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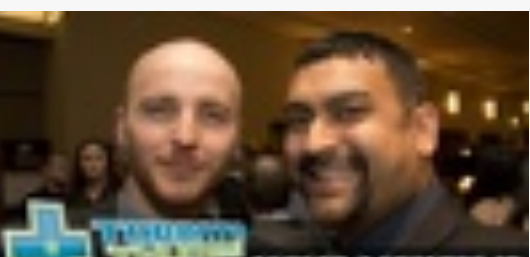
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REVIEWS

Kiwaka Story

By Jorge Figueiredo - July 17th, 2014



Smallest Thumbs and I are suckers for a good story. *Kiwaka Story*, an eBook from international mobile app company LANDKA, tells a tale that can be enjoyed by the whole family. This app, which is designed for iPod, iPhone and iPad, is entertaining and educational.

According to an old legend, fireflies carry the light from the stars. In the depths of the African jungle, in a place called Kiwaka (which stands at the equator), four strange creatures embark on an interesting adventure: discovering the mysteries of the night sky and unveiling the different constellations. Tuka (the rainbow bird), Shaka (the sneaky serpent), Kudi (the pink elephant) and Kwilu (the blue crocodile) begin this interesting journey by talking to a firefly that they find in the jungle, who helps them along their path.

Each page contains an interactive element, allowing the users to "play" with the scenes (usually through animation and/or sound). These interactive elements on the pages do not really change the story in any way, as they tend to be simple noises and visual gimmicks. However, there are some pages that offer some enhancements to the telling of the tale, so it is important to make sure that you interact with each page. The final set of pages in the eBook are the cornerstone of the educational portion of the app, showing the configuration of some of the more well-known constellations; the background story of each of these constellations is also revealed, giving the readers a lot of interesting information in an entertaining fashion.



These four animals get into all kinds of mischief.

The story is narrated by Diogo Morgado (English/Portuguese editions) and the music is by David Leon, an Emmy-nominated composer. These two auditory elements fit together well, and are further complemented by the sound effects and the visuals, which are simple but beautiful. The graphical design for the game is very much like a story book, so it is perfect to "read" with your children.

Smallest Thumbs and I took this app along with us on our iPad and checked it out during a recent trip. Smallest Thumbs found it enjoyable (she liked Diogo's accent) for the most part. She shot me some dirty looks at the beginning as the story was unfolding because she thought that it might be too simple a tale for her. However, as the story went on, her curiosity was piqued, and she was curious to know if we could see any of the constellations in the book. Sadly, the sky was cloudy the night we checked out the story.



The constellations that are present in the game are explained very well.

Kiwaka Story is priced at \$2.99 in the App Store, which might be considered steep. I, however, think that it's a pretty fair price, and that most people would pay more than that for a book that is both entertaining and educational at the same time. Smallest Thumb enjoyed it, too. One thing that is interesting to note is that Kiwaka Story is something of a companion app to the Kiwaka game, which we will be reviewing shortly.

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