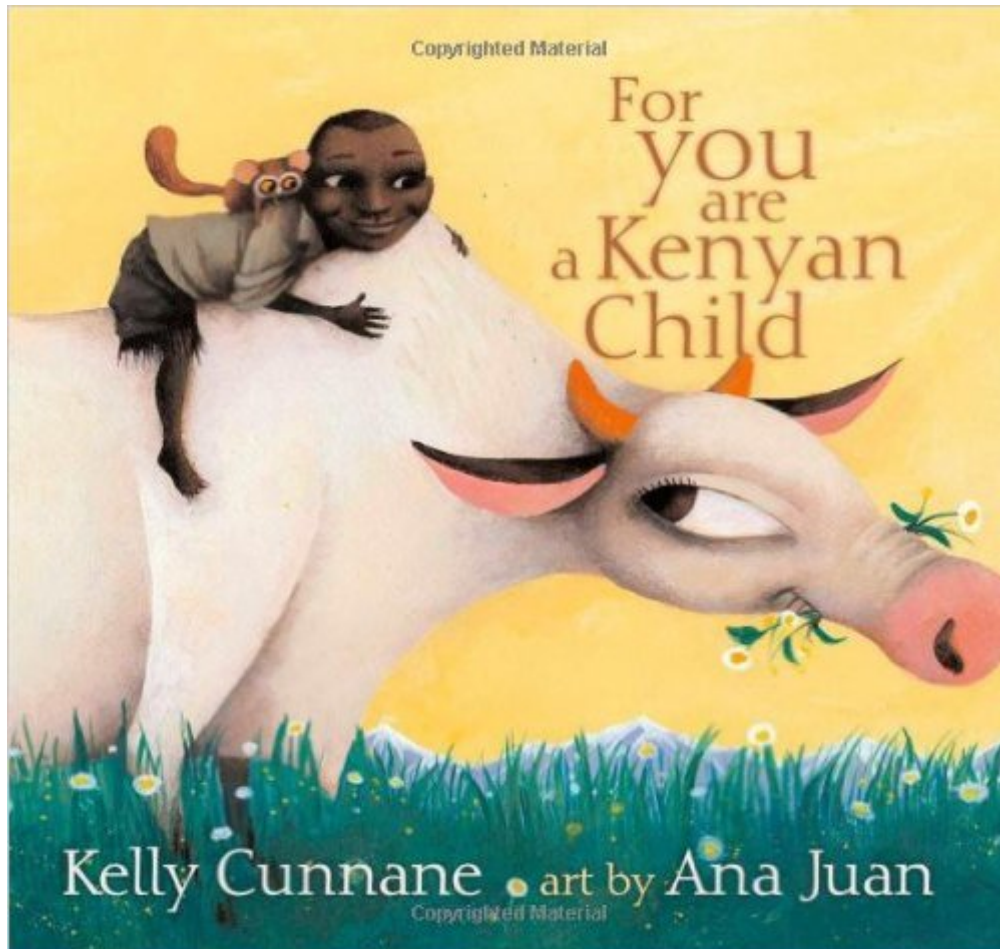


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# For You Are A Kenyan Child (Ezra Jack Keats New Writer Award)



## Synopsis

Imagine you live in a small Kenyan village, where the sun rises over tall trees filled with doves. You wake to the sound of a rooster's crow, instead of an alarm clock and the school bus. Your afternoon snack is a tasty bug plucked from the sky, instead of an apple. And rather than kicking a soccer ball across a field, you kick a homemade ball of rags down a dusty road. But despite this, things aren't that different for a Kenyan child than they would be for an American kid, are they? With so much going on around you, it's just as easy to forget what your mama asked you to do!

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 760L (What's this?)

Series: Ezra Jack Keats New Writer Award

Hardcover: 40 pages

Publisher: Atheneum Books for Young Readers (January 1, 2006)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 068986194X

ISBN-13: 978-0689861949

Product Dimensions: 11 x 0.6 x 10.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (22 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #122,402 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #76 in [Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Explore the World > Africa](#) #81 in [Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Where We Live > Country Life](#) #250 in [Books > Travel > Reference > General](#)

Age Range: 3 - 8 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 3

## Customer Reviews

I am a Kenyan residing in the U.S. and my 10-year-old cousin also from Kenya just borrowed this book from the library and ran to me saying some of the Swahili was wrong. I went through the book and was in total shock by the way the author had totally used words that were out of context. First, I'd like to commend her for writing a book about a Kenyan village and to state that the illustrations are quite good. I am sure she had the purest of intentions when writing it. I cannot claim to have flawless Swahili but having learned and spoken the language since childhood, I can easily identify mistakes. It is unfortunate that there are thousands of children out there reading incorrect

Swahili. Her father says the following: "It is bad that she has placed the wrong meaning of Swahili words in the English context and she ought to have consulted a Swahili scholar or native speaker (a Tanzanian/Kenyan) so as to write the language correctly. No book would be published in English with incorrect spellings and context and we hope that measures will be taken to correct these errors." We also believe that the publisher has an obligation to ensure that the books they sell which are geared to millions of people/children are correctly edited by native speakers/scholars of the respective foreign languages. Some mistakes found in the book include: Una taka chepati? = Unataka Chapati?\* Chapati is not a pancake, it is a type of flat-round-bread with its origin in India Jambo, Mzee - Mzee means an old man/elder not exactly respected one as stated\* Mheshimiwa means respected one Una taka shika rungu (fly-whisk)? = Unataka kushika rungu?\* A rungu is a club, not a fly-whisk, not sure what a flywhisk means in Swahili Una taka maziwa lala?

Essentially I've come to the conclusion that Ana Juan could come to my home and hit me over the head with multiple frying pans and I would STILL worship at her feet. You know that fantasy everyone has where a famous children's book illustrator walks up to you one day and says, "I made this incredibly beautiful painting, pre-framed, just for you"? You don't have that one? Well I do. And the illustrator in question would be Ana Juan. My goodness me, how that woman can paint. From her Fellini-esque, "The Night Eater" to the biography of "Frida" that only SHE could have illustrated, Juan is consistently brilliant in whatsoever she chooses to do. So when first-time picture book author Kelly Cunnane found that, "For You Are a Kenyan Child" was to fall into the creative hands of Juan, one can only imagine her response. The pairing of an artist who's picture book work, prior to this title, has been almost solely fantastical with a playful but realistic author makes for a unique book. One that reads as well as it looks. A child wakes in Kenya, "in the green hills of Africa, sun lemon bright over eucalyptus trees full of doves", to herd his Grandfather's cows. He's instructed by his mother to watch them carefully, but the cows won't mind if he slips away for a moment to see who else is up and about, will they? There's Bashir who bakes some pancakes in the morning, and the great black monkeys that perch in the trees. There's the village chief who is carving a magnificent lion and Grandmother who offers "sleeping milk, sweetened with crushed charcoal, fresh from the gourd". Distracted further by friends and playmates the boy finally makes it back to the field . . . but the cows are gone!

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