

Kwesi and Nana Ruby Learn to Swim

Kobina Commeh

Bárbara Quintino, Illustrator

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When Kwesi confides to his Nana Ruby that he is embarrassed by his inability to swim, she makes him a deal: if he learns to swim, she will, too. Surprised that Nana Ruby can't swim, Kwesi learns about segregation—and its lingering consequences for Black Americans. Inspired by a story about an African water deity, Kwesi agrees to the deal. The illustrations reflect the geometric patterns and saturated colors of traditional kente cloth, honoring the history and heritage of the book's Ghanaian characters.

DANIELLE BALLANTYNE (January / February 2025)

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