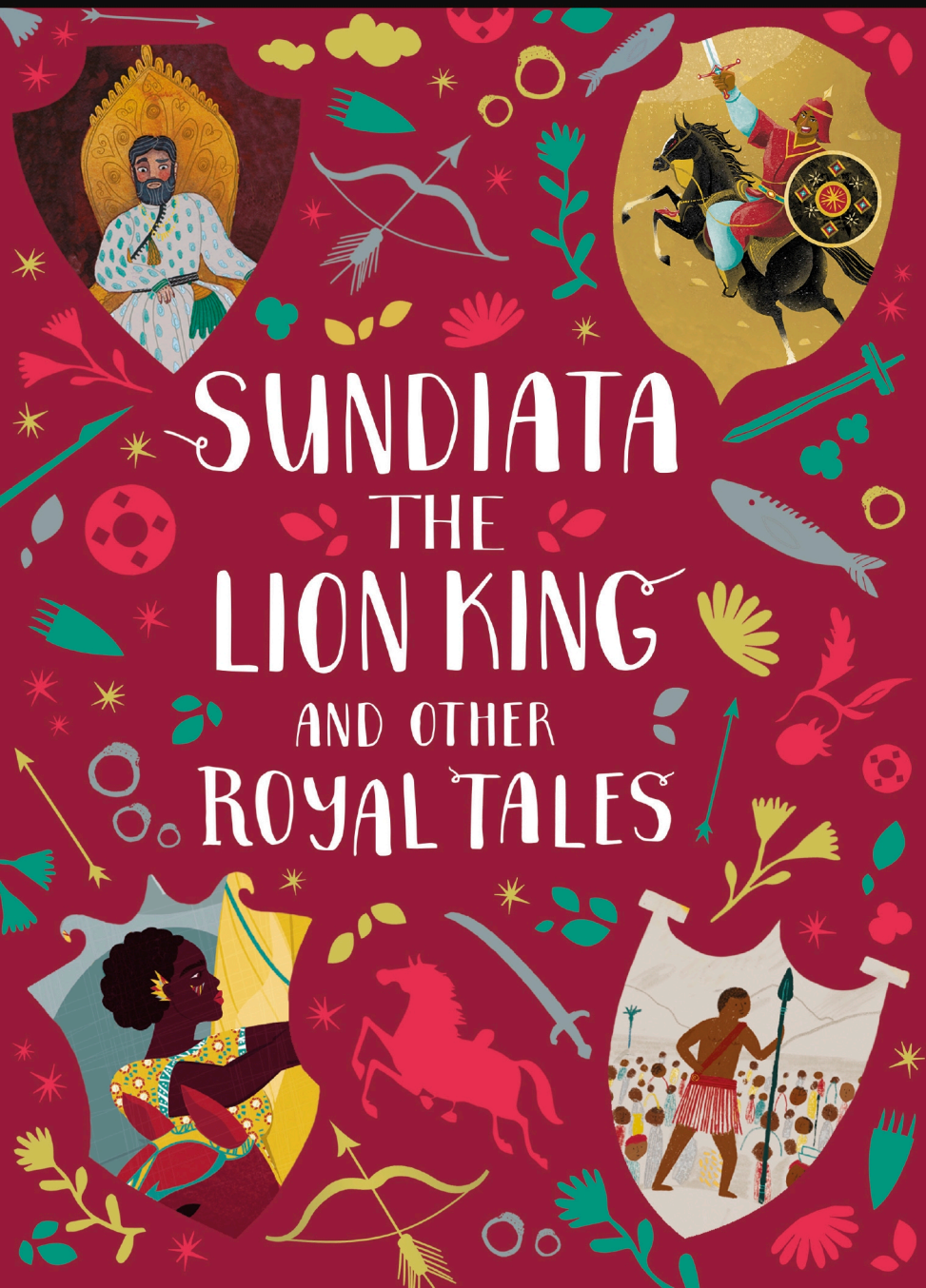


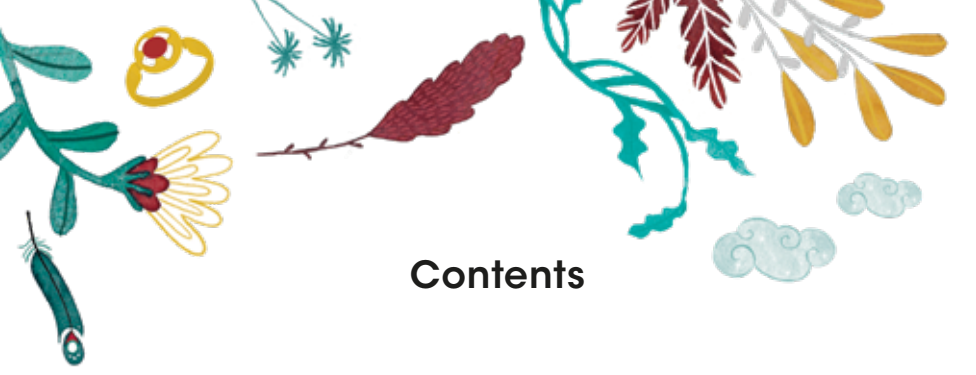
Penguin



Readers



SUNDIATA
THE
LION KING
AND OTHER
ROYAL TALES



Contents

New words	4
Note about the stories	6
Before-reading questions	6
Sundiata the Lion King	8
Yennenga and the Mossi Kingdom	20
Rostam and his horse Rakhsh	32
Shakuntala and the gold ring	44
During-reading questions	56
After-reading questions	57
Exercises	58
Project work	62
Glossary	63



Sundiata the Lion King

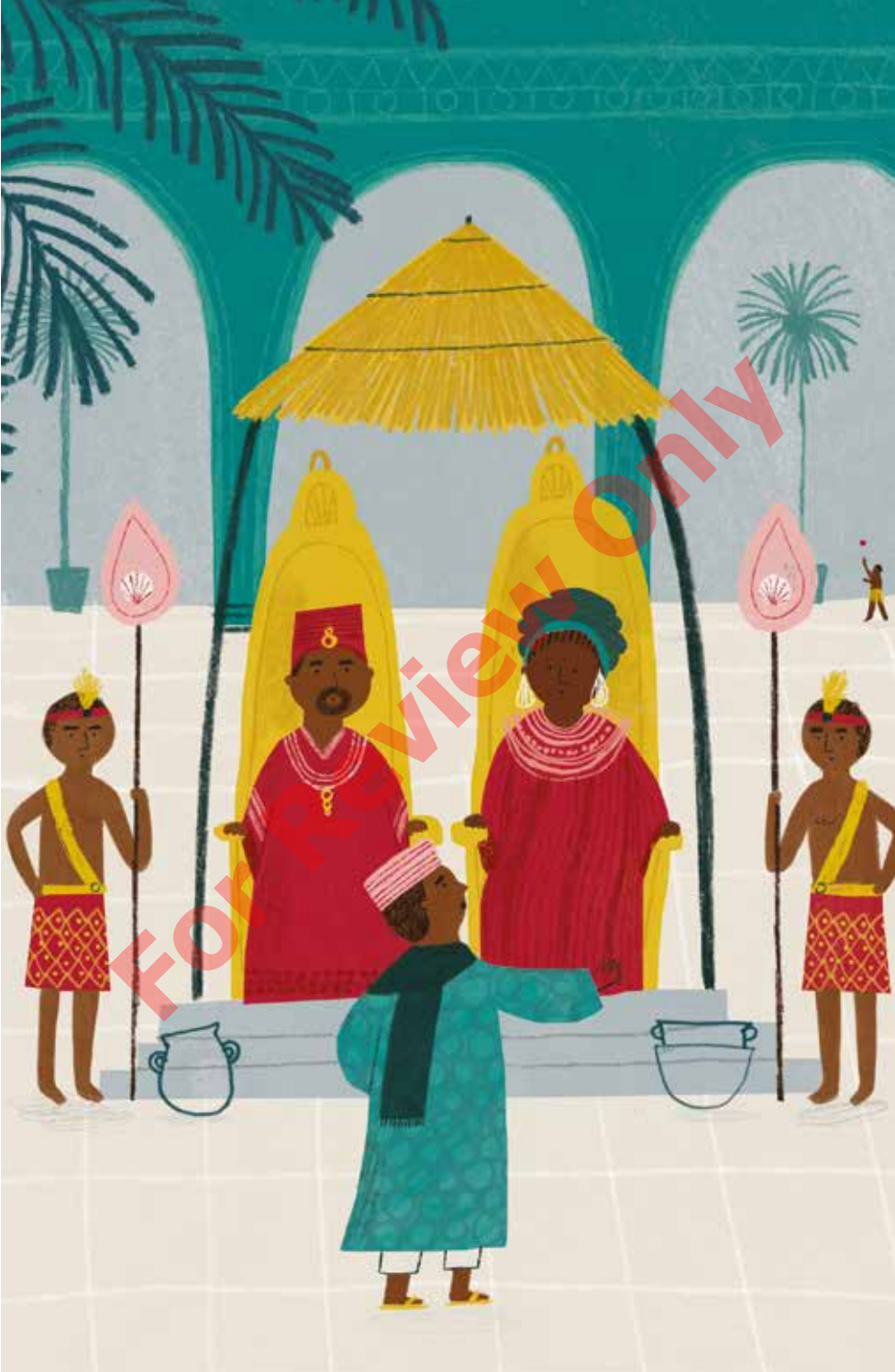
King Konaté and his wife, Queen Sassouma, lived in the **kingdom** of Manding, Africa. They had a beautiful **palace** and their young son, Dankaran, played happily there. But one day, a **fortune teller** came to see the king.

“A woman called Sogolon is going to have a son,” said the man. “And this boy will be a wonderful king.”

“What?” said the king. “But **Prince** Dankaran will be the next king!”

“Maybe he will be king one day,” answered the fortune teller. “But Sogolon’s son will be a stronger and more famous king. He will bring money to this kingdom and make it great.”

The king loved his wife. But he did not want the next king to be another man’s son. He thought for a long time. Then he asked Sogolon to come to the palace and marry him. He wanted her child to be his son.



Months later, Sogolon had a baby, and they called him Sundiata. But the baby was very small and thin.

“This baby isn’t strong! How will he be a great king?” said the king.

Sundiata was a small child, and he often was not well. Everyone laughed at him because he could not walk. Then an important day came. At seven years old, boys changed into men. On this day, Sundiata wanted to walk in front of the Manding people. His mother gave him two very strong walking sticks. Sundiata started to stand, but the sticks **broke**. People wanted to help him, but he said no. Then, for the first time, he stood and walked!

The Manding people were very happy.

“Sundiata can walk!” they said. “He is as strong as a lion!”

Sundiata grew very strong, and he learned to be a warrior.

“My son is strong, and he will be a great king!” said his father. Dankaran was very angry about this. “The first son is always king!” he thought.

Then King Konaté died, and Dankaran wanted to be king. He visited a **sorcerer**.



One evening, Sundiata saw the sorcerer.

“Hello!” Sundiata said. The man stopped but did not speak. “What do you want?” the boy asked. “Would you like my elephant?” But again the man said nothing.



“You want to kill me,” Sundiata said, quietly. “Am I right? Do it now, and do it quickly.”

“This boy is so kind and friendly,” thought the sorcerer. “I cannot kill him.”

“Run,” he told Sundiata. “Leave Manding. Dankaran wants to kill you, and he will look for you.”

Sundiata talked to his mother and his sister, Nyakhaleng. “We must leave Manding now!” he said. That day they left their home.

Sundiata, Sogolon and Nyakhaleng travelled for seven long years. They visited many villages, but no one wanted them to stay. “Dankaran is very angry with Sundiata,” the villagers said. “We must not make him angry with us, too!”

In the seventh year, Sundiata and his mother and sister stayed in a village called Djedeba. Then one day, the king there asked Sundiata to come to his palace.