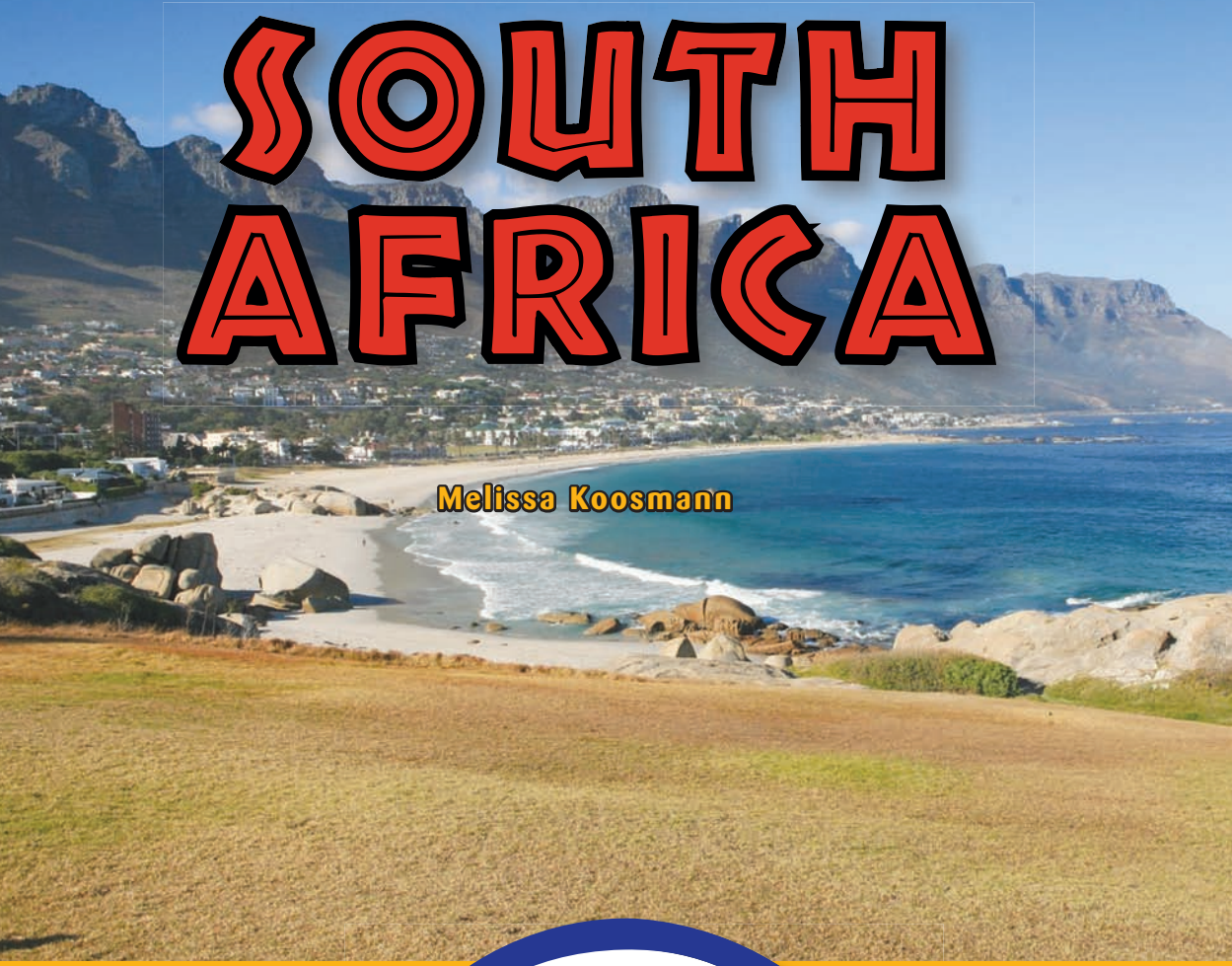


Meet Our New Student From

# SOUTH AFRICA

Melissa Koosmann



## Meet Our New Student From

- Australia • China • Colombia • Great Britain  
• Haiti • India • Israel • Japan • Korea • Malaysia •  
Mali • Mexico • New Zealand • Nicaragua • Nigeria  
• Quebec • **South Africa** • Tanzania • Zambia •  
Going to School Around the World



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**PUBLISHER'S NOTE:** The facts on which the story in this book is based have been thoroughly researched. Documentation of such research can be found on page 44. While every possible effort has been made to ensure accuracy, the publisher will not assume liability for damages caused by inaccuracies in the data, and makes no warranty on the accuracy of the information contained herein.

To reflect current usage, we have chosen to use the secular era designations BCE ("before the common era") and CE ("of the common era") instead of the traditional designations BC ("before Christ") and AD (anno Domini, "in the year of the Lord").

A note on the running heads: The animals on the top of each page live in South Africa. They are as follows: Chapter 1—Hydrax; Chapter 2—Elephants; Chapter 3—African Penguin; Chapter 4—Meerkats; Chapter 5—Rhinceros.

### Library of Congress

### Cataloging-in-Publication Data applied for.

Printing 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

PLB

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# Mr. Ochoa's Announcement

## Chapter

# 1



“Class, I have an announcement,” said Mr. Ochoa.

My friend Lilly’s hand shot into the air. “Are we having a party?” she asked. Some of the kids laughed. Lilly suggests a party about once a week.

But Mr. Ochoa looked thoughtful. “You know, that’s a good idea.”

I couldn’t believe it. “It is?” I said.

“Yes, Kim,” said Mr. Ochoa. “A party will help us welcome our new student. She’s moving here from South Africa, and I want to make her feel at home.”

South Africa! Everyone started talking at once. Our school in Tucson, Arizona, had lots of kids from different countries, but nobody from anywhere in Africa. What would the new girl be like?

Miguel raised his hand. “What’s the new girl’s name?”

“Her name is Zaziwe,” said Mr. Ochoa. He pronounced it zah-ZEE-weh. “She comes from Cape



## Where in the World



## FACTS ABOUT REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

### South Africa Total Area:

472,008 square miles  
(1,219,921 square kilometers)

### Population:

49,052,489 (July 2009 estimate)

### Capital Cities:

Pretoria (administrative), Cape Town (legislative), Bloemfontein (judicial)

### Monetary Unit:

Rand

### Religions:

Christianity (many denominations), African traditional religions, and Islam

**Official Languages:** Zulu, Xhosa, Afrikaans, English, Sesotho sa Laboa, Setswana, Sesotho, Xisonga, Ndebele, Swati, Tshivenda

**Chief Exports:** Gold, diamonds, platinum, other minerals, machinery and equipment

South Africa completely surrounds the country of Lesotho.



*fun*  
FACTS

The world's largest diamond, the Cullinan, was found in South Africa in 1905. Before it was cut, it weighed over 3,000 carats. The largest gems cut from it are the Great Star of Africa, weighing 530.20 carats, and the Lesser Star of Africa, which weighs 317.40 carats. The other 104 diamonds form part of the British crown jewels.

*fun*  
FACTS

Town, one of South Africa's biggest cities." He projected a world map onto the wall. "The country of South Africa is the farthest south on the continent of Africa. The Atlantic and Indian Oceans border it on the west, south, and east. Cape Town is almost at the bottom tip."

I had so many questions, I almost didn't know where to start. "Does Zaziwe speak English?"

"Good question," said Mr. Ochoa. "She speaks English, but her first language is **Xhosa**." I didn't


understand that last word because he made a strange sound in his mouth.

"Can you say that again?" I asked.

Mr. Ochoa explained. "Xhosa is hard for us to say because the X stands for a click. The Xhosa language uses clicks for some of its sounds. To make this click, press the side of your tongue against your back teeth and pull it away fast."

We all tried this, and for a minute the room was filled with clicks. "It's like the sound my dad makes





*Animals like giraffes were once wild in South Africa. Now they live mainly in national parks and game reserves. Most South Africans have never seen a giraffe—or a lion or an elephant—in the wild.*





when he's trying to be cool!" I said. I held up two thumbs, winked, and clicked at Lilly.

When we all knew how to make the click, we tried saying *Xhosa* together. It sounded like this: *click-OH-suh*. It was fun!

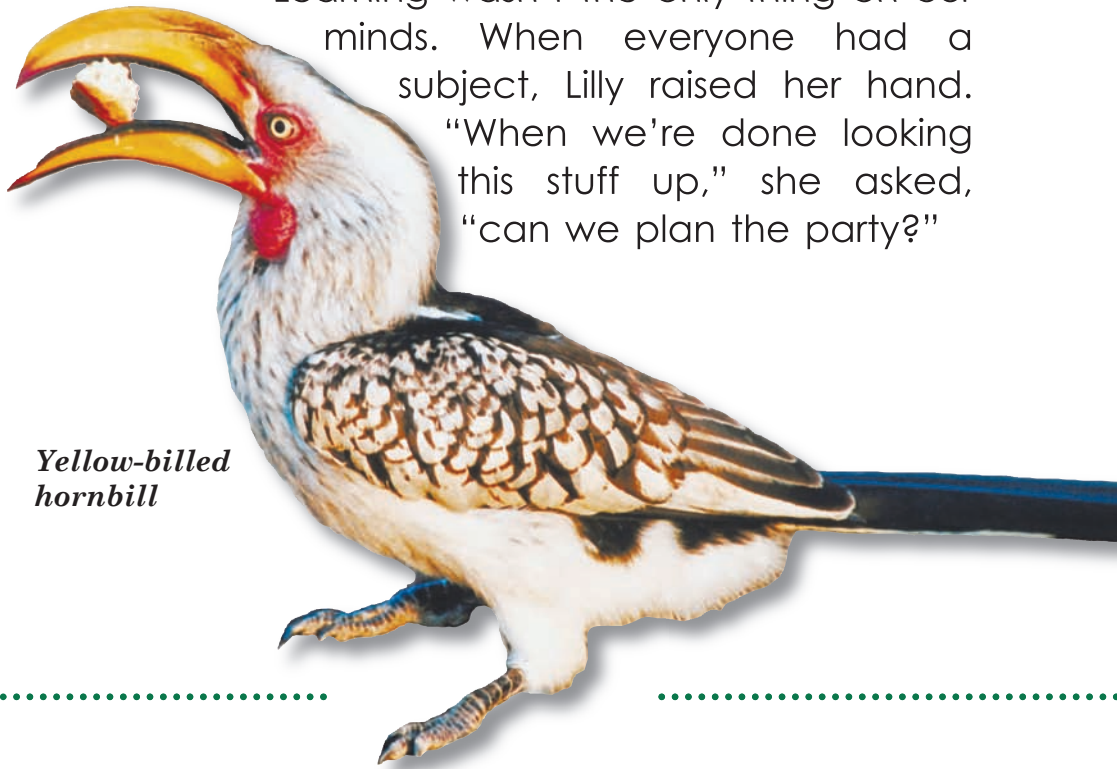
"Can we learn some more *Xhosa* words and say them to the new girl?" I asked.

"That's a great idea," said Mr. Ochoa. "I want you all to use your library time today to learn about South Africa. Kim, you can look up our new student's language."

Other kids raised their hands to ask for subjects, too. John picked South African animals, and Maria took sports. I think it was the first time everybody in our class wanted to go to the library.

Learning wasn't the only thing on our minds. When everyone had a subject, Lilly raised her hand.

"When we're done looking this stuff up," she asked, "can we plan the party?"



*Yellow-billed  
hornbill*

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