



The Water Seed

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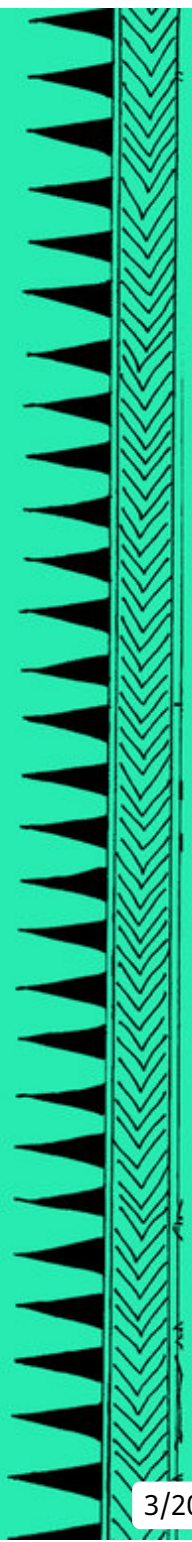
Level 2



Long ago, in a village it did not rain for three years.

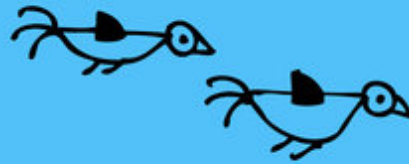


The earth was parched and all the plants dried up. The dry dust blew into people's eyes. They were very worried. They knew they could not live without water.





The village chief called for a meeting. Old and young, everybody came.



The chief asked four young men to come up.
He said, "I want the four of you to go in four different directions to find water."



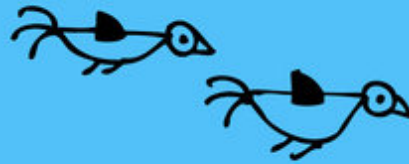
Three of them returned after some days as they could not walk any further. The fourth one who had gone north, reached a white mountain.



As he climbed up the slippery slope he saw a cave. There was an old lady in the cave. "Where can I find water?" the man asked her.



The old lady said, "Go higher up on the mountain."



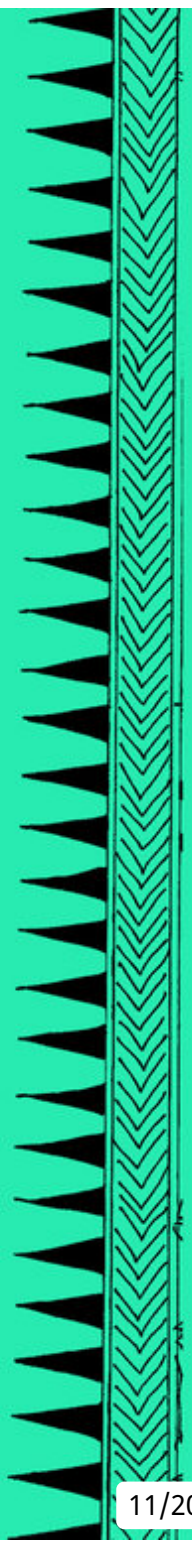
The man climbed right to the top. He broke off a piece from the white mountain. He wrapped it carefully in a sack. He ran back to his village as fast as he could.



When he got there, everyone ran to him to see what he had got. He was very tired but happy. He said, "I've brought back the water seed."

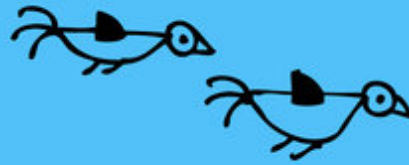


When he opened his sack, the ice had melted into water! It dripped on to the ground and was absorbed by the soil.



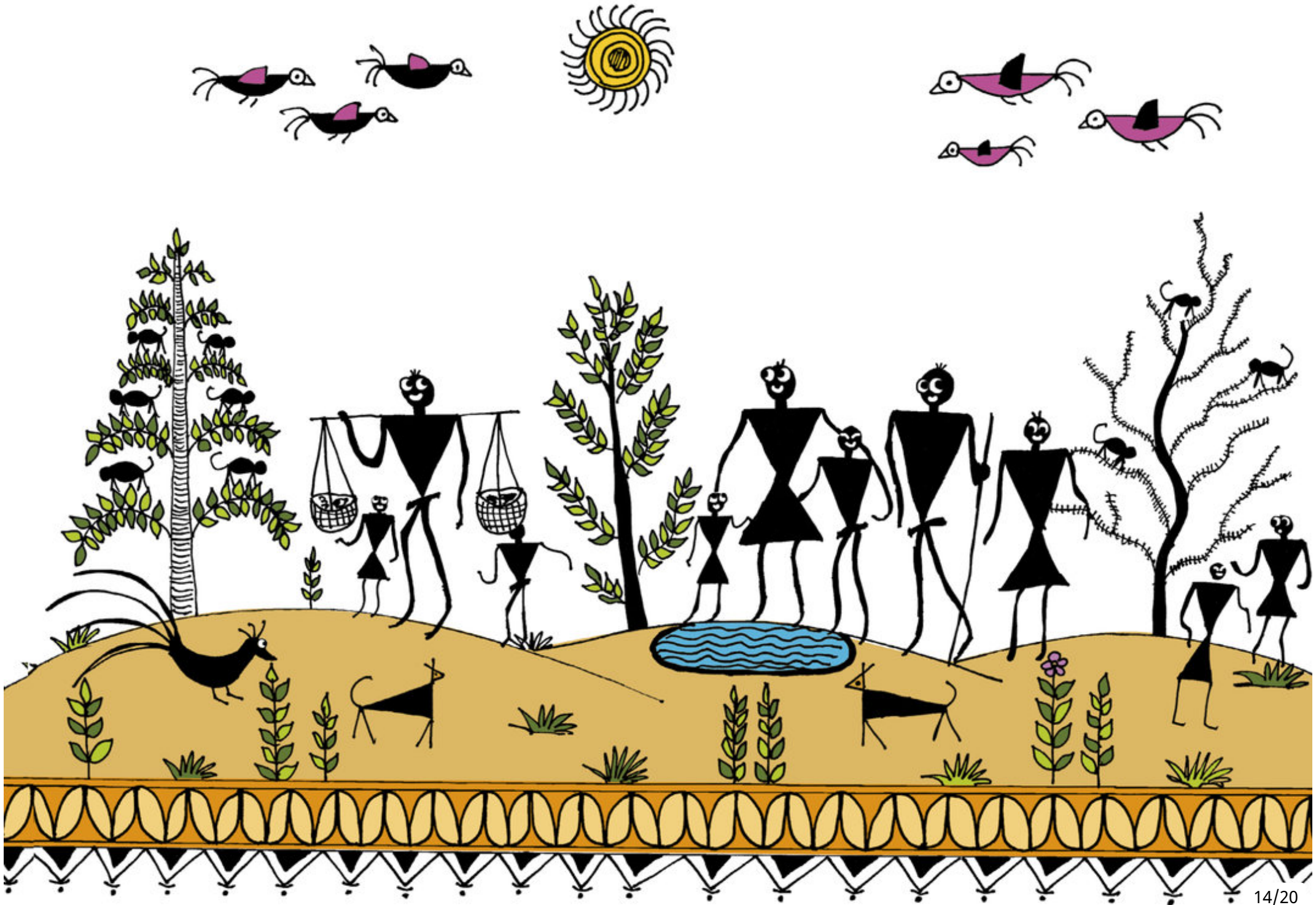


With a cry, the villagers started digging to get back the water seed.
They dug and they dug deeper. At last, they struck water!



Everyone shouted with joy, “The water seed has given us water! The water seed has given us water!”

And now the village had water.

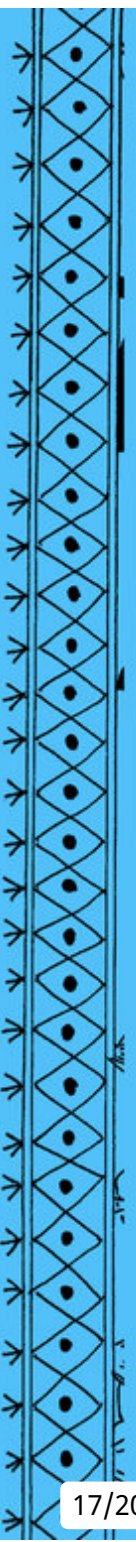
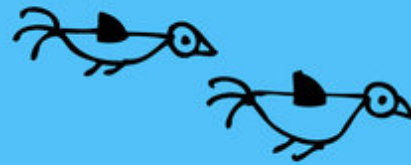


They looked after it well.
Now the village has water even if it does not rain.





Have you ever seen a water seed?





The Concept

India's diverse linguistic landscape has a rich seam of stories for children. Unfortunately, many tribal languages do not have literature for children in book form or books for reading pleasure. As increasing numbers of tribal children go to school, it is now more necessary than ever to create a body of children's literature in their languages. Literature that reflects their own world and opens up the world beyond because books are magical, powerful things that inform, amuse, educate and entertain in the most interactive way. Books make every child an independent and life-long seeker of knowledge in her own unique way. For education to be truly meaningful to every child, she must get good books to read in her own language.

The Project

Pratham Books and IgnusERG, with the support of Bernard van Leer Foundation have created the first ten books for children's reading pleasure in Munda, Kui, Saura and Juanga languages from Odisha. The stories were written and illustrated by authors and illustrators belonging to these tribes in a series of workshops. This series of books is called **Adikahani**. It is a significant first step towards giving a voice to cultures that do not find adequate representation in mainstream discourses.



The Partners

IgnusERG is a guild of resource persons working to support teachers and enhancing the quality of education, particularly in government schools. They focus their efforts on bringing equity in education and addressing the needs of marginalized children.

Bernard van Leer Foundation is an international grant-making foundation based in The Hague. Its mission is to improve opportunities for young children growing up in socially and economically difficult circumstances. It has a particular interest in supporting mother-tongue based education.

This story was written by the Munda Writers' Group consisting of Budhanatha Munda, Prafull Surin, Prafulla Tapno, Rabindra Kumar Singh and Santosh Kumar Singh. With a background in ECCE, they all interact with children regularly. It has been illustrated by Ramani Ranjan Sarangi using the Saura wall mural style as a base. The Munda language has more than 5 lakh speakers and is spoken in Sundargarh, Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar districts of Odisha. It is a group of languages spread over a geographical area beyond state boundaries and has been a repository of fascinating myths that have attracted linguists and litterateurs. The spellings of the language in Odia script are not definitive as many new sounds are being rendered in print for the first time.



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'The Water Seed' has been published on StoryWeaver by Pratham Books as a part of Adikahani series of ten books. The development of this book has been supported by Bernard van Leer Foundation along with our Content Partner IgnusERG. www.prathambooks.org

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The Water Seed

(English)

When the rains did not come, the young men of the village went in search of water. One of them brings back a water seed!

This is a Level 2 book for children who recognize familiar words and can read new words with help.



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