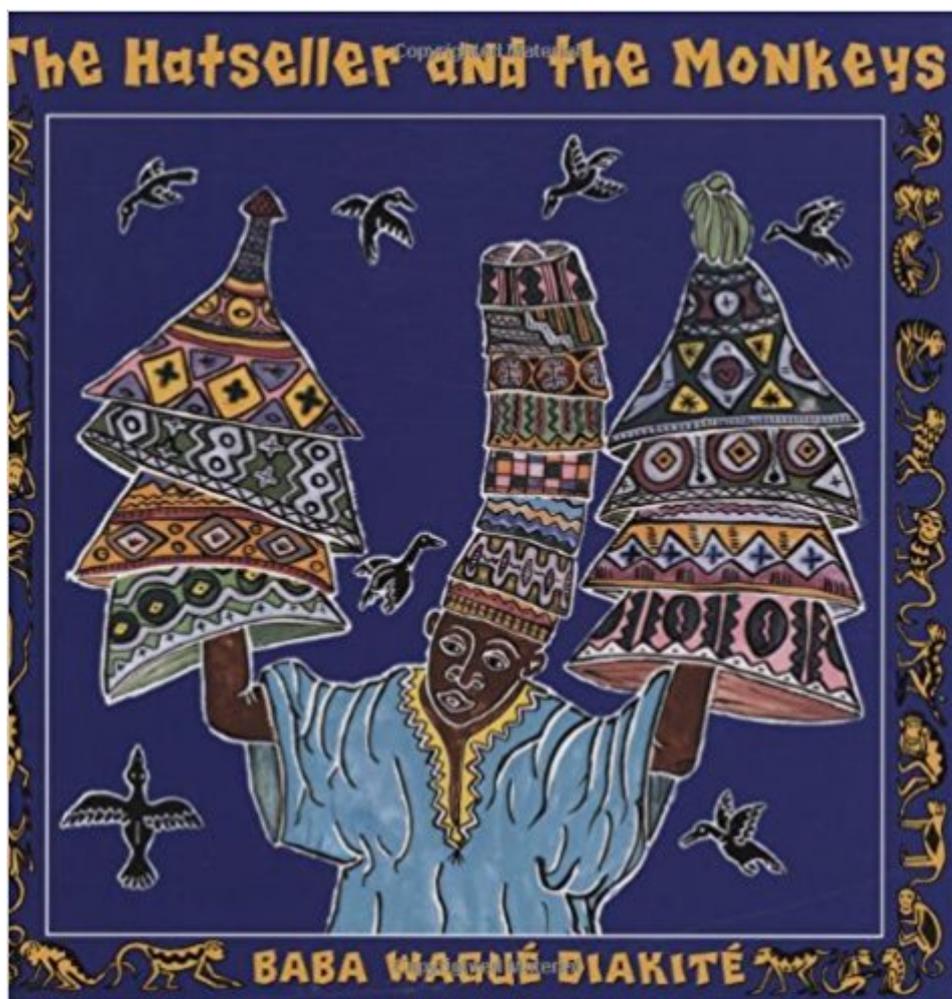


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# The Hatseller And The Monkeys



## Synopsis

Everyone familiar with the popular story, *Caps for Sale*, will immediately recognize this authentic African tale. Readers will love the mischievous monkeys that steal the peddler's caps. And they will laugh at the monkeys' funny antics as the peddler outsmarts them and gets his caps back.

## Book Information

Age Range: 4 - 8 years

Lexile Measure: AD650L (What's this?)

Hardcover: 32 pages

Publisher: Scholastic Press; 1st Edition edition (February 1, 1999)

Language: English

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Product Dimensions: 10.2 x 10.2 x 0.4 inches

Shipping Weight: 14.9 ounces

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars 5 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #617,456 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #26 in [Books > Children's Books > Fairy Tales, Folk Tales & Myths > African](#) #328 in [Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Cultural Studies > General](#) #606 in [Books > Children's Books > Fairy Tales, Folk Tales & Myths > Multicultural](#)

## Customer Reviews

Fans of Slobodkina's *Caps for Sale* will relish this fresh twist on a hat vendor's comical skirmish with some clever primates, set in Diakite's (The Hunterman and the Crocodile) native Mali. BaMusa is not only a hatseller, but descends from a long line of hatmakers. After a brief explanation of how he learned to make wide-brimmed dibiri hats and close-fitting fugulan caps, he heads to town to sell them. He stops to nap under a mango tree, where some monkeys relieve him of his hats. The author makes the most of the interplay between the mischievous culprits and BaMusa with phrases children will want to imitate right along with the characters ("Tchat, tchat, tchat!" yells BaMusa; "Hoop, hoop, hoop!" the monkeys reply). Diakite's version imparts a new moral: only after the man eats some of the monkey's mangoes can he think with a clear head?and reclaim his hats.

Ceramic-tile paintings on each spread depict the action in fluid, bold brushwork with man and creatures outlined in white against backgrounds of nearly transparent blue sky. Opposite each full-color tile image, a page with brief text set against a white background shows off a spot line

drawing. Diakite then frames each page with a ring of monkeys in silhouette tumbling over one another. The handsome design emphasizes the detailed artwork of the tree teeming with life: leaves, mangoes, lizards, dragonflies, bats and butterflies, as well as the scampering monkeys sporting BaMusa's brightly threaded hats. In this retelling, Diakite's use of language is as colorful and unusual as his artwork. Ages 4-7. Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Kindergarten-Grade 3?A West African version of the beloved folktale about a peddler whose hats are stolen by monkeys. The story has been fleshed out a bit with African words and background about the hatseller's life. Hurrying to a festival, BaMusa does not take time to eat breakfast. When he takes a nap beneath a tree, playful monkeys steal his wares. After being showered with mangoes, the man has a snack and figures out how to get his hats back. The moral is: "it is with a full stomach that one thinks best." Diakite illustrates the tale with lively and authentic ceramic tile paintings that are faintly reminiscent of, but not as elegant as, Leo and Diane Dillon's illustrations for *Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears* (Dial, 1975),. Each page is bordered with drawings of monkeys in a variety of poses. An author's note gives sources and lists other variants, including the perennial favorite, Esphyr Slobodkina's *Caps for Sale* (HarperCollins, 1947). Libraries owning other versions of this tale, such as Susanne Suba's *The Monkeys and the Pedlar* (Viking, 1970; o.p.), will also want to consider *The Hatseller*. It deserves a place on the African folktale shelves with Barbara Knutson's *Sungura and Leopard* (Little, Brown, 1993; o.p.) and Angela Shelf Medearis's *Too Much Talk* (Candlewick, 1995).?Pam Gosner, formerly at Maplewood Memorial Library, NJCopyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Love this! Came as promised, excellent condition. I use this in my pre- k class to compare and contrast with our curriculum book, *Caps For Sale*!

Acquired this book for Treehouse Books in Philadelphia for their kids. This organization is helping to grow and sustain a community of readers, writers and thinkers in NW Philadelphia. Kudos!

Strongly stylized art and a little background about the hatseller is what makes this book stand out. The author discusses how BaMusa (the hatseller) learned to make hats and caps from rice stalks when he was a boy. It also gives the name of some of the hats and how they differ in style because they are intended for different purposes. There are the wide brimmed dibiri hats and the embroidered fugulan caps. In addition, the author emphasizes how important breakfast is to clear

thinking and having a good day: "an empty satchel can not stand." Four Stars. Strongly stylized art. Good Read-aloud. Additional background information about the hatseller makes this book stand out.

My children were already familiar *Caps for Sale*, which is an older version of the same folktale. I thought the kids would think this was cute, but prefer *Caps for Sale*, as the text is more rhythmic and shorter. I was wrong. My kids REALLY like *The Hatseller and the Monkeys*! Diakite's charming, colorful illustrations, well-described setting (monkeys in Mali makes a heck of a lot more sense than monkeys in Eastern Europe), and sound moral set this book apart. My 2 y o clamored for it to be read again and again. The two books would be great paired in a folktale unit for grades K-2.

This is a West African variation of a wonderful old folk tale. An ambitious hatseller encounters a tree full of curious, clever and comical monkeys who not only steal his hats and make fun of him but also teach him the best way to start each day! The text is lyrical, with some African words and expressions, and the illustrations are colorful and lively. A fun read-aloud.

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