



## A KIDS YOGA STORIES AFRICAN TRIP PLAN

Topic: **AFRICAN ANIMALS**

Age Group: 3 to 8 years old

Time: 15 minutes to 45 minutes. Be flexible to suit the needs of the children.

Intention: To learn through movement about different animals that live in Africa.

Preparation: Gather information about different animals that you might see on a Safari trip in Africa. Use resources such as YouTube clips, newspaper reports, magazine pictures, Internet sites, guest speakers, brochures, and fiction and non-fiction books

Opening: Explain the intention of the day's experience and ask the children about their prior knowledge of Africa. Has anyone been to Africa? Do they know anyone who has been to Africa? Have they read books about Africa? Have they seen African animals in zoos? What animals do they think live there? Which animals don't live there?

Talk about the sights, sounds, and smells of Africa. Use visuals.

Now pretend to go on a trip to Africa. Pretend to wake up, pack your backpack with your gear, and get ready for your adventure. Lead a Sun Salute or similar warm-up sequence to get ready for the day.

Find Tanzania, Africa, on a map to plot your trip. Pretend to take a bus, car, or plane to get there.

Journey: You could brainstorm your own list of African animals and then act them out or follow the suggested *Kids Yoga Stories* sequence below. This sequence was inspired by our trip to San Francisco Zoo, my friend's trip to Tanzania, and our visit to the African Hall at the California Academy of Sciences.

The keywords are listed in a specific sequence to create a safe kids yoga experience that encourages flow from one pose to the next. Feel free to shorten or lengthen the sequence to suit your age group by changing the number of poses. Don't forget to practice on both sides/legs.



Focus on having fun with movement, not on practicing perfectly aligned poses. Engage the children. Follow their passions and interests. Create authentic, meaningful experiences. Cater to their energy levels and different learning styles. Be creative and enjoy yourselves, but please be safe. Wear comfortable clothing and practice barefoot. Encourage the children to share their yoga experiences with their family and friends.

Africa-inspired kids yoga sequence:

1. **Airplane – Warrior 3** (Standing on one leg, stretch the other leg out backward, with your arms out to the sides, flying like an airplane to Africa.)
2. **Kilimanjaro – Mountain Pose** (Stand tall with arms out to sides.)
3. **Giraffe – Palms Together Overhead** (Stand tall and reach both hands straight up, pretending to munch on high leaves.)
4. **Baobab Tree – Tree Pose** (Stand on one leg. Bend the other leg to rest your foot on the opposite shin.)
5. **Ostrich or Stork – Dancing Pose** (Stand on one leg and reach back to grab foot in hand out back behind you.)
6. **Elephant – Standing Forward Bend** (Bend at the waist. Link your arms and let them sway back and forth like an elephant's trunk.)
7. **Frog – Squat Pose** (Squat and hop like a frog.)
8. **Crocodile or Lizard – Plank Pose** (Stretch your back while hovering over your hands and toes in a plank position.)
9. **Cobra – Cobra Pose** (While lying on your tummy, with your legs stretched behind, lift up onto your forearms.)
10. **Hippo – Child's Pose** (Rest back on your heels, gently bring your forehead to rest in front of your knees, and tuck your arms alongside your body.)
11. **Zebra and Leopard – Cat and Cow Pose** (Come to your hands and knees, then look up and open your chest, and then look down and arch your back.)
12. **Lion – Hero Pose with Lion's Breath** (Sitting back on your heels, exhale with your tongue out.)
13. **Camel – Camel Pose** (Kneel and then arch your back, reaching your hands back to your heels.)
14. **Rhino – Child's Pose** (Rest back on your knees, tucking your arms and hands alongside your body.)

## Closing:

Rest on your backs, pretending to be a rushing river (like the Nile River) or a watering hole. Ask the children to close their eyes and think about their favorite African animal. Feel free to add your own special ritual to end the session together, such as lighting a candle, saying 'Namaste,' sitting in a circle, or have everyone take turns saying their favorite African animal.



## Further Activities:

- Take pictures of the children practicing their yoga poses and make a class book of "Our African Journey."
- Plan an imaginary trip to Africa by using maps, guidebooks, travel websites, travel brochures, and magazines.
- Invite a guest speaker who has been to Africa to share their photos and stories.
- Find an African map and research what is special about each of the countries.
- Choose an African animal and write a mini-book or research report.
- Make an African collage.
- Research and draw the flags of each African country.
- Discuss similarities and differences between the African lifestyle and your own.
- Look on YouTube for African videos or find videos at the library.
- Paint pictures of African animals.
- Make a diorama of a Safari scene.
- Make an African passport and stamp each country/region as you study it.
- Learn a few basic words from some of the African languages (ex. Zulu).
- Have an African party. Bring African food and dress in traditional clothing



## About Kids Yoga Stories

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Kids yoga-inspired books by Giselle Shardlow:

*Sophia’s Jungle Adventure*

*Sophia’s Jungle Adventure Coloring Book*

*Anna and her Rainbow-Colored Yoga Mats*

*Luke’s Beach Day*

*The ABC’s of Australian Animals: A Kids Yoga Book*

*Luke’s A to Z of Australian Animals: A Kids Yoga Alphabet Coloring Book*

*Good Night, Animal World*

Many of the books above are available in Spanish and eBook format. The books are found at [www.amazon.com/author/giselleshardlow](http://www.amazon.com/author/giselleshardlow).

Thank you for your support in spreading our message of integrating learning, movement, and fun.

Giselle

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Kids Yoga Stories

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