

Example text: Dramatic plays

The First Coconut: A play for shared reading from Papua New Guinea

CAST:

Storytellers (1 – 4)

ToKanao (a clever fisherman)

Talia (a villager)

Villagers (any number)

Act 1

STORYTELLER 1: In days long ago, ToKanao, a clever fisherman lived in a village by the sea. No one saw him going out, but every day he caught dozens of fish which he shared with the others.

STORYTELLER 3: One morning, ToKanao went fishing. Talia decided to follow him.

TALIA: Where is ToKanao's spear? How can he catch fish without using one?

STORYTELLER 4: Silently Talia followed ToKanao. Talia then hid among the trees to watch.

TALIA: What will ToKanao do now? He's putting his hands to his neck and ... (shocked) Oh!

STORYTELLER 1: ToKanao lifted his head off his shoulders and put it on the sand.

TALIA: Ai-eee! This is strong magic!

STORYTELLER 2: ToKanao waded out into the waves until he disappeared. Talia waited impatiently for him to return.

TALIA: How long will he be? What will happen next?

STORYTELLER 3: At last ToKanao appeared and waded back to shore. He bent over and Talia was amazed at what he saw.

TALIA: A great stream of fish is pouring out of his neck!

STORYTELLER 4: When ToKanao's body was empty of fish, he returned to the

sea again. While he was gone, Talia ran down the beach, grabbed the head and hurled it away.

TALIA: ToKanao's head! Away with it!

STORYTELLER 1: Soon ToKanao resurfaced and again emptied his body of fish. But when he reached out to find his head, it wasn't there.

TALIA: (sniggering) What will he do now?

ALL STORYTELLERS: ToKanao returned to the sea and disappeared – (whisper) forever.

STORYTELLER 3: Some years later, Talia and some villagers were walking along the beach when he came to the place where ToKanao's head had been caught in the undergrowth.

VILLAGER 1: It's a new tree. It's tall and slender, and it leans to one side.

VILLAGER 2: The leaves look like a headdress of feathers and it has large round fruit.

STORYTELLER 1: Talia picked up one of these fruits that had fallen to the ground. After he removed the fibres covering it, he saw that one side had 3 marks that looked like the eyes, nose and mouth of a man.

TALIA: Ai-eee! ToKanao's skull planted itself in the ground, and sprouted a strange tree with many heads.

STORYTELLER 2: The villagers tasted the sweet juice and white flesh of the fruit.

ALL VILLAGERS: Let's name this new fruit 'coconut' in memory of ToKanao.

ALL STORYTELLERS: Since then, the coconut palm has provided many things for the people.