

PERFECT  
FOR PRE-K  
TO 2ND GRADE

but fun for everyone!



Inspired by the childhood of African-born model Georgie Badiel, acclaimed author Susan Verde and award-winning author/illustrator Peter H. Reynolds have come together to tell this moving story. As a child in Burkina Faso, Georgie and the other girls in her village had to walk for miles each day to collect water. This vibrant, engaging picture book sheds light on this struggle that continues all over the world today, instilling hope for a future when all children will have access to clean drinking water. [Listen](#) to Tiphonie Yanique, associate professor of English and creative writing at Emory University, read *The Water Princess* in the Charles S. Ackerman Galleries of African Art. Tiphonie is seated beside a large, intricately decorated clay vessel. This vessel was made by a Makonde artist in Mozambique and was made to be carried on a woman's head while filled with water.

**This project is great for:**



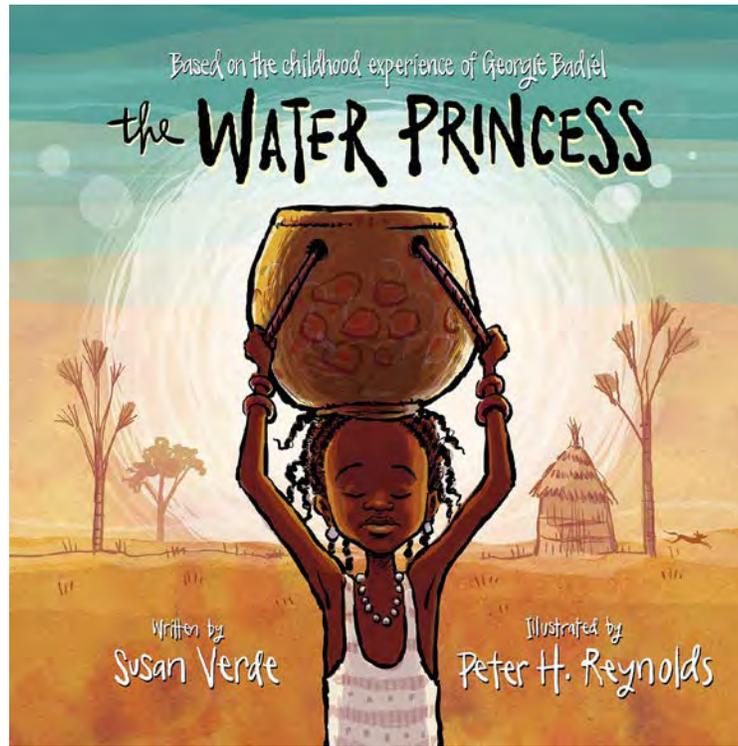
**Learning about access to fresh water**



**Developing empathy**



**Learning create and decorate objects from clay**



# The Water Princess

**Written by Susan Verde and Georgie Badiel**  
**Illustrated by Peter H. Reynolds**

G.P. Putnam's Sons Books for Young Readers, 2016 • ISBN 9780399172588

**With its wide sky and warm earth, Princess Gie Gie's kingdom is a beautiful land.** But clean drinking water is scarce in her small African village. And try as she might, Gie Gie cannot bring the water closer; she cannot make it run clearer. Every morning, she rises before the sun to make the long journey to the well. Instead of a crown, she wears a heavy pot on her head to collect the water. After the voyage home, after boiling the water to drink and clean with, Gie Gie thinks of the trip that tomorrow will bring. And she dreams. She dreams of a day when her village will have cool, crystal-clear water of its own.

**Vessel.**

Southern Africa, Mozambique. Makonde.  
20th century. Ceramic. Anonymous gift.  
2004.016.057 ↓



**The Makonde vessel in the Carlos Museum** was made using red clay and a combination of **pinching** and **coiling** techniques. The shiny surface was created by **burnishing**, or rubbing the clay with a smooth river stone when it was almost but not completely dry. After the vessel was burnished, alfalfa designs were **incised**, or scratched, into the surface with a sharp tool. Then the vessel was fired using animal dung, grasses, or branches as fuel, turning the clay black. Some of the red clay body is still visible. A white **slip**, a mixture of kaolin and water, was poured over the vessel right after it was fired and then wiped off, highlighting the designs.

**Learn more about this vessel [here](#).**



**Talk Together**

- What are some of the ways you use water every day?
- How do you get that water?
- Is it clean?  
Can you drink it?
- In the story, what do Princess Gie Gie and Maman have to do to get water?
- Look again at the water vessel in [this video](#) to notice its size. Can you imagine filling a big pot with water, putting it on top of your head, and then walking for miles in the hot sun?
- When you look at the Makonde water vessel, what colors do you see?
- What words would you use to describe the different textures on the surface of the vessel?
- How do you think the designs were made? What do the designs look like to you?

# Make it!



## CLAY WATER VESSELS

**To build confidence and a sense of ownership in their art, it's important that children have autonomy.** Lead by example by making your own water vessel and let them do as much on their own as they can. The instruction videos are guidelines. Children should make their water vessel the way they want it to be.

### What you need

- **A flat surface covered with fabric or heavy paper**
- **A small board or heavy piece of fabric,** such as canvas or heavy paper to use as a movable work surface, approximately 6 x 6 inches
- **A fork, pencil, ball-point pen, or barbecue skewer**
- **A wooden paddle or spoon**
- **An old plastic gift card or membership card**
- **Clay**  
You can use standard ceramic clay [like this](#), which can be fired.

Alternatively, you can use air-dry clay, such as [Crayola Air Dry Clay](#) or [Amaco Air Dry Clay](#).

If you use air dry clay or are unable to fire standard ceramic clay, you can coat your vessels with Elmer's White Glue diluted with water to add strength and water resistance. However, they will not be able to hold liquid.

- **Kaolin clay**  
[like this](#), for making slip
- **A small container and a little water**  
for making slip

### What to do

Watch these videos of Atlanta ceramic artist and museum educator **Ana Vizurraga** making pinch pots and coiled pots and make them along with her.

#### How to make a coil pot



#### How to make a pinch pot



# Learn new words



## Clay ↑

Naturally occurring material made from the decomposition of rocks combined with water to that is pliable when wet, making it a good for constructing objects.

## Ceramic ↓

Objects made of clay and permanently hardened by the firing process.



## Vessel ↑

A hollow container.

## Pinch pot

A simple vessel made from a ball of clay by pinching between the thumb and fingers. Pinch pots have been in cultures around the world for many thousands of years.

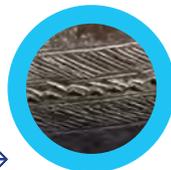


## Coiling →

A method of hand-building where the clay is rolled by hand into long coils or “snakes” and then stacked one on top of the other to build up a vessel or other form. When the vessel is the desired height, the coils are smoothed out.

## Burnish

Rubbing or polishing clay with a smooth stone or other object before it is fired, compacting the clay to create a shiny surface.



## Incise →

A method of decorating by design by cutting or scraping into the clay surface.

## Kaolin [KAY-uh-lin]

White clay found naturally in many parts of the world including right across the middle of Georgia! Sandersville, Georgia is known as the “Kaolin Capitol of the World.”



## Slip →

Clay mixed with water to make a liquid used for decorating and for joining clay parts together.

## Firing ↓

Heating clay to a high temperature in order to remove moisture and **sinter**, or weld together, the clay particles, turning clay into ceramic.



## Kiln ↑

A furnace or oven made especially for firing pottery.

# People and places



## Georgie Badiel ↑

*The Water Princess* is based on the childhood experiences of Georgie Badiel. She is **Burkinabé**, which means she's from Burkina Faso. She is an international fashion model. Georgie created an organization that builds wells and brings clean, fresh water to villages in Burkina Faso and other countries in Africa, just like she dreamed about when she was a little girl. To find out more about Georgie's work, check out the [Georgie Badiel Foundation](#).

## Burkina Faso

[burr-KEE-nuh FAH-so]

A country in West Africa. Over 60 languages are spoken in Burkina Faso, but the most common languages are Mossi and French. Did you notice any French words in *The Water Princess*?



## Mozambique

[moh-zum-BEEK]

A country in Southeast Africa. Mozambique has more than 1500 miles of coastline along the Indian Ocean.

## Makonde [muh-KUN-day]

An **ethnic group** (people who share the same language, history, and traditions) who live in the northern part of Mozambique, as well as in Tanzania and Kenya. The Makonde have a long history of art-making that continues today.

Experience all this and **so much more** at the **Carlos Museum!**



**Vessel.**

West Africa, Burkina Faso.  
Gurunsi. Nouna potter.  
20th century. Ceramic.  
Anonymous gift.  
2004.016.109



[Click here  
to learn more.](#)

**This vessel is from Burkina Faso**, where *The Water Princess* is set. Large water jars like this one might be placed prominently under a tree, or on the veranda of the home, where they are easily accessible for serving visitors a cup of cool water. As objects on public display, water jars are enhanced with incised lines, impressed textured surfaces, and smooth burnished surfaces. Older examples will often have an animal shape—snake, turtle, lizard, crocodile—molded onto the surface. Today, many African women prefer to cook with more durable metal containers. However, the preferred water jar is still made of clay because of its ability to keep liquids cool.

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This lesson plan was prepared by the Education Department of the Michael C. Carlos Museum. Description of the featured book is provided by the publisher. For more information on Artful Stories, contact Alyson Vuley at [avuley@emory.edu](mailto:avuley@emory.edu) or 404.727.0519.