

# Journey to Jo'burg

Beverley Naidoo

## Teacher's Notes and Key

### About this resource kit

This is the first resource kit in the new 'Open Book' series which has been developed from the original BritLit project. The background of the story is South Africa during the apartheid years. In this resource kit, one chapter from a book containing 17 chapters is concentrated on, but the students are prepared to go on and read the whole book for themselves. As with earlier resources from the BritLit project the teacher is expected to guide the students towards a creative reading programme, and to be critically aware of the content and the cultural context while simultaneously developing the student's language awareness.

### Before Reading Activities

*These activities are designed to stimulate curiosity and creative enquiry by using fragments of the original story and asking students to create their own versions around them. It is important to stress that students are being asked to create their own stories, not to guess Beverley Naidoo's narrative. While they will doubtless wish to compare their version to the original, there should be no sense of 'right' or 'wrong' answers in this respect.*

Q. The answers to this question can be guided by asking under what circumstances a 13 year old and a 9 year old might be separated from their mother, and why they would be travelling unaccompanied to find her. Stress that we know where they are going and how far they have to travel. Students should think about what happened to the children before the journey to find their mother.

Q. This is a follow on from the first question, but by concentrating on the mother students may be able to focus on the situation from the mother's point of view. Ask how the mother feels about being separated from her children. What circumstances would have caused her to make this sacrifice?

**Sentences from the story.** Read through each of the sentences aloud, dealing with any questions of vocabulary. Use the prompts after each sentence to focus on context and meaning.

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.

*How busy was the train? What time of day was it? (Very busy – train was crowded; perhaps rush hour, morning or evening)*

But in a sudden surge at one of the stations, they found themselves being carried forwards, hurling out on to the platform.

*Were the children still on the train? What happened? How did the children feel? (No – on the platform; the movement of the crowd forced them off the train; probably frightened, confused.)*

Suddenly, without any warning, there was a commotion up ahead. Three figures in uniform stood at the top of the stairs.

Who were the three figures in uniform? (*Figures of authority – ticket inspectors, police*)

A man was protesting loudly that he had left his pass at home.

Why was the man upset about his pass? (*He didn't have it with him; it was required*)

"We can't stay on the bridge while the police are here," panted Naledi when they had got past.

Why did they want to avoid the police? (*Any form of speculation – they had done something wrong; hadn't got a ticket etc*)

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.

Who was the third person who had joined the children? Why were they running? (*Prompt that they already know about a man who hadn't got his pass, and that the children were anxious not to be stopped by the police. Any speculative answers using the facts known so far.*)

"This time I'm really going to hold on to you," she told them, taking each firmly by the hand.

Who is 'she' who took them 'firmly by the hand'? Why does she suddenly appear now? Refer students to preamble before the sentences. (*Grace; students can speculate about reasons for them not being together and being reunited*)

Ask students to work in groups to tell the story using the information they now have. They do not have to write the stories down (though you may choose to make this an activity) but they must make notes. Point out that the order the sentences appear in is the correct chronological order of the narrative. Do not permit them to change this. The stories can be told to the rest of the class.

## Reading

The chapter is short enough to be read silently in class. Provide students with a copy of the **Glossary** for reference (point out that there is an example each of Afrikaans and Tswana languages). Advise quick readers to consider their answers to the questions which follow while waiting for the others to catch up.

1. The answers in this section rely on a mixture of speculation and interpretation. The purpose is not for students to get 'right' answers but to understand what was going on when the children encountered the police.

- Subjective feelings – allow students with these experiences to explain it to those who might not have had them yet.
- They were frightened / they had something to hide .....
- 'Pass' implies a permit to go from one place to another.
- Passes were not required by children under sixteen.
- They were children
- He was referring to the pass. He hated it (and what it stood for).

2.

<b>On the train</b>	<b>The police check point</b>	<b>Finding the man's house/pass</b>	<b>Grace</b>
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Students aren't required to use the same words as above.

The second section is longer because it contains all the information required to understand a) what was happening in the story b) as cultural background c) to inform us regarding the next stage of the story

**3.** The student's are now being asked to develop 'the story so far', using the earlier chapter headings as guidelines. They should work together in the same groups as previously. They should not be expected to write down the story, but they must make notes as they will need to refer to these when comparing their versions with other groups later. Go through the first seven chapter headings one by one before leaving the students to work on their own. You may wish to use the following question prompts.

1. Naledi's Plan (*Plan to do what? Why? Who does it involve? How long will it take?*)
2. The Road (*The road to where? What kind of road? How do they travel?*)
3. Oranges! (*Why would oranges be important? Why the exclamation mark? Are there any dangers involved here?*)
4. Ride on a Lorry (*Who gave them a ride on a lorry? Where to? What questions did the driver ask?*)
5. The City of Gold (*What city? Why is it called the city of gold? What did they find in reality?*)
6. A New Friend (*Who was the new friend? Refer to what they already know of Chapter 8. Where did they meet? What happened?*)
7. Mma (*Refer to glossary for meaning of 'mma'. Where did they find their mother? How did everyone feel?*)
8. Police (*Students have read this chapter. Ask them why they are now with Grace and not their mother.*)

4. Students should cooperate to try and work out how the story **they** have constructed so far is resolved. They will need to think of a resolution and how the four main characters are involved in that resolution. Is it a happy ending?

A representative from each group should go to another group to explain how their story concludes. A variation is for the students to elect the most exciting/plausible/imaginative story and for this/these to be presented to the whole class either as a piece of story telling (perhaps with illustrations) or as a play.

The students are now ready to read Beverley Naidoo's story 'The Journey to Jo'burg.'

## After Reading Activities

These activities relate to the main theme of Chapter 8, and should only be carried out after the Chapter has been read. They give context to the main issue of the pass laws.

1. This is not a definitive list, merely a guide. Students can work alone or in pairs to complete this. Stress that they do not need to try and find something write in each square.

a)

	<b>For Black People</b>	<b>For White People</b>
<b>Advantages</b>		They didn't need to carry them. Got promoted over back people
<b>Disadvantages</b>	Highly controlling No freedom of movement Could be arrested	

b) Justifying advantages is challenging!

2. a) A chance for students to think about the way that citizens in their own country are required to identify themselves. The vital question here is to see if they understand if everyone in the country (children, foreigners etc) are treated the same or differently and to explain the reason for any differences.

2. b) Personal choices. Work individually, then share in pairs.

2. c) Personal choices. Work in same pairs as 2.b) and then share in groups of 2 pairs.