

**All:** LingoKids.

**Speaker 1:** Welcome to *Stories for Kids* by LingoKids, where we discover fascinating facts about the world around us and the fun of play learning. February is Black History Month in the United States. This year we met some amazing Black Americans doing inspiring work in our *Growing Up* podcast, and we would like all of you to meet them as well. I think you will find their stories very interesting, and you will certainly learn something new.

**Cowie:** Ooh. I like learning things.

**Elliot:** Me too.

**Speaker 1:** Well, then, Cowie and Elliot, let's get started. Oh, hi, Billy. Can we borrow your tablet? Thank you. Let's take a look and see if we can find a good episode to share. Oh, perfect. Jessica Nabongo is the special guest on this episode.

**Lisa:** Who is that?

**Speaker 1:** Jessica Nabongo is the first Black woman to travel to every country in the world.

**Cowie:** wow.

**Speaker 1:** That's right, Billy. Ms. Nabongo has been to 195 countries.

**Cowie:** She must be very brave.

**Lisa:** Yes. What if she doesn't know the language? What if she's feeling shy?

**Elliot:** What if she doesn't know where the bathroom is?

**Speaker 1:** There's a lot you have to figure out when you travel to new places. Let's hear what it's like to be an adventurer like Jessica Nabongo.

**Ms. Nabongo:** I think you have to be brave, you have to be curious, and you have to be open-minded. When you go into a new place, if you're open, you're able to meet new friends no matter where you are. We are more similar than we are different. No matter what we look like, no matter what our religion is, I found that people around the world are the same. When I say we're more similar than we are different, it means that I can meet a friend anywhere. Someone who is a stranger at first can become a friend very quickly because even though I was born in the U.S. and I'm from Uganda, I can meet someone in Jamaica or Myanmar or Italy, and we can become fast friends because we have similar interests.

**Cowie:** Can we go on an adventure like Miss Nabongo? It sounds really exciting.

**Elliot:** Yes. Let's go.

**Lisa:** We're just kids. We can't fly to all those places on our own.

**Speaker 1:** That's true, Lisa. Ms. Nabongo says there are some things you can do to

practice being an adventurer from home.

**Ms. Nabongo:** Part of being an adventurer when you're at home is talking to other kids who may not seem that similar to you, but you may have an opportunity to learn something from them, especially if they're from a different country than you are or if their parents are from a different country. Sometimes you can go on an adventure just through conversation.

**Elliot:** Oh, I can do that. I can totally do that.

**Lisa:** Me too.

**Cowie:** Me too. Yes.

**Speaker 1:** The next person I'd like you to meet is Byron Scott. He has a different kind of job.

**Cowie:** What is it?

**Speaker 1:** Here's a clue. Listen. What is making that sound?

**Elliot:** I'm not sure.

**Speaker 1:** LingoKids listeners, can you guess what is making this sound? No, Billy, it's not a hammer. Keep guessing.

**Lisa:** Oh, I know. It's a basketball. Is he a basketball player?

**Speaker 1:** That's right, Lisa. Byron Scott is a professional basketball player and coach. Here he is.

**Byron Scott:** My name is Byron Scott. I live in Los Angeles. I am a professional basketball player and coach. I used to play for the Los Angeles Lakers for a number of years. I won three championships and really had a good time doing it.

**Lisa:** Hey, I play basketball too.

**Speaker 1:** Billy is wondering how Byron Scott got so good at basketball. Let's find out.

**Byron Scott:** You know what? How I became a professional basketball player is that I knew at 12 years old that's what I wanted to do. It's a crazy story because my mom and dad were coming upstairs because I had just won my first trophy. My mom and dad were so proud of me and happy for me. My mom asked me what was I going to do when I grew up. I said, "I'm going to be a professional basketball player." I knew at 12 years old that was my passion, that was my dream.

**Lisa:** That's amazing. I have a dream too, but not to be a basketball player.

**Speaker 1:** Oh? What's your dream, Lisa?

**Lisa:** I want to be an inventor. Also an ice cream maker, and of course an astronaut.

**Elliot:** Wait, I thought you wanted to be a soccer player.

**Lisa:** I did, Elliot, but that was yesterday.

**Elliot:** Oh, right.

**Speaker 1:** Byron Scott knew very early what he wanted to do when he grew up, but he had to work super hard to make it happen.

**Byron Scott:** It takes a lot of dedication, a lot of hard work, a lot of effort, but it also takes some luck. I think without the hard work, you have no chance of being successful. For me, I just knew at 12 that I was going to work my butt off and I was going to be a professional basketball player.

**Lisa:** Coach Byron is inspiring me to work hard.

**Speaker 1:** It does take a lot of hard work to get really, really good at something. Are you ready to meet one more inspiring guest?

**Cowie:** Yes.

**Elliot:** Yes

**Lisa:** Yes.

**Speaker 1:** Okay, everyone, close your eyes and imagine you are outside. Lingokids listeners, you can join in too. Imagine there are lots of trees all around you and a gentle breeze blowing through the leaves. If you listen very closely, you start to hear-

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**Lisa:** Birds. I hear birds.

**Cowie:** They sound so pretty.

**Speaker 1:** They do sound nice.

**Lisa:** Wait, did you hear that?

**Elliot:** What kind of bird makes that sound?

**Lisa:** Yes, what is that?

**Speaker 1:** That is a strange sound. I bet our next guest will know exactly what it is. Corina Newsom is an ornithologist.

**Elliot:** An orni what?

**Speaker 1:** An ornithologist. She is a scientist who studies birds. Corina Newsom started Black Birder Week to encourage people of color to study her favorite animals, birds. I am sure she would love to study you, Billy. For now, let's hear Ms. Newsom talk about another type of bird she likes to study.

**Corina Newsom:** Vultures are usually birds that people look at and are like, "Oh,

gross." They have bald heads and they're patchy looking. Vultures are incredible. Vultures eat dead bodies of animals. Gross, but their bodies are actually really well-built for that. If you've ever had a tummy ache and you've had to throw up, you know that burns. That stomach acid burns our throats, our own stomach acid. Vultures have stomach acid that is so strong, it's anywhere up to 100 times stronger than ours. It can dissolve bone. They can eat solid objects and it gets dissolved in their stomachs.

They can eat diseases or pathogens, little microbes like rabies. They can eat cholera, which causes all kinds of horrible diseases in people, and they never get sick. If we didn't have vultures, we would be in a bad way. We would have disease in our water, in our soil. They're making sure that our ecosystems are healthy. The next time you see a vulture, you don't even have to think that they're pretty, but just thank the vulture.

**Elliot:** Thank you, vultures.

**Lisa:** Thank you, Ms. Newsom. Now I know what that strange sound is. It's a vulture sound.

**Elliot:** Birds are pretty amazing.

**Speaker 1:** Billy says thank you. I hope you enjoyed meeting Jessica Nobongo, Byron Scott, and Corina Newsom. I wonder if you learned something you didn't know before.

**Cowie:** I did. I learned that you can go on adventures by talking to new friends.

**Elliot:** I learned what a vulture sounds like.

**Lisa:** I learned that you have to work super hard for a long time to become a professional basketball player.

**Speaker 1:** Billy says he learned that scientists that study birds are called ornithologists. Great job, everyone. Lingokids listeners, did you learn something new today? Let us know. You can have a grown-up help write in to [podcast@lingokids.com](mailto:podcast@lingokids.com). Today, we listened to short versions of interviews from Jessica Nobongo, Byron Scott, and Karina Newsom. You can hear their full stories on the Lingokids *Growing Up* Podcast. These are just a few of the many inspiring Black Americans that we can learn from during Black History Month and all year long. See you next time.

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