

YOGA

FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

By Joanna Gardner (IYTA DIP)

Here is one of my yoga stories you may like to try with your children.

Please read the guidelines first and practise the individual poses beforehand.

HOW THE ELEPHANT GOT ITS TRUNK

1



High up in the **MOUNTAINS** of Africa, whose peaks stretched upward, lay the source of a river.

2



A small trickle of water became a stream, which then became a **WATERFALL** that cascaded, splashing down over rocks and cliffs.

3



By the time it reached the floodplains it had become a large river that looked just like a huge **SNAKE**'s body winding its way over the land.

4



The river was called the Great Limpopo River and it was home to many people-eating **CROCODILES**. The meanest one of all was called Mandabeka.

5



The sun sparkled on a beautiful **RAINBOW** that arched across the sky in a multitude of brilliant colours.

6



Near the riverbank, round **BOULDERS** **ROLLED** in the strong current of the Great Limpopo River.

7



Along the riverbank a vast jungle or green leafy **TREES** grew, stretching their branches towards the sky. This jungle was home to many animals.

8



The black and yellow striped **TIGERS** who flicked their **TAILS UP AND DOWN**.

9



The cunning spotted **HYENAS**.

10



And the fierce golden-maned **LIONS**, whose roar would echo through the trees.

11



The largest animals of all were the huge grey **ELEPHANTS**, who in those days had short stumpy noses. (**Bend elbows and hold pose with interlocked hands.**)

12



Now it just so happened that a wise mother **ELEPHANT** **BENT DOWN** to caution her new baby elephant. 'Never stray too far from my side. The jungle is a dangerous place, and never ever go down to the Great Limpopo River by yourself.'

13



(**Change legs**) But one day the baby **ELEPHANT** was terribly thirsty, and, forgetting his mother's warning, he trundled down to the edge of the Great Limpopo River and began to drink.

14



Lying close by, as still as a log, was Mandabeka the **CROCODILE**. Quietly, he swam up to the baby elephant and with one **SNAP** of his powerful jaws he took hold of the elephant's nose and began to pull him into the river.

15



The baby elephant screamed for help and the mother **ELEPHANT** lumbered up and took hold of the baby. But Mandabeka the crocodile would not let go. (**One child as crocodile, two children sitting in elephant pose, facing crocodile and holding each other's waist.**)

16



So, she called to the **LIONS** to help. They all joined in a line one behind the other and pulled. (**Children, in groups of 5, moving as the different animals, sit in the lion's pose, lined up close behind each other, holding each other's waists, pretending to pull.**) But Mandabeka still held on. As the animals helped pull, the baby elephant's nose began to stretch and stretch.

17



The mother elephant called the **TIGERS**, then the **HYENAS** to help, but they still could not free the baby elephant and his nose grew longer and longer.

18



At last the animals called on the **SNAKES**. The snakes pulled the hyenas, who pulled the tigers, who pulled the lions, who pulled the mother elephant, who pulled the baby elephant. (**Children gently pulling each other.**)

19



Mandabeka the crocodile could not compete with all of the animals' strength. Suddenly, he let go of the baby elephant's nose! And all of the animals (**gently leaning back on each other**) fell backwards one on top of each other. And do you know, from that day on, all elephants have had long trunks!