

Journey to Jo'burg

Beverley Naidoo

Before Reading Activities

Naledi (13) and her brother Tiro (9) are looking for their mother in Johannesburg, 300 kilometres away from their home. On their journey they meet Grace, who helps them and who offers to take them to her home for the night.

Q. Why do you think Naledi and Tiro are travelling by themselves to find their mother?

Q. Why is their mother 300 kilometres away in Johannesburg?

Before you read a chapter from 'Journey to Jo'burg' by Beverley Naidoo, look at some sentences taken from the story. Then use your own words to connect the sentences and make it into your own story. You can work in groups, and you don't need to write the story down!

- ❖ Grown-up bodies pressed in from above and all around them. Some people laughed, some people swore and others kept silent, as the train shook and lurched on its way.
- ❖ But in a sudden surge at one of the stations, they found themselves being carried forwards, hurling out on to the platform.
- ❖ Suddenly, without any warning, there was a commotion up ahead. Three figures in uniform stood at the top of the stairs.
- ❖ A man was protesting loudly that he had left his pass at home.
- ❖ "We can't stay on the bridge while the police are here," panted Naledi when they had got past.
- ❖ All three raced back down the road, but just as they came in sight of the station, there was the big police van pulling off.
- ❖ "This time I'm really going to hold on to you," she told them, taking each firmly by the hand.

Glossary

swore (to swear)	<i>used bad language</i>
lurched (to lurch)	<i>moved suddenly and violently</i>
surge	<i>strong movement (of people)</i>
hurling (to hurl)	<i>throwing</i>
commotion	<i>noise</i>
panted (to pant)	<i>breath heavily, after running</i>
firmly	<i>strongly</i>

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Reading Activities

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firmly	<i>strongly</i>
wedged	<i>not able to move</i>
dismay	<i>concern</i>
barbed-wire fence	<i>wall with sharp metal points</i>
leapt (to leap)	<i>jumped</i>
scrambled (to scramble)	<i>climbed</i>
sprinted (to sprint)	<i>ran quickly</i>
clambered (to clamber)	<i>climbed</i>
tugged (to tug)	<i>pulled</i>
Houjou bek	<i>(Afrikaans) shut up</i>
loafer	<i>lazy (person)</i>
muttering	<i>sound of voices</i>
murderous	<i>able to kill</i>
glancing (to glance)	<i>looking quickly</i>
weaved in and out	<i>moved from one side to the other</i>
tub	<i>container</i>
flung (to fling)	<i>threw</i>
grazing	<i>making a slight mark</i>
startled	<i>surprised</i>
Mma	<i>(Tswana) mother (in this case a mark of respect)</i>

1. After you have read the chapter, think about the following:

- Have you ever been in a crowd of so many people that you were forced to go in the same direction as the crowd? How did you feel?
- Why do you think some people were running away from the police?
- What was 'the pass' and why, in your opinion, did the police want to see them?
- Why did a boy say that he wasn't yet sixteen?
- Why did the policeman let Naledi and Tiro go?
- What was the boy referring to when he said "I'll burn this one day"? Why did he say that?

2. There are four separate parts to this chapter. Decide what the four parts are by looking for the places where the action changes (look for where the activity happens in a new place or another character is introduced). Write them in the table below.

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Why do you think the second part is the longest?

3. You have looked at Chapter 8 of the story. There are 15 Chapters in the story altogether. Work in groups and decide what you think has happened in Chapters 1 to 7. Here are the Chapter headings to help you:

1. Naledi's Plan
2. The Road
3. Oranges!
4. Ride on a Lorry
5. The City of Gold
6. A New Friend
7. Mma
8. Police (you have just read this one!)

Makes notes about what you think happens in the earlier part of the story (leading up to Chapter 8). Be prepared to tell the rest of the class your version of the story.

4. What happens at the end of your story? In the story by Beverley Naidoo the chapter you have read ('Police!') is in the middle. Think about how you would like your story to end, and the steps that are needed to reach that end. Explain what happens to Naledi, Tiro, their mother and Grace.

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After Reading Activities

Passes

Some people were feeling into pockets, others frantically searching through bags.

Pass raid!

A man was protesting loudly that he had left his pass at home. It would only take two minutes to get it. The police could come and see, or someone could call his child to bring it. He cried out his address, once, twice... Slap!

Pass laws in South Africa were designed to segregate the population and severely limit the movements of everyone except white South Africans. This legislation was one of the dominant features of the country's apartheid system.



They were designed to regulate movement of black Africans in urban areas. Outside designated "homelands", black South Africans had to carry passbooks at all times, documentation which proved they were allowed to live or travel in 'White' South Africa. A pass included a photograph, details of place of origin, employment record, tax payments, and encounters with the police. It was a criminal offence to be unable to produce a pass when required to do so by the police. No black person could leave a rural area for an urban one without a permit from the local authorities.

In the 1970s and 1980s, many Africans who broke pass laws lost their citizenship and were sent to the poor rural 'homelands'. By the time the expensive and ineffective pass laws were stopped in 1986, they had led to more than 17 million arrests.

These discriminatory regulations created a great deal of anger from the black population and the ANC (African national Congress) began the *Defiance Campaign* to oppose the pass laws.

Pass laws also stated that black Africans could not hold a higher business position within a company than the lowest white employee.

White South Africans did not need to have passes.

1. Why were passes introduced? a) Try to think of the advantages and disadvantages of one section of the population carrying passes while another section did not. Don't worry if you can't think of something to write in every square.

	For Black People	For White People
Advantages		
Disadvantages		

b) Justify any 'advantages' you have written down.

2. Identity Documents. a) Do you have to carry identity documents with you in your country? Is this the same for everyone in the country? (Think about the difference between children and adults, and between citizens, foreign residents and tourists etc.)

b) What are the advantages of people carrying identity cards (for the ordinary citizen; for the police; for the government)? What are the disadvantages?

c) There is no standard identity document (ID) in Britain and citizens are not all required to carry ID cards, though since 2008 the British government has been introducing compulsory identity cards for foreign nationals resident in the UK. Identity cards for British nationals are only required for workers in certain high-security professions, such as airport workers. Driving licences and passports are now the most widely used ID documents in the UK.



- o What are the advantages to this system?
- o What are the disadvantages to this system?