictionary.com> and rewritten in more “accessible” language

Vocabulary Word	Definitions	Page Found
plumage	n-feathers that are often used for decoration (like on hats or in flower decorations)	7
sisal	n-a plant fiber that is used for making rope	8, 67
pert	Adj-behaving in a very forward and not bashful way	12
scythe	n-a tool with a long handle and a blade on the end that is used for cutting grass and grain by hand. (These are still used in many parts of the world. They are handy to use on hills and cliffs—places that a lawn mower couldn’t reach.)	25
indignant	Adj-Angry because of something that was done wrongly to someone. (He was <u>indignant</u> when he received a parking ticket, because he knew he hadn’t been at that sight for the two hour limit.)	81

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alighted	v-to get down from a vehicle or dismount	112
forelock	n-the lock of hair that grows from the top part of the head (This word is often used when talking about horses.)	158
louse (plural of "lice")	n-a parasite that lives off of humans and other mammals	179
antagonism	n-conflict or disagreement, dislike, hostility	181
indifferent	Adj-not caring one way or the other about something. (She was <u>indifferent</u> about which movie they should go see.)	181

## Indiana Academic Standards

### Language Arts:

6.1.5, 6.2.7, 6.3.2, 6.3.3, 6.3.5, 6.3.6

7.1.3, 7.2.4, 7.3.3, 7.3.4

8.1.3, 8.2.6, 8.3.2, 8.3.4, 8.3.5

### Social Studies:

6.3.1

7.3.1, 7.3.2, 7.3.10

8.3.1

## Anticipation Statements- Listening for Lions

Agree or Disagree?

1. Children should always respect their elders.
2. If you really love your country, you should never want to leave it.
3. Good can sometimes come from something bad.
4. There are no such things as jobs for only men or only women anymore.
5. Most people in Africa live a substandard way of life when compared to our lives in America.
6. You should be closer to your family than your friends or acquaintances.
7. Orphanages are quite common everywhere in the world.
8. It would be much easier if everyone spoke the same language.

## Read-Aloud Pages/Passages

1. Read p. 157-158 (begin at last paragraph on p. 157 and continue to the end of p. 158)

Rachel tries to figure out what to do, now that the Pritchards have arrived and want Rachel to deceive the grandfather she loves.

2. Read, starting on p. 185 (second full paragraph "Time in Africa...") and continue until the end of the first paragraph on p. 186 (... "Someone was tending the small graveyard.")

In this scene, Rachel comes across a wild pony in the middle of the field. Although it accepted an apple from her, when it ran away, Rachel felt a sadness that made her think about Valerie.

3. Read, beginning on the last paragraph on p. 120 (“I was alone...”) and continue to the end of the paragraph on p. 121.  
Rachel finally returns to her beloved Africa, but finds things have changed and the hospital is gone.

### **Read-Alikes:**

- Alexander’s Folk Tales from Africa* by Alexander McCall Smith
- African Folk Tales* by Alexander McCall Smith
- Scientists Anonymous: Great Stories of Women in Science* by Patricia Fara
- The Empty Mirror* by James Collier
- A Time of Angels* by Karen Hess
- The Secret Garden* by Frances Hodgson Burnett

### **Books with more adult material and themes. Suggested for mature readers only (or interested parents/guardians):**

- A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier* by Ishmael Beah
- They Poured Fire On Us From The Sky: The True Story of Three Lost Boys from Sudan* by Alphonsion Deng, Benson Deng, Benjamin Ajak, and Judy A. Bernstein
- Don’t Lets Go to the Dogs Tonight: An African Childhood* by Alexandra Fuller
- No. 1 Ladies’ Detective Agency* by Alexander McCall Smith (This is the first in the series.)

### **Suggested books by Gloria Whelan:**

- Homeless Bird*
- Angel on the Square*

### **Across the Curriculum Connections**

1. Rachel’s parents die from influenza and leave her an orphan. Research the influenza using the websites listed below. Create a brochure (hand written or done on computer) that clearly answers the following questions:

- What is influenza?
- How is it spread?
- What are its symptoms?
- How is influenza treated?
- What are some of the serious Influenza outbreaks the world has seen? When were these? How many were infected?
- Is influenza an issue today? Explain.

Resources to Use:

- Computer with Internet Access

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-<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/influenza/> PBS “American Experience” Program  
“Influenza 1918”  
-<http://www.cdc.gov/> The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)  
-<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2008/05/080519165939.htm>  
Science Daily—Tracking Influenza  
-<http://www.who.int/topics/influenza/en/> (World Health Organization)  
-<http://virus.stanford.edu/uda/> (Influenza Pandemic of 1918)  
<http://www.medicalecology.org/diseases/influenza/influenza.htm>  
-[http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/health/march97/1918\\_3-24.html](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/health/march97/1918_3-24.html) (Interview on PBS)  
-<http://www.history.navy.mil/library/online/influenza%20epid%201918.htm> (Information  
on influenza from US Navy)

Supplies Needed:

Computer, printer or paper for a brochure, pens, markers, colored pencils as needed

**Social Studies Standards Covered:**

6.3.1  
7.3.1, 7.3.2  
8.3.1

**Technology Education Standards Covered:**

3-A, 3-B

**Language Arts Standards Covered:**

6.4.6, 6.4.7, 6.6.4, 6.6.5  
7.4.5, 7.4.7, 7.4.8, 7.4.9, 7.4.10, 7.6.8  
8.4.4, 8.4.6, 8.4.7, 8.4.8, 8.4.9, 8.6.5, 8.6.6, 8.6.7

2. One of the special things in this book is how the reader naturally learns about two different countries. Make a map showing where Rachel lived in the beginning of the book. Trace her journey by boat (beginning around p. 70) and show the route her ship took. Find out if a trip like hers would be possible today. Look online and/or check with a travel agency.

Resources to Use:

Travel/Tourism books

Travel Agencies/Travel Agents

<http://www.mapsofworld.com/index.html>

<http://www.worldatlas.com/aatlas/world.htm>

<http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/maps>

<http://www.virtualtourist.com/>

Supplies Needed: Computer with Internet Access, Travel/Tourism books, Information from Travel Agency, paper for a map, markers

**Social Studies Standards Covered:**

6.3.1  
7.3.1, 7.3.2  
8.3.1

**Technology Education Standards Covered:**

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3-A, 3-B

**Language Arts Standards Covered:**

6.4.6, 6.4.7, 6.6.4, 6.6.5

7.4.5, 7.4.7, 7.4.8, 7.4.9, 7.4.10, 7.6.8

8.4.7, 8.4.8, 8.4.9, 8.6.5, 8.6.6, 8.6.7

**Resources**

Resources are suggested materials that students could access if they have a particular interest in the book and its topics. Due to limited class time, movies are not meant to be shown in the classroom; rather they are suggestions for students and parents/guardians to watch at home. Film ratings are included (when possible). Explanations for the film ratings can be found at <http://www.filmratings.org>

Akpan, Uwem. Say You're One of Them. New York: Little, Brown, and Co., 2008.

*Nigerian Jesuit priest Akpan created a collection of five short stories that take place in Africa. One of the best-reviewed books this summer, it tells of Africa from the perspective of children.*

Hotel Rwanda. Dir. Terry George. Perf. Don Cheadle. Lionsgate, 2004. (Rated PG-13)

*A true story of a man who managed to save over 1000 lives during the genocide in Rwanda by sheltering people in his hotel. The movie provides detail about Rwanda today, compared to the book which took place in the early 1900's.*

I Dreamed of Africa. Dir. Hugh Hudson. Perf. Kim Basinger, Vincent Perez.

Videocassette. Columbia, 2000. (Rated PG-13)

*A movie about a woman who moves to Kenya and starts a cattle ranch. Many of the animals she sees are ones mentioned in Listening for Lions.*

Silvester, Hans. Natural Fashion: Tribal Decoration From Africa. New York: Thames and Hudson, 2008.

*A photography book that shows African tribes and the accessories and make up they create from plants and flowers. While some people might think of African tribal people as scary, this book shows beauty in unlikely places.*

Out of Africa. Dir. Sydney Pollack. Perf. Robert Redford, Meryl Streep. DVD. Universal, 1985. (Rated PG)

*The story of a woman who moves to Kenya with her husband and starts a coffee plantation in 1913. Based around the same time as Listening for Lions, one can get a better idea of the time period and setting.*

Sense and Sensibility. Dir. Ang Lee. Perf. Emma Thompson, Kate Winslet. Columbia, 1995. (Rated PG)

*Though the movie takes place before the setting of Listening for Lions, this movie helps us have a better feel for living in England and its countryside and get a feel for the various rules for men and women's behavior.*

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Snyder, C. Albert. On a Hill Far Away: Journal of a Missionary Doctor in Rwanda. Indianapolis: List and Life Press, 1995.

*In the Author's Note at the end of Listening for Lions, Gloria Whelan praises Dr. Snyder's book as a tremendous help when writing her book.*

Winged Migration. Dir. Jacques Cluzaud and Michel Debats. Sony Pictures, 2002. (Rated G)

*A documentary that follows birds as they migrate through 40 countries and all continents. In Listening for Lions, we read about the tremendous influence birds have on both Rachel and her grandfather. This documentary helps bring that passion to life.*

### **Book Activities**

1. This is an independent assignment that could be done at the end of the book, or as students are reading it. Students could also spend some time in their school library to select books that are connected with *Listening for Lions*.

In Africa and England, we see Rachel enjoying reading. Some of the authors she enjoys are Charles Dickens and William Shakespeare. Near the end of the book, Rachel is given a copy of Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*. Choose one of the authors mentioned in *Listening for Lions*. Check out the book at the library, get it from the class library, or find a copy on your own. Read the beginning of the book (at least the first chapter, or first Act in a play). In your opinion, is this the type of book Rachel would read? Explain your thoughts clearly.

#### **Language Arts Standards Covered:**

6.4.3, 6.4.8, 6.4.9, 6.4.10, 6.5.4, 6.6.4, 6.6.5  
7.3.3, 7.4.8, 7.4.9, 7.4.10, 7.5.6, 7.6.8  
8.4.7, 8.4.8, 8.4.9, 8.6.5, 8.6.6, 8.6.7

2. This is an assignment that could be done while reading the book. It could also be done as an assessment at the end of the book. Students could do this during class time or as homework.

Imagine that Rachel was able to write to her friend Kanoro in Africa. (Pretend that she was able to send letters without fear of the Pritchards finding out and assume that Kanoro would receive the letters.) Even though she was away from Africa for many years, she only wrote a total of four letters.

Write four letters to Kanoro. What would Rachel write about? How would she feel? What would she share with Kanoro? What questions would she ask him?

The letters should correspond to the following four times:

- When Rachel first arrives in England.

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- After a few months in England as Rachel has spent time exploring the grounds and recording bird sightings for her grandfather.
- When Mr. and Mrs. Pritchard arrive in England and want Rachel to lie even more.
- When Rachel is almost finished with medical school and plans on returning to Africa.

**Language Arts Standards Covered:**

6.4.8, 6.4.9, 6.5.1, 6.5.4, 6.5.6, 6.5.7, 6.6.4, 6.6.5  
 7.3.3, 7.4.9, 7.5.2, 7.5.6, 7.5.7, 7.6.5, 7.6.8, 7.6.9  
 8.4.7, 8.4.8, 8.4.9, 8.5.2, 8.5.6, 8.5.7, 8.6.5, 8.6.6, 8.6.7

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