

# Refloe and the chickens

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

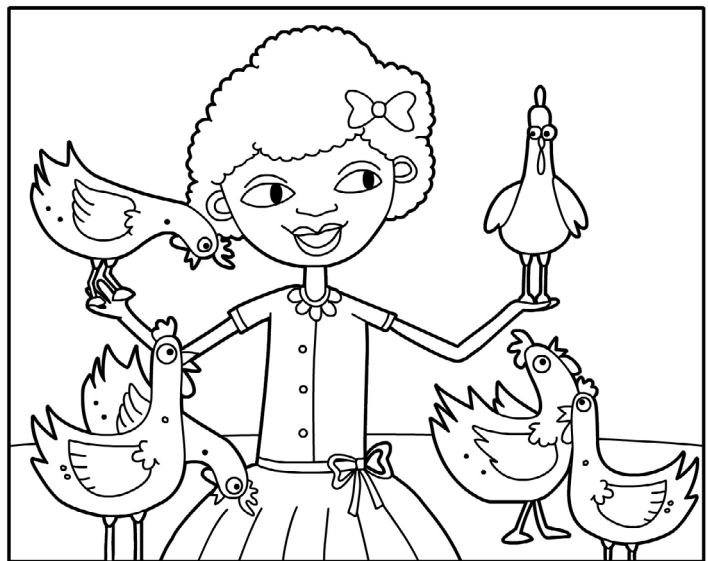
## Before you read

- Skim the text and the pictures to see if you can predict what this story will be about.
- Take turns to read the various roles in the first part of the story: the narrator and anyone else who speaks

It was the first wedding in the Tenane family, and Refloe had never been so excited in her life. "I'm going to be Palesa's bridesmaid, with a new dress and shoes!" she said to her chickens. Refloe told her chickens everything. Her father had given the chickens to her as a birthday present, and she loved them very much.

"Take those dirty scruffy chickens out of here Refloe!" shouted her mother, "I don't want them anywhere near this wedding tent."

Refloe shooed her chickens out of the tent.



"Run away you silly things," she said, "I don't want you to be eaten at Palesa's wedding! Mme says that this is going to be the best wedding ever seen in Malealea," Refloe told her chickens, "and she says that I can help all the older girls with the cooking."

The chickens paid no attention to her.

"Refloe!" called her mother from inside, "leave those chickens of yours and come and help me with these pots please!"

Refloe's mother was very proud of her house, and wanted it to be perfect for the wedding. She cleaned and washed and scrubbed and scoured and polished everything in sight. When she had finished, there was not a single speck of dust anywhere.

The chickens poked their heads inside the front door. "Out!" shouted Refloe's mother, "out you scruffy things with your dirty feet and beaks!"

Refloe followed her chickens out into the yard.

"Mme is right, you are a disgrace," she scolded them.

So Refloe thought for a while. Suddenly she smiled and said to herself, "I have an excellent idea."

She went and filled a bucket with water from the spring.

Refloe had a lot of trouble catching her chickens. They did not think that a bath was such a good idea.

Refloe put the first chicken into the bucket of water.

It clucked at the top of its voice and flapped its wings like crazy.

"Hold still you silly thing," Refloe shouted, "this won't take long!"

When Refloe wiped the chicken's nose and eyes it suddenly went limp and flopped over the side of the bucket.

"This is no time to sleep," said Refloe. She gave it a good shake to get all the water out.

"If you are not going to wake up now, I'll have to put you somewhere to dry nicely," she said. She laid the chicken out on the grass to dry.

The chicken lay completely still.

### **Read the rest of the story silently on your own.**

Refloe washed each and every one of her chickens. Each and every one of them went limp and floppy before she was finished with it. She put all those eight chickens in a row on the grass to dry. Not one of them moved a single feather.

"I'll leave them to sleep a little," Refloe thought to herself, and off she went to check on the moroho.

Mme Ngwe and Mme Pedi were Refloe's aunts. They did not like each other at all.



The aunts had been preparing for months for Palesa’s wedding, but they would not even think about riding together in the same taxi

Mme Ngwe spotted Refloe’s chickens laid out to dry.

“What a nice little snack for me to take home!” she said to herself.

She took off her chale and carefully wrapped all those chickens up in it. Not a single chicken moved.

“Perfect!” she smiled, “now I shall put them somewhere where Mme Pedi will not ever find them,” and she put the bundle around the corner among the pumpkin vines.

If you would like to read the rest of this story written by Marion Drew go to:

<http://www.africanstorybook.org/stories/refloe-and-washed-chickens>

**After reading:**

Talk about the questions with a friend and then write the answers individually in your class workbook.

1. Which cultural group do you think this story belongs to? The names could give you an idea.
2. What is the setting of the story?
3. Who are the characters in the story? What are they like?
4. Often a story has a ‘hero’ and a ‘villain’ in it. Who do you think has those roles in this story?
5. Do you think that villains and heroes are simply stereotypes in a story or do you think they are a vital part of a story? Give a reason for your answer.
6. Identify the main idea of this extract.
7. What do you think happened next? Write an ending for this story.
8. Often in a story you’ll see the following structure. Fill in how this story fits into this structure.

Beginning	Characters and setting are introduced.	
Middle	Events start to take place	
	A problem of some sort is introduced	
	Events start to lead to a climax	
	Climax or main event takes place	
End	Problem is sorted out	
	The story comes to an end	

9. List five words you don’t know well in this story and look up their meanings in your dictionary.
10. Did you enjoy this story? Why or why not?