



## Jambo Means Hello: Swahili Alphabet Book

*Muriel L. Feelings , Tom Feelings (Illustrator)*

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**Jambo Means Hello: Swahili Alphabet Book** Muriel L. Feelings , Tom Feelings (Illustrator) Muriel and Tom Feelings, author and illustrator of the Caldecott Honor Book, "Moja Means One: Swahili Counting Book, " have now collaborated on a companion volume - a Swahili alphabet book.

## **Jambo Means Hello: Swahili Alphabet Book Details**

Date : Published July 15th 1992 by Puffin Books (first published January 1st 1974)

ISBN : 9780140546521

Author : Muriel L. Feelings , Tom Feelings (Illustrator)

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Genre : Childrens, Picture Books, Cultural, Africa

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## **From Reader Review Jambo Means Hello: Swahili Alphabet Book for online ebook**

### **Chelsea says**

This Caldecott Honor book is very informative in a way that is still easy for students to understand and enjoy. In the beginning of the book there is an introduction about the language of Swahili and a map showing the countries in which Swahili is spoken. On each page of the book there is a Swahili word that starts with each letter of the english alphabet. For example, on the "A" page the word "arusi" is introduced. The pronunciation of the word is provided along with a brief description of what the word means. The author chooses words that elementary students would be familiar with such as "school" and "friend." This book would be great to use with lower elementary students. Not only does it reinforce the english alphabet and introduce a new language, it teaches a great deal of African culture as well. It would be a great read aloud in a classroom when learning about African culture. The illustrations in the book are all done in black and white but are large and detailed. The pictures reinforce the word that is introduced on that particular page.

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### **Jen says**

The illustrations are beautiful. The black and white pencil drawings show so much detail and realism, yet leave the focus on the text and the words. I would really like to discuss this book, though, with someone who has more of an ability to make judgments: I feel like, if I had read this as a child, - a white child in white Suburbia - I may have learned some swahili words, but I would have had my uninformed ideas of Africa confirmed, not challenged. I'm not sure this book did enough to show the diversity of the continent.

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### **Kelsey says**

This book is a great introduction to the Swahili language and culture. The introduction is perfect for those who are unfamiliar with Swahili culture and language to have a better understanding of what they are reading and how it relates to the real world. It portrays and reflects East Africa and Kiswahili positively and accurately. If you read/buy this book, *Feelings' Moja Means One* is a great companion book and a must read. *Moja Means One: Swahili Counting Book*

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### **Becky B says**

A Swahili alphabet with each letter paired with a Swahili term and it's meaning.

I hadn't read this one since childhood. I remember I wasn't impressed as a child, probably since the illustrations are mostly black and white. As an adult I appreciate the illustrations and the information much more. Definitely read the note in the back on the illustration process used in this book. It is super complicated! Definitely think now *Feelings* deserved that Caldecott honor. But taking into consideration the opinion of my younger self, the target reading group of kids is probably middle grades. Q and X are skipped in this book, as is noted in the author's informative note at the beginning (read that too). Q and X don't

appear in the Swahili language, so the author chose to skip them. The intro talks about the prevalence and importance of the Swahili language. The words chosen help give a picture into some of the culture and traditions of the many peoples who speak this language. A great book to pick when doing multicultural studies or when studying Africa. Don't necessarily pick this one when studying the alphabet since two letters are missing by English standards.

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### **Shiloah says**

This was a beautifully illustrated book. With over 5 million people speaking Swahili and over 135 million speaking it as a second language, I thought this an appropriate book for children.

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### **Contemplative says**

This Caldecott Honor Book would be an enhancement for a geography lesson about Africa. It gave simple Swahili words to pronounce pertaining to the alphabet as well as tidbits about the culture in reference to the word given. My oldest dd enjoyed repeating the words with me. I like how she asked where all the color was because the book is in sketch form in black & white. It was a nice change of pace as well as exposure to something other than the typical illustrated books she's used to viewing.

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### **Mandy says**

This beautifully illustrated alphabet book introduces children to the Swahili alphabet and more importantly to the East African culture. I have never read a book like this before and I really enjoyed learning all of the Swahili words. I really liked how the author made this book relatable to children with words that would be relatable to children, for example English words like mother, father, friend, etc.. This book would be a great book to have in the classroom when doing a unit on African culture. I enjoyed this book and I think that children of all ages will too.

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### **Amy Clinton says**

This book uses Swahili life to teach counting in both the English language as well as Swahili language. While showing the numbers, it tells a little about life in Swahili.

I like the way that this book incorporates African life in the story.

This book is a good book to teach counting, as well as a second language. It is a good introductory lesson to teach diversity in the classroom. It would also be a good book to use in the history class when doing lessons on Africa.

The illustrations in this book are done by pencil, and give the African touch to the book. It really works well with the story and helps to connect the words with the images.

This book would be good to use with first or second grade.

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### **Illyra Vote says**

This book is an alphabet book containing a different letter on every other page but what makes it so different is that the letters used spell out swahili words. The words are very large at the top of the page with a definition describing what it is in english and then next to it is a large picture depicting the definition, the pictures are also all done in black and while pencil sketch fashion. For instance R stands for Rafiki which is a friend in Swahili. I would use this book as a read aloud or an SSR book because it is so much fun to learn new languages especially for younger children, this would be appropriate from ages 7 to 10. The best quality is the interactive alphabet order with new fun words next to them, and the words are useful fun words kids will be able to use, like friend and welcome.

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### **Stefanie Burns says**

Very informative alphabet book on the Swahili language. Each two page spread gives the a Swahili word, the pronunciation, the definition, how it is used, and an illustration to match. There is an introduction at the beginning of the book that tells about the language and a note at the end that explains about the art work. Informative, yet accessible for younger audiences, this book is a welcome addition to the language section in any children's library.

I would like an updated introduction though, to see the spread of the language in Africa currently.

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### **Aysheh M says**

This book illustrates the beauty of bringing forward a new language and learning it's characteristics. While passing the pages i soon learned many interesting words/ phrases. I was intrigued how the culture rose in East Africa.

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### **Luisa Knight says**

Learn a different Swahili word for each letter of the alphabet. You'll learn some African culture too. Beautiful black and white sketches adorn the pages.

Ages: 4 - 8

Cleanliness: a baby is bathing naked - nothing seen.

#geography #africa #languages #swahili #culture

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### **Analissa Cox says**

Jambo Means Hello teaches some of the basic vocabulary of the Swahili language as well as teach the order of the American Alphabet. Each letter corresponded with a Swahili word and included background information about each word. The pictures included what ever word was being talked about as well as an appropriate setting. Its a great way to teach young children about other cultures and languages while also sharing the alphabet. The entire book was full bleed in black and white, causing the reader to feel apart of the scenery. There are plenty of fun and cool facts included as well.

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### **Stephany Rose says**

"Jambo Means Hello: Swahili Alphabet Book" is a nice way to introduce children to other cultures. The book like many alphabet books gives a word for each letter of the alphabet. In this book, the words come from the Swahili language and helps make the reader aware of important aspects of South-East African culture where the language of Swahili is spoken. The illustrations are beautiful done in black and white. They show scenes from African village life and help the reader understand the Swahili words. This is a nice book to read aloud to children.

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### **Luann says**

Muriel and Tom Feelings followed up their counting book with an alphabet book to teach children the alphabet in Swahili along with a word and a few sentences giving facts about East Africa for each letter of the alphabet. As with Moja Means One, I wonder about how dated this is, but thought the illustrations were very nice and worthy of their Caldecott Honor.

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### **Manybooks says**

While Muriel and Tom Feelings' Jambo Means Hello: Swahili Alphabet Book is of course presented and appears in a traditional abcedarian format (but minus the letters Q and X, as they do not exist in the Swahili language), this is most definitely NOT a book meant to be used with and for young children first learning and practicing their letters, as no, Yambo Means Hello: Swahili Alphabet Book seems to be first and foremost conceptualised to introduce children, and not really toddlers either, to twenty-four Swahili words (for the most part various nouns and a few common expressions which are also presented with an appreciated pronunciation guide, as well as relevant cultural information and details, such as the roles played by mothers, fathers and children, the importance of respect for ones' elders, farming practices and so on and so on).

And while for the most part, I have indeed very much enjoyed the cultural information author Muriel Feelings presents and features, as someone who has always been very much interested in and intrigued by the various and different languages of the world, I really do wish that since in the introduction, the author

makes a point of declaring that Jambo Means Hello: Swahili Alphabet Book is meant to introduce Swahili words in particular, is meant to introduce Swahili as a language, as probably the most common and widespread language of Africa, that at least one part of the information shown in the different letter sections, on the specific and individual words, had been about their various linguistic backgrounds, had been with regard to the specifics of the Swahili language as a linguistic construct. And sadly and indeed, not really ever having this included, this does at least for me kind of lessen the language teaching and learning potential of Jambo Means Hello: Swahili Alphabet Book, as the words uttered and used in a given language have both cultural and language-based grammatical, syntax and the like significance, and both are (at least in my opinion) of equal and the same importance (for example, the Swahili word shown in Jambo Means Hello: Swahili Alphabet Book for school, *shule*, is both pronounced and spelled almost exactly like the German word for school, *Schule* and it indeed would have been a wonderful linguistic addition for the author, for Muriel Feelings to have investigated and shown if there are indeed linguistic and perhaps historic correspondences here).

And finally, while I have both appreciated and definitely much enjoyed the detailed and informative author's introduction of Jambo Means Hello: Swahili Alphabet Book, there are nevertheless two rather problematic and yes much annoying bones of contention for me. Firstly, Muriel Feelings absolutely should have included a bibliographical list of books for further reading and study, both on East African culture AND on Swahili as a language (perhaps even a few detailed grammar and syntax tomes for those of us interested in how Swahili actually works as a language, what its grammatical rules are and such). And secondly (and here I am in fact somewhat majorly personally annoyed and frustrated), why does the author, why does Muriel Feelings make the claim that Jambo Means Hello: Swahili Alphabet Book is primarily for children of African ancestry to discover the Swahili language? Nothing wrong with this in and of itself, I guess, but discovering and studying global languages, including the diverse languages of Africa, is something for EVERYONE AND ANYONE, and for the author to categorically make a statement, to pontificate that Jambo Means Hello: Swahili Alphabet Book should mostly be for children of African origin and ancestry, well, as someone who loves languages and is interested in diversity, culture and promoting the learning of as many different world languages as possible, I for one, have felt rather taken aback if not even a bit insulted.

Now with regard to Tom Feelings accompanying Caldecott Honour winning illustrations, while they are truly and indeed expressive and detailed (and give an appreciated realistically imaginative visual portrait and representation of East African culture), I do wish that the colour schemes used had not just been various shades of blacks, whites and browns (that they had also included reds, yellows, greens and blues). For while I have been both willing and very much able to appreciate and even rather enjoy the illustrations (and have truly found the information on how Tom Feelings' art was created of much interest), for my own aesthetic tastes (for my own eyes), there is simply not enough colour and thus not enough liveliness and brightness to consider Feelings' pictorial renderings as in any way personal favourites (although I do agree that they are adept, descriptively bold and provide a both adequate and even lovely complement to Muriel Feelings' verbal descriptions and explanations of the twenty-four Swahili words presented in Jambo Means Hello: Swahili Alphabet Book).

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## SamZ says

1975 Caldecott Honor: favorite illustration: "Ngoma is drum and dance." I love the joy on everyone's faces as they enjoy the music and the grace and movement of the dancing figures.

This alphabet book is a great introduction to the Swahili culture of Africa. Each letter (with the exception of q and x, which do not occur in the Swahili language) is paired with a word from the Swahili language.

Feelings chooses words that small children would likely be familiar with, making the book more accessible to children of all ages and reading levels. The beautiful drawings highlight the Swahili culture and give the reader a fairly good idea of what day to day life may be like in African Swahili countries. I especially enjoyed the page that mentions beauty being different for different peoples.

Overall, I enjoyed this book much more than the Caldecott Winner from 1975, Arrow to the Sun, especially after learning more about the validity of both books (this one being factual, the other taking a great deal of poetic license with the beliefs of the pueblo people) and feel that this book was much more deserving of the medal.

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### **Katie Fitzgerald says**

I think kids really enjoy learning how to say words and phrases in languages other than their own. This book does a nice job of introducing Swahili vocabulary and using these words and their accompanying illustrations as opportunities for teaching about East African culture. I was also surprised by the elaborate process that went into creating the illustrations. I'm still not sure why a children's book without any color or any real plot would be so appealing, but there is something eye-catching about it. Still, though, I wonder if kids pick this book up without an adult recommendation.

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### **Sadie says**

I love learning new languages, so when I saw the title "Jambo means hello", I was extremely interested! The cover illustration is a happy, young girl participating in a traditional African gathering. This is a great book that teaches young children Swahili, or Kiswahili, words using the Swahili alphabet (24 instead of 26 letters). The illustrations provide detailed examples of the Swahili word being taught. For example, the zeze (zay-zay) is a musical instrument that banjos and guitars are based off of. When you get to this word in the book, the illustration shows members of the African community playing with the zeze. For children who do not speak Kiswahili, the illustrations are crucial because they elaborate on what the word is.

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### **Mitchell says**

A Caldecott Honor Book. And a different kind of alphabet book and not just because it is for Swahili and not English. Your typical American alphabet book is for animals and very common words. Most of the words in this book are concepts or are treated as concepts. And the supporting text is not that as for little kids, it's more for older kids and it's aimed to express something about the culture behind those who speak Swahili. And the art is also far from typical for an alphabet book. It is also aimed at the culture more than the words and it is muted and beautiful.

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