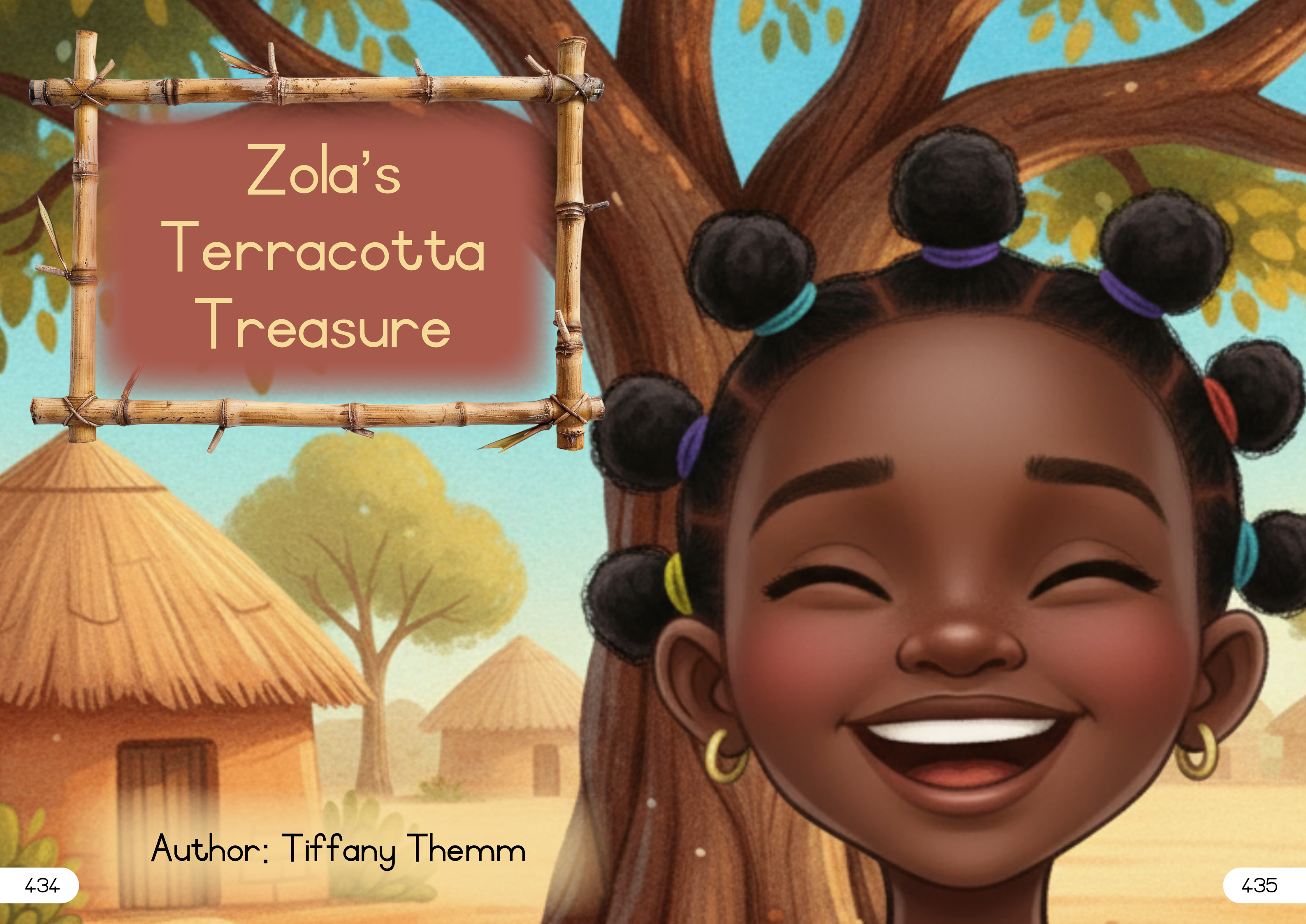




Zola's Terracotta Treasure

Author: Tiffany Themm



In a small village, dusty and bright, lived a young girl named Zola, full of light.

Zola loved the earth, not just the soft dust that tickled her toes, but the rich, red soil where the big Mopane tree stood.

Zola had a secret wish deep down inside her heart



Her wish was to mould
the rich, red earth into
something beautiful,
something that would
make Gogo beam with the
happiest smile.

“What can I make for
Gogo?” Zola wondered,
as she held the rich, red
clay in her hands, her
greatest treasure.

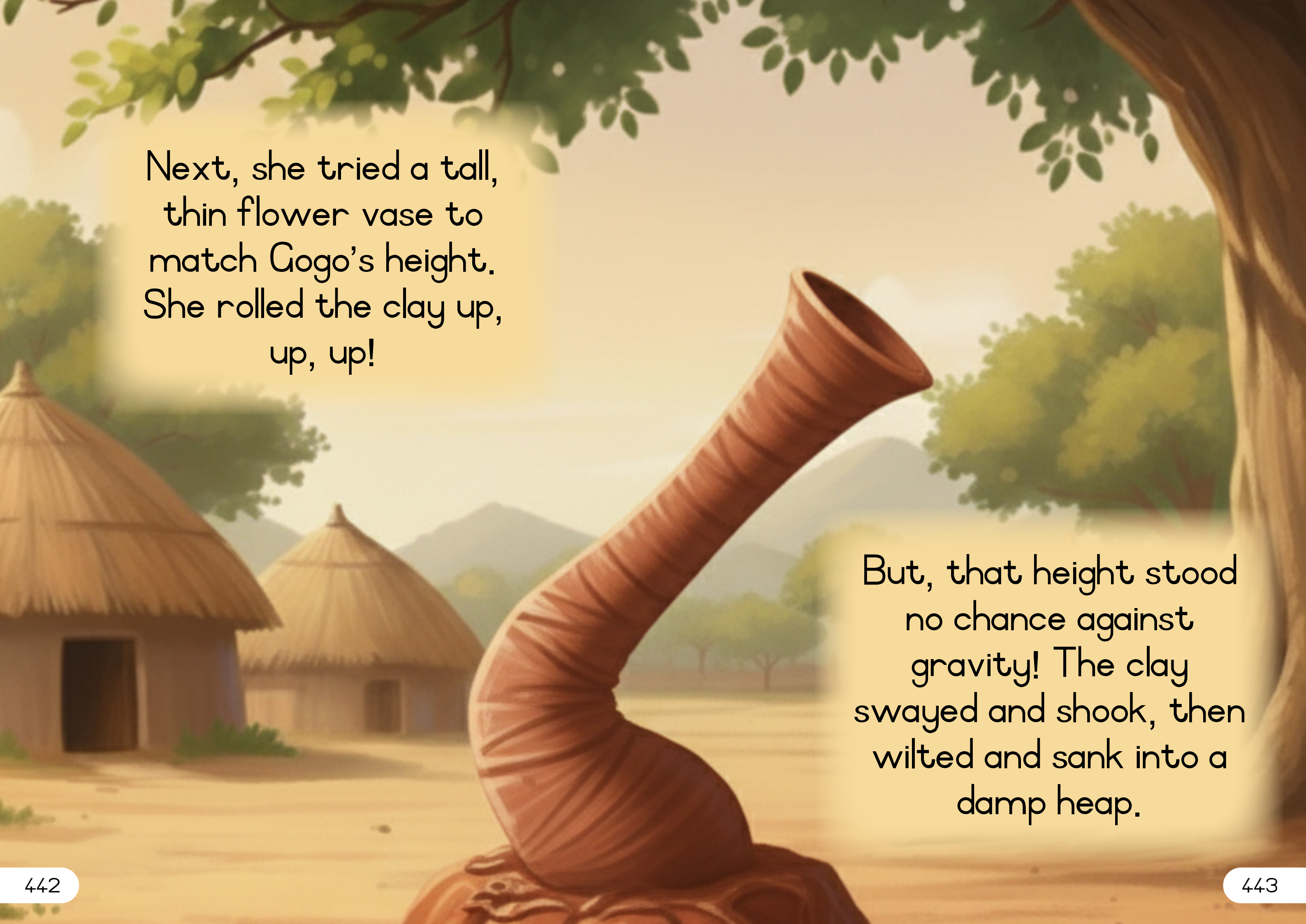
She was certain that
no matter what she
decided to make, that it
deserved a wonderful,
fancy design.



Zola tried to sculpt
the clay into a tiny,
perfect bird...
But the beak bent
and the tail fell off!

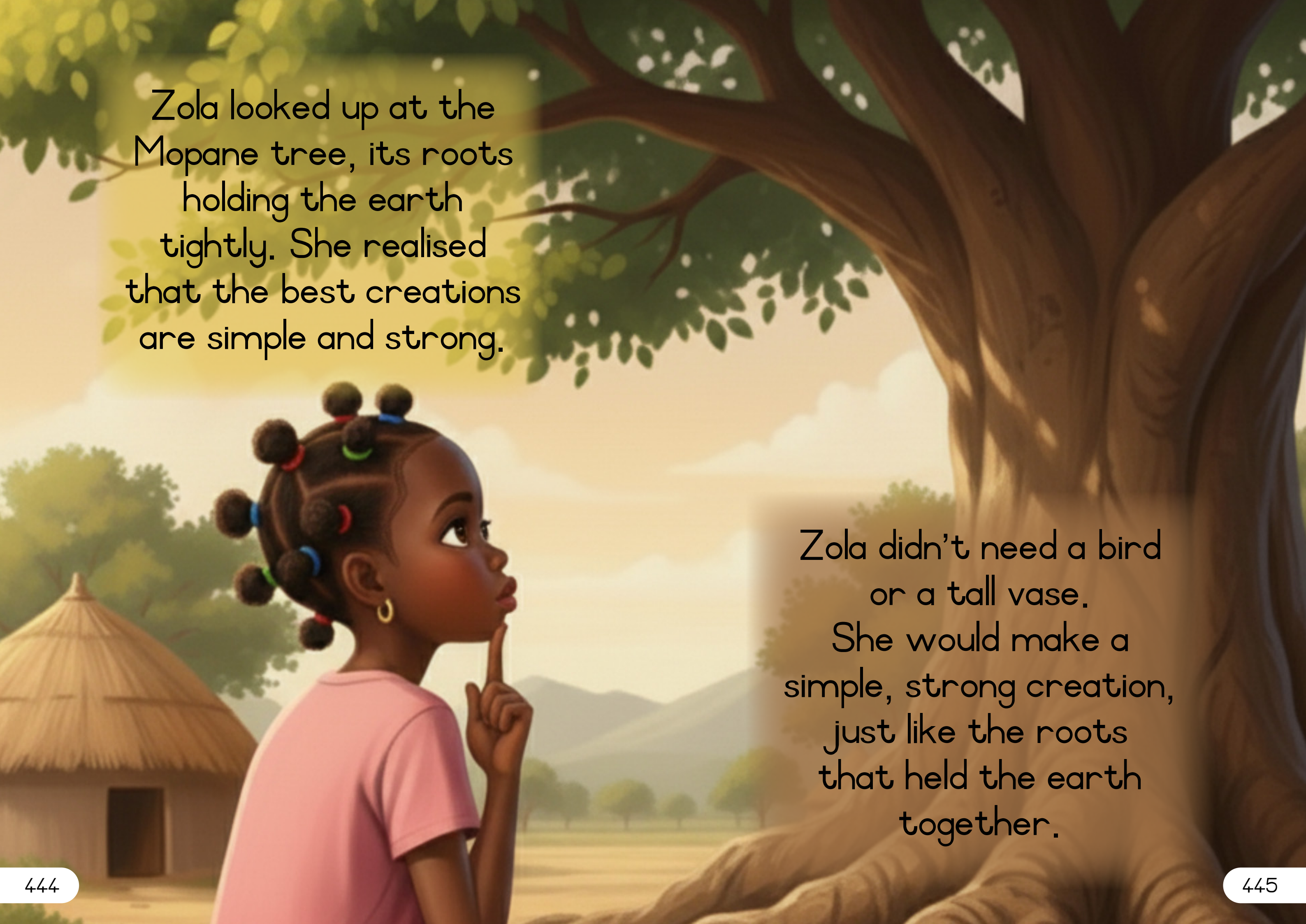
Oh no! It collapsed
into a soft, sad heap.
Zola sighed.



A tall, thin, reddish-brown clay vase is the central focus, leaning precariously against a large tree on the right. The vase has a flared top and a bulbous base. In the background, there are traditional thatched-roof huts, lush green trees, and distant mountains under a soft, hazy sky. The scene is set in a village with a dirt path.

Next, she tried a tall,
thin flower vase to
match Gogo's height.
She rolled the clay up,
up, up!

But, that height stood
no chance against
gravity! The clay
swayed and shook, then
wilted and sank into a
damp heap.

A young girl with dark skin and her hair styled in many small buns with colorful ties (red, blue, green) is looking up at a massive, ancient tree with thick, gnarled roots. She is wearing a pink t-shirt and a small gold hoop earring. Her hand is near her chin in a thoughtful pose. The background shows a village with a thatched-roof hut and rolling hills under a warm, hazy sky.

Zola looked up at the
Mopane tree, its roots
holding the earth
tightly. She realised
that the best creations
are simple and strong.

Zola didn't need a bird
or a tall vase.

She would make a
simple, strong creation,
just like the roots
that held the earth
together.

With fresh patience,
Zola began shaping
the clay. She used her
thumb to press a wide,
steady dent right in the
middle of it.

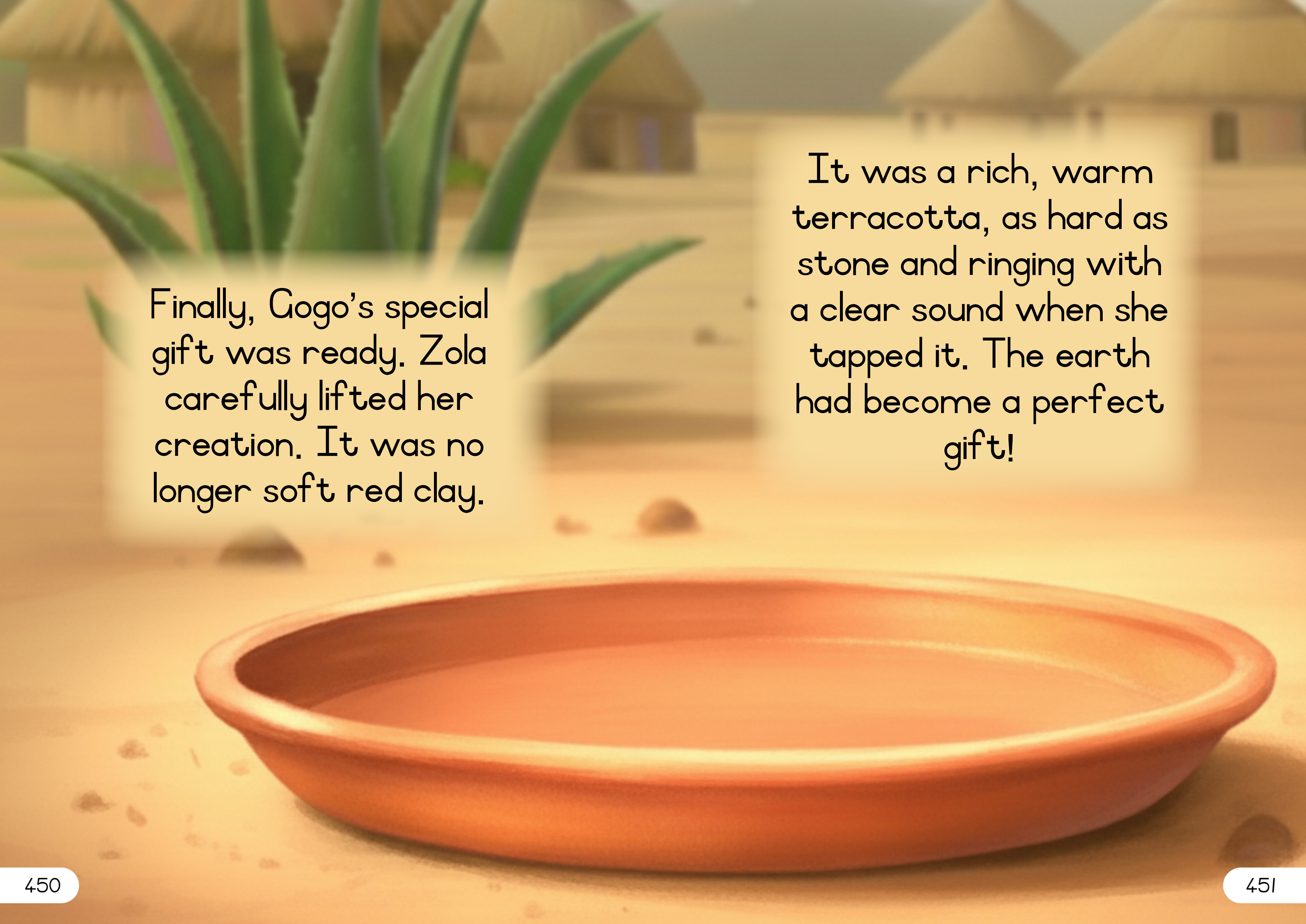
She moulded the
clay into a big,
round dish that
was perfect for
holding Gogo's little
treasures.





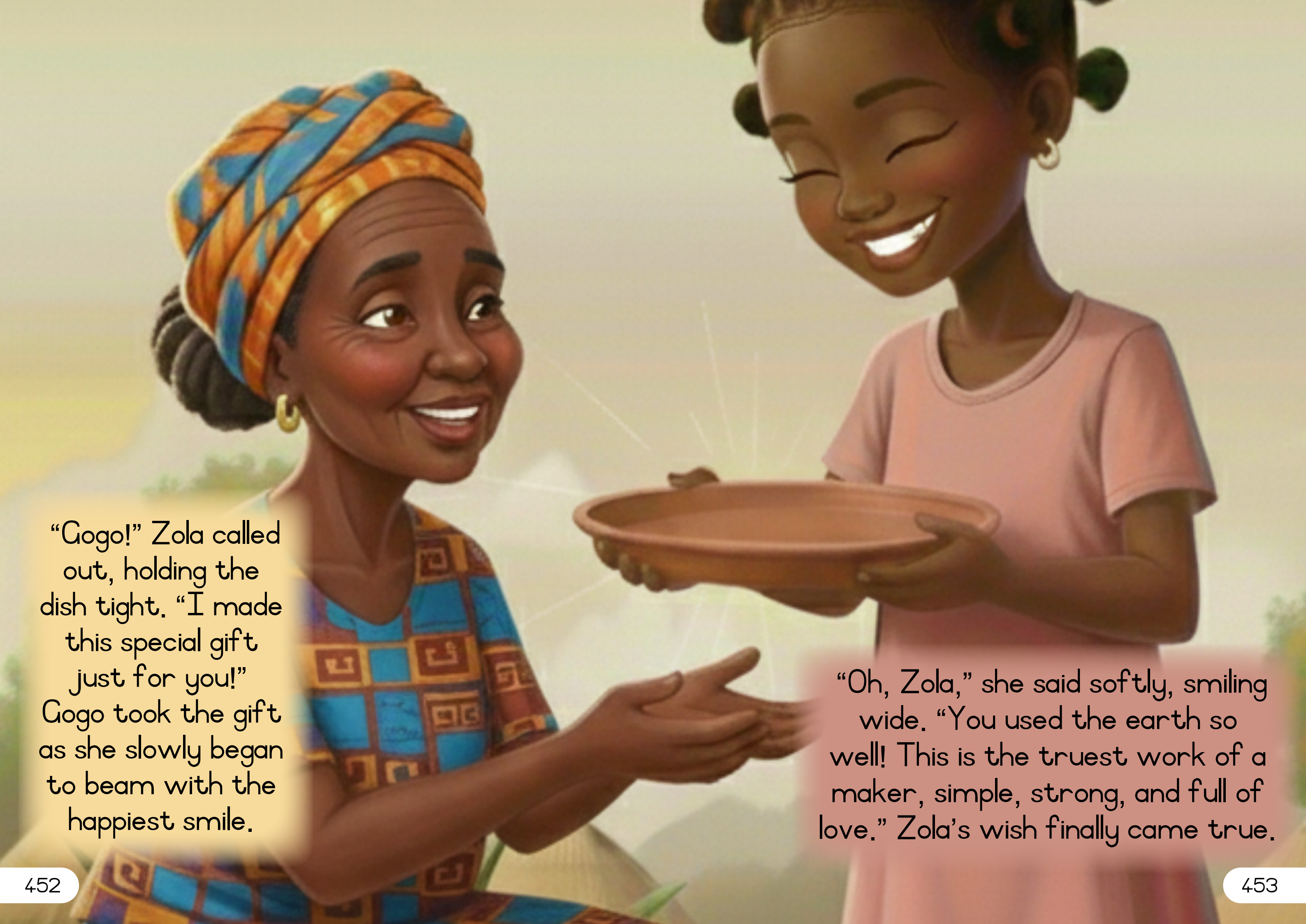
Zola polished it gently
with a wet cloth
before placing it next
to a large aloe plant in
the hottest spot of
the yard.

Her handiwork was
done, but now she had
to let the sun work its
slow magic and bake
the clay.

The background of the page features a soft-focus illustration of a green, spiky plant in a light-colored pot on the left. In the foreground, a shallow, wide terracotta bowl sits on a sandy surface. The overall color palette is warm, with shades of orange, yellow, and green.

Finally, Gogo's special gift was ready. Zola carefully lifted her creation. It was no longer soft red clay.

It was a rich, warm terracotta, as hard as stone and ringing with a clear sound when she tapped it. The earth had become a perfect gift!



“Gogo!” Zola called out, holding the dish tight. “I made this special gift just for you!” Gogo took the gift as she slowly began to beam with the happiest smile.

“Oh, Zola,” she said softly, smiling wide. “You used the earth so well! This is the truest work of a maker, simple, strong, and full of love.” Zola’s wish finally came true.

Zola smiled a proud,
happy smile...



She had learned
the best part of
creating was the
patience, care,
and love poured
into making
something.

Preschool Glossary: Zola's Terracotta Treasure

1 Village

A village is a small place where people live and grow vegetables.



2 Earth

Earth is the ground we walk on.



3 Soil

Soil is the soft ground where plants grow. The soil is red and warm.



4 Clay

Clay is soft earth we can shape with our hands. Zola holds clay in her hands.



5 Mopane tree

A Mopane tree is a big, strong tree. Zola sits near the Mopane tree.



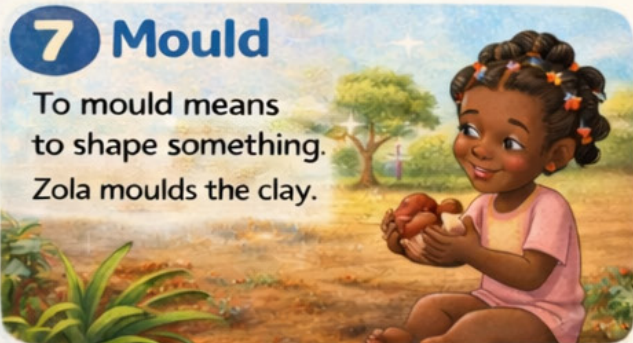
6 Wish

A wish is something you hope for. Zola has a special wish.



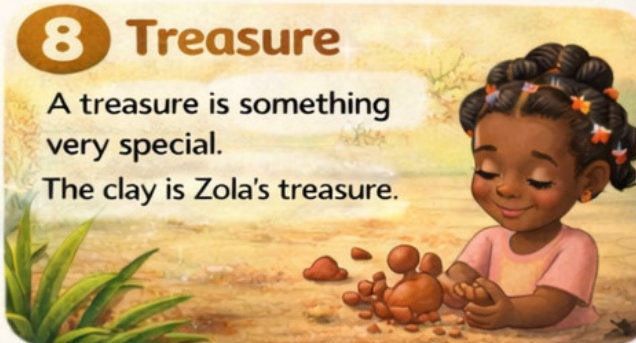
7 Mould

To mould means to shape something. Zola moulds the clay.



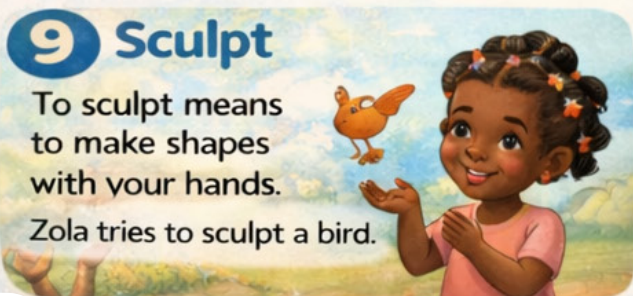
8 Treasure

A treasure is something very special. The clay is Zola's treasure.



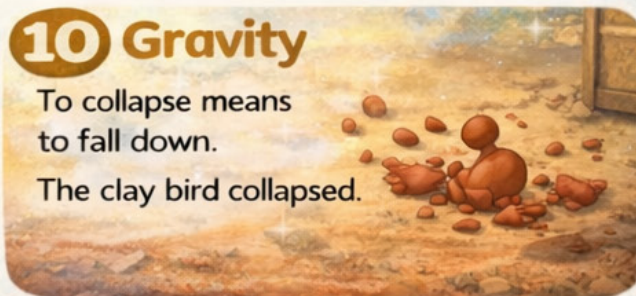
9 Sculpt

To sculpt means to make shapes with your hands. Zola tries to sculpt a bird.



10 Gravity

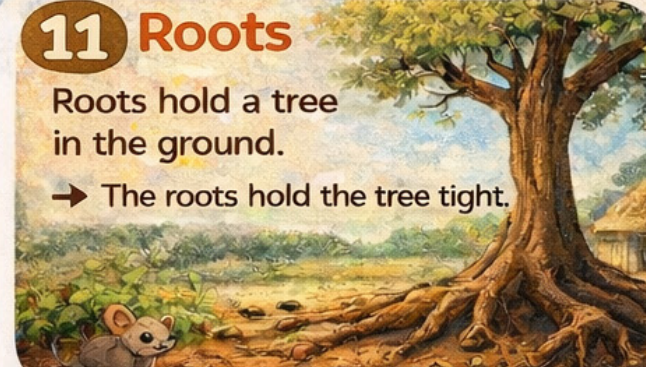
To collapse means to fall down. The clay bird collapsed.



Preschool Glossary: Zola's Terracotta Treasure

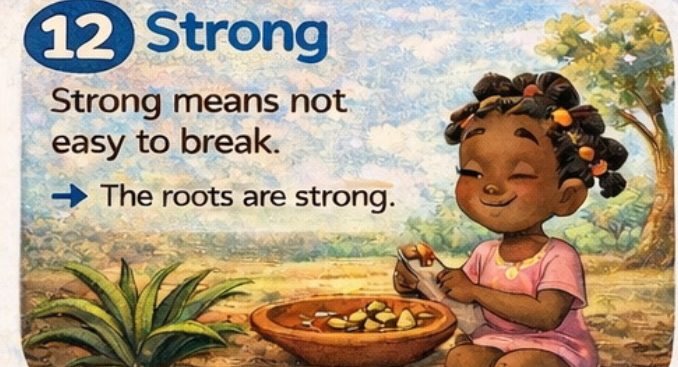
11 Roots

Roots hold a tree in the ground. → The roots hold the tree tight.



12 Strong

Strong means not easy to break. → The roots are strong.



13 Dish

A dish is something that holds things. Zola makes a clay dish.



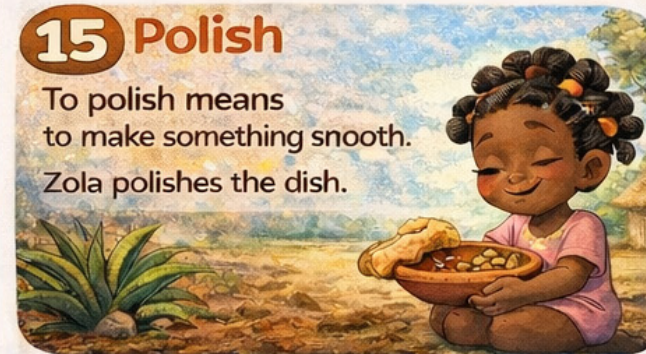
14 Patience

Patience means waiting calmly. Zola uses patience.



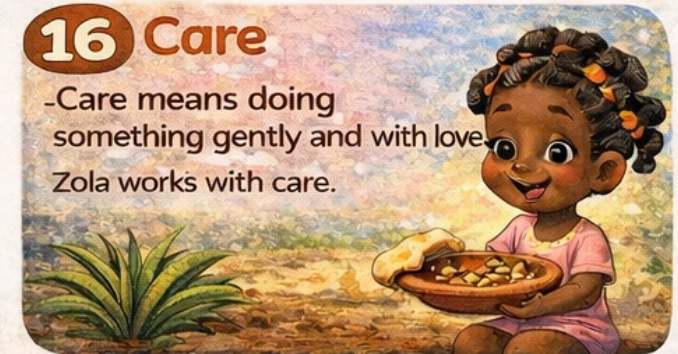
15 Polish

To polish means to make something smooth. Zola polishes the dish.



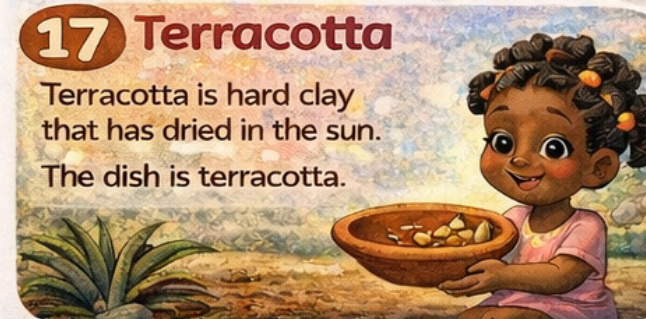
16 Care

Care means doing something gently and with love. Zola works with care.



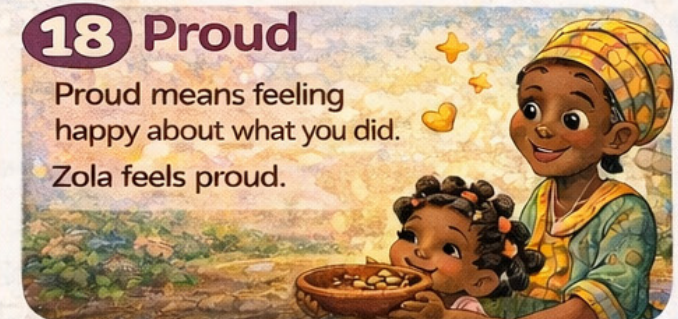
17 Terracotta

Terracotta is hard clay that has dried in the sun. The dish is terracotta.



18 Proud

Proud means feeling happy about what you did. Zola feels proud.



19 Grown-up

A grown-up is an older person who can help us. Zola asks a grown-up for help.



20 Gift

A gift is something you give to show love. Zola makes a gift for Gogo.

