

Bookfolio for **The Cow-Tail Switch and Other West African Stories**

Author: [Harold Courlander](#)

Illustrator: Madyee Lee Chastain

Publisher: Holt

ISBN: 0805002987

Recommended for: [Grades 4-6](#)

Classification: Fiction

Genre: [Legends and Folktales](#)

MultiCulture: African American

Story Summary: In this collection of West African tales, Harold Courlander and George Herzog include stories about people and animals, who are clever or stupid, good or bad. Some stories tell how objects and animals came to be the way they are. "The Cow-tail Switch," a parable found by George Herzog in Liberia, is the story of the ornamented cow-tail switch which each of the chief's sons demands because of the authority this object carries with it. In each of the stories, the reader learns about customs and values of the people of West Africa. Brief notes on each story are included along with a glossary and pronunciation guide.

Read-aloud Recommendation: "Anansi's Fishing Expedition," pages 47-57

The skills for each activity are identified by the following abbreviations:

R=Reading, W=Writing, S=Speaking, L=Listening, D=Drawing

The Cow-Tail Switch and Other West African Stories - Independent Activities	Skills
1. Illustrator's Choice (Making a picture book)	D , R
2. What Makes the Earth Quake (Creating a myth)	D , W
3. Indian Names Crossword (Making a crossword puzzle)	D , R , W
4. A Cow-tail Switch (Drawing a picture)	D , R
5. Cowrie Shells (Writing a report)	D , R , W
6. An Ad for Anansi (Creating an ad)	D , W
The Cow-Tail Switch and Other West African Stories - Group Activities	Skills
1. A Special Book Jacket (Creating a book jacket)	D , W
2. The Collectors' Sources (Locating original sources)	R , W
3. Readers Theatre (Presenting a Readers Theatre)	R , S
4. Americo-Liberians (Writing a report)	D , R , W
5. "Africa Is Many Things" (Making a map)	D , R , S
6. "Let's Talk About..." (Discussing the story)	L , S

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