



The Rice Bag Hammock

Shaeza Haniff, Swafeha Khan (Illustrator)

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The Rice Bag Hammock is a book that takes its readers on the journey of an ordinary burlap bag. It makes its way from holding freshly harvested rice to becoming the center of playground, family life, community and everyday activities.

Told in a lyrical voice and filled with vibrant detailed illustrations of scenic Guyana countryside, The Rice Bag Hammock is a picture book for all ages.

The Rice Bag Hammock Details

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Author : Shaeza Haniff , Swafeha Khan (Illustrator)

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From Reader Review The Rice Bag Hammock for online ebook

Sammy Sutton says

This is a darling book for the very young reader. The repetition is interesting and appropriate. The illustration is wonderful with exquisite detail, and was a delightful read on my kindle. I would recommend it for any tiny reader.

C.L. says

I am a person who believes that children's books are never given their proper due, especially those for younger children. Writing for children is hard because it is necessary to shrink the vocabulary that can be used, and the visuals of the pictures are very important to keep a child engaged. To write a compelling story to keep young children interested is not easy, but *The Rice Bag Hammock* by Shaeza Haniff does just that. Telling the simple story of the differing uses a family finds for a rice bag hammock created by Aja, they range from the practical to the magical to the romantic. The sweet simplicity of the story is matched only by the beautiful delicacy of the artwork which would tell a wonderful story all on its own. The progression of the story back to where it started is straightforward and easy to understand, critical for young children. Definitely for younger children, but I would definitely recommend this story to all parents. Because good children literature is not only hard to write, it's even harder to find.

Natasha Larry says

I read this book to my three year old and she just adored it, as did I. Her favorite part was the repetitive nature of the text and the simplicity in the illustrations. After I read it the fourth time she read it right along with me.

My favorite part, as a history nerd, was reading about the farmers in Guyana. I've not run into a children's book quite like this one, so that's always a good treat.

Well done and recommended for anyone with little ones.

Karen B. says

This is a wonderful picture book. I was fortunate to be able to read an electronic copy online and the pictures as well as the words came up clearly.

Personally I loved the memories it evoked for me, of family and togetherness and of just plain having fun as a child. This one hammock ties the children together to their Grandfather, to their pats (cute little cats) and to their friends. As the author has stated in her comments this is a book about community. I love the book for its simplicity and it shows to children. They don't need to have "electronic" toys to be happy; more important is the love of family and community. In the end the one child's comment to the Aja implies a sense of knowing that Aja loves them that much, that he can be counted on to make another hammock. It says as much about the Aja (grandfather) as it does about the hammock itself or the children. I guess maybe that is what makes it

work for me. The hammock becomes the symbol of the loving presence of the Aja in the children's lives. He always has time for his grandchildren!

The illustrations are incredible, with bold, strong colors. To me the making of this book, illustrates one of its major themes. FAMILY. The author needed an illustrator, her sister was one, so together they worked on this with loving memories of their own Aja. I love that cooperative effort.

I can't wait for this book to come out in a hardback version so that I can give it to my husband who reads children's books aloud.

The book created for me a sense of peace, simplicity and joy. It made me sort of wish I had a hammock to curl up with my book (sort of because we have been having a heat wave right now.) But maybe you will want to climb into the rice hammock yourself with a good book, or a cousin, or a friend, or a pet, or a....

Mary Ting says

This wonderful story tells how a simple burlap bag is transformed into a hammock, handmade by a man named Aja. Each page shows the usage of the hammock and every page refers back to the man who made it. Even though there was only one sentence per page, the author's descriptive words on how the hammock was used was perfect. The story is in a pattern format and the ending broke away from the pattern, which I enjoyed reading the unexpected. It ended by going back to the beginning. Being a mother and a kindergarten teacher, I would recommend this book to all the parents and teachers. This book is not only an attention grabber, but educational as well. A teacher can use this book and create a thematic unit. I recommend this book to all readers!!!

Amira Aly says

It is very refreshing in this materialistic world of ours to find such a beautiful illustrated, non pretentious book, that touches the hearts of children.

The illustrations are vivid, yet sweet. The characters are almost alive! And unlike many books in the ethnic genre for children, the characters look modern enough to be your next door neighbors.

The writing is beautiful, fluid and catchy enough to keep a child's attention and interest for the length of the story. It makes a great read-along book because of the repeating phrases.

The message gets across nicely, without sounding preachy at all. The ending is unexpected and that makes the book all the more entertaining .

I give the book 5/5 and recommend it to anyone wanting to reinforce family values and multiculturalism in their children

Haresh Daswani says

If you want a story to tell to children, with beautiful, nostalgic pictures. This book has to be in the

bookshelf.

It depicts a friendly, serene rural life that a child can have pleasant dreams of. It gives a sort of calming comfort to the child, and is a friendly read.

There are times when I worry about what books have been accepted to the realm of children's books, and it is comforting to know that there are still books like these that we can share as a gift to a friend's child, our own children (well, except me), and perhaps something to donate to libraries.

It was very enjoyable, and even more so for people who want to read a good night story for their children

McKinzie Bark says

This is the story of a rice bag made by Aaja. This burlap bag goes through life much like we do as people. The rice bag is a meeting place, a rocking place, a broom making place, a place for you when you're sick, a friendly place, a calm place, an imaginative place, an alone time place, a planning place, a breezy place, a cooling down place, a resting place, a preparation place, an observation place, a high swinging place, until one day, the rice bag breaks. People call out to Aaja, "time to make another rice bag hammock!" What a great book about how this bag becomes a big part of everyday life and activities. It's a place that becomes "your" place and is an important symbol for the family in this book.

Becca Chopra says

Reading this delightful picture book, set in the serene Guyanese countryside, my young Hawaiian friend and I felt we were being taken back to old Hawaii - where a simple burlap bag that held the daily staple, rice, would be made into clothing, shopping bags, and perhaps even hammocks.

The story is comforting and uplifting, showing that even such a simple gift, like the hammock Aja made, leads to multiple uses and much joy for her extended family, even the cats. And I'm sure once the hammock is worn out, Aja will find more uses for the burlap - I'm waiting for the sequel!

Sustainability and recycling are very important to me, and messages I try to include in my weekly journalism column. I hope that I can someday do it as eloquently as Shaeza does in this show-and-tell treasure. Her talent as a writer and her sister, Swafeha's as an illustrator, should be shared with young and old.

Thanks Shaeza,

Becca Chopra, author of The Chakra Diaries

Alima Khan says

A wonderful multicultural and amazing skillfully illustrated children's book that travels back to the good times with family, friends and childhood. A refreshing book that is hard to come by. I recommend this book for every its diversity and simple language in the early childhood classroom. It extends the young child's imagination.

A.J. says

This book has very colorful and exquisite illustrations. This is another book that shows how something as simple as a burlap bag can bring so much happiness and meaning to one's life. You could use this to open up a discussion about recycling as well. You could talk about investigating multiple uses in objects.

Tori says

The illustrations are vivid, yet sweet. The characters are almost alive! And unlike many books in the ethnic genre for children, the characters look modern enough to be your next door neighbors.

E.M. Walton says

A beautifully illustrated story! The repetition of form makes this wonderful for young, developing readers. The pictures are simple yet sweet. It brings you back to a simpler, calmer world and reminds you of what is important in our lives.

Wayne Kernochan says

My wife got a new Kindle Fire yesterday, and asked me about this book. I've read books on the computer before, but not a picture book. The Kindle does the artist a great service. It's beautiful. The prose was like a song, I wanted to slow down to appreciate the art, but it had a rhythm, so I had to go through a second time. It was well worth it. I intend to read it again when I'm allowed. (probably when the wife falls asleep:)

I look forward to the next book.

Diane Majeske says

It's not easy to keep the attention of children these days. They have their TV, they have their Wii, they have so much to distract them and keep them busy.

But they have very little to calm them. Maybe that's why I like "The Rice Bag Hammock" so much. This simple story tells of a burlap bag sewn into a comfy hammock by the talented Aja and how it serves many uses in the community. The beautiful illustrations and the lyrical words tell the story so well - and so soothingly - the story is almost mesmerizing.

I read this story to my two children to see what they thought, and for once they were absolutely quiet while I read. No wiggling, no poking each other, no getting up for snacks or wrestling for more space on the couch. They just looked. And listened. And at the funny little ending, they laughed. Then they wanted me to read it again.

I can't offer any bigger compliment than that.

Rahma Krambo says

Picture books portray an illusion of simplicity and are usually underrated in the book world. The Rice Bag Hammock is simple, but as a writer I know how much goes on behind the scenes to make simple look effortless which this book achieves.

Like the threads of the rice bags woven into a hammock, this story is woven from memories of the author's warm home life. Its lyrical, repeated text is reminiscent of 'this is the house that Jack built' with a tropical flavor. Its vivid, yet soft pastel illustrations are the kind to draw your young ones to pick up the book on their own.

The Rice Bag Hammock feels like one we would have had in our picture book collection when my kids were little. It's the perfect bedtime story—short, with a calming affirmation of the rhythm of life.

One of the quotes this Goodreads author has on her profile is from Gandhi, "In a gentle way you can shake the world." Her book reflects that gentleness while transporting you to her tropical homeland. Few of us will have a chance to visit this wonderful place...except in Shaeza's book.

Rahma Krambo,
Author | Guardian Cats and the Lost Books of Alexandria

Kira says

This is definitely a children's book. Very short but with great drawings. I still remember the rice bag hammock my grandmother made and sitting in it every afternoon with my cousins.
