

One Child's Village
*A Day in the Life of a Young Student
Living in Rural Africa...*
THE STORY OF GRACE





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QUESTION!

What would it be like to live
in a village in Africa?

As you listen to Grace's story,
think about what is similar to a
typical day for you

...and...

what is different from a typical
day for you.



View the complete PowerPoint
with photos here:

www.acgc.ca/pages.php?pg=1007&sec=2032

The Story of Grace

(Photo 1) My name is Grace and I am 8 years old. Every day I get up at 6 o'clock when Mama wakes me. Sometimes the mornings are quite cold. **(Photo 2)** I am thinking of my friend Kevin who sleeps outside because there is no room in his grandmother's hut. His grandmother takes care of him and his seven cousins. I put my sweater on before fetching water. **(Photo 3)** I take the blue and red buckets to go get water. We are lucky to live close to the community well. It is only 20 minutes to walk to the well. After carrying the water back home, I use the blue bucket to wash myself before going to school. I get to have my bath first, and then my younger brothers and sisters go after. The clean water is nice, but it is really cold. I put on my school uniform and shoes. **(Photo 4)** I pray that today is the day that Kevin gets a pair of shoes because he also lives far away from school and his toes get infected. He wears his uniform all the time – even on weekends – because he has no other clothes to wear. His uniform is never clean and now has holes.

(Photo 5) I give Mama the red bucket of water for cooking porridge for breakfast. Sometimes we have a treat and put a little sugar in the porridge so it is sweet – but not today. **(Photo 6)** After eating my porridge, I grab my schoolbooks and homework and walk to school. It takes an hour to get to school if I walk really fast. I can't be late or else Teacher Mayam will be angry.

(Photo 7) School starts at 8 o'clock. We sing songs and greet Teacher Mayam. Then we start learning. **(Photo 8)** I sit on a bench with other students. When Teacher Mayam tells us what subject we are learning, the class repeats it out loud together. One of the students goes and gets a book for us to share. Sometimes, there is only one book for the whole class. **(Photo 9)** We learn different subjects: Math, Social Studies, English, Kiswahili, Science. When Teacher Mayam is finished the material and we have recited it and tried really hard to learn it and remember it, she gives us exercise books with work to do. **(Photo 10)** Teacher Mayam has written the work in our books for us, so that we know what to do. When I am finished, I always pray that I got it all right because I do not want to be ashamed in the class.

(Photo 11) In the morning we get a break and we can play outside with our friends. The boys play with the soccer ball and the girls sing, play in the dirt, or skip rope. If we want, we can go to the school library to look at a book **(Photo 12)**. After a little while, the Head Teacher Veronica yells "Class time!" and we all run into our classrooms. We get to learn another subject and then it is lunch time.

(Photo 13) Students who live close to the school go home for lunch. I have to stay at school during lunch with other students who also live too far away. We are lucky that our school can give us lunch today. **(Photo 14)** For many of my friends, it will be the only meal they will have today. **(Photo 15)** Sometimes our school will have nuts, a slice of bread, or ugali – a thick dough made of corn flour. After lunch we learn more, but it is harder to concentrate **(Photo 16)**. Class ends at 3 o'clock. Some students stay after school to receive extra learning that their parents paid for. Mama doesn't have enough money for that. Those kids get more learning time and are always smarter than me. I wish that I could stay after school too.

(Photo 17) We walk home and Mama is there waiting for us. We run and take off our school uniform and shoes so that they stay clean, and then we put on our work clothes. **(Photo 18)** We help Mama by going to get water at the well for the garden. We help her with cleaning and laundry too **(Photo 19)**. Once our chores are done, we start our homework while Mama makes us dinner. **(Photo 20)** We have to hurry to finish our homework before dark since there is no electricity. Sometimes I don't understand my homework. My older sister is the one who helps me because Mama didn't go to school. **(Photo 21)** My favourite dinner is maconde, which is maize corn, beans, and some peppers. But usually we just have rice and beans or ugali and beans. We help Mama clean up and go to bed as the sun sets **(Photo 22)**. I like to get to bed first because I share a bed with my two sisters and they take up all the room if they get in first. I also want to be rested for school. I am so lucky to be in school and that Mama was able to buy me a uniform and school books so that I can be a good worker when I am older. We say our prayers together and fall asleep.

QUESTIONS!

 What stands out for you as being **DIFFERENT**?

 What stands out for you as being **SIMILAR**?

 What would it be like to live with Grace's **FAMILY**?

 What would it be like to be in Grace's **CLASS**?



We wish to thank all the orphans and teachers of Mercy Centre school in Bumala, Kenya!

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