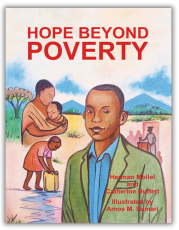
Identifying the themes in *Hope Beyond Poverty*



Hope Beyond Poverty is an important text to encourage students to persist through times of adversity, inspire them to serve others and to value education. This guide provides teachers with evidence-informed approaches to enable them to effectively teach students how to identify the themes in the book. Mshauri Education's professional learning program *Reading aloud to students: The Why and How* provides in-depth information on how to teach literacy skills by reading aloud to students and this program can be downloaded for free from their website, www.mshauried.org

Using a graphic organiser

Students can be supported to infer the themes in the book by using a graphic organiser as shown in Table 1. A teacher may choose to focus on specific moments (for example, when Herman is at university) within the book to provide more structured support to students in inferring the themes.

	The text says...	I know from my prior knowledge...	I infer that..
Who?			
What?			
Where?			
When?			
Why?			
How?			

Table 1: A graphic organiser for identifying themes

Facilitating rich discussions

Discussing a text is a highly effective way of supporting students to identify the themes in a book. Initially, discussions should focus on literal questions (where answers can be found directly in the text) and then move onto inferential questions (where students are required to make connections with their own background knowledge in order to answer them). Teachers can use different types of sentence starters that teachers can use to support students' thinking about the text (Lemov, Driggs and Woolway, 2016). Some example sentence starters are provided in Table 2.

Clarifying: Can you explain what you mean by... Could you give an example of...?
Elaborating: To expand on your point, I believe... Another example of this could be... Furthermore, we could consider..
Evaluating: I see your point, but I think... This idea is strong because.. I'm not sure I agree with that because...
Synthesizing Bringing together these different ideas it appears that.. If we look at all the perspectives shared, a common theme is...

Table 2: Types of sentence starters for teachers to use to support discussions about the themes in a book.

Reciprocal Questioning

This strategy involves students asking questions of their teacher or peers, because asking good questions requires a good understanding of the text. Reciprocal questioning can take on various forms, but one suggestion is that it begins by a

student asking a question and the teacher then calls on another student to answer it. The second student is to attempt to answer the questions and then create another question for the third student to answer, and so on (Dougherty Stahl, Flanigan and Mckenna, 2020).

Question Answer Relationship (QAR) strategy

Questioning is an effective strategy for building students' comprehension and encouraging students to think critically about a text (Fisher and Frey, 2018) and can be used for identifying the themes in a text. This strategy sorts questions into one of two categories - book questions (i.e. literal questions) and brain questions (i.e. inferential questions) (Fisher and Frey (2018). The following questions are based on the QAR strategy and can be used with the book *Hope Beyond Poverty* to support students to identify the themes in the story.

Right There

Students locate explicit information about characters, events, problems and outcomes.

Questions to ask:

- What challenges does Herman experience?
- What does Herman do when things become difficult?
- How does the story end?

Purpose: Gather evidence that might reveal a theme.

Think and Search

Connect information across the text
Students look for patterns, repeated events and changes in characters across different parts of the story.

Questions to ask:

- What experiences does Herman have at the beginning, middle and end?
- What does the Herman learn from these experiences?

Purpose: Identify patterns and recurring ideas.

Author and You

Use evidence and inference
Students combine clues from the text with their own reasoning to work out what the author might be communicating.

Questions to ask:

- What might the authors want us to understand about Herman's experiences?
- What can we infer from Herman's actions, even if they aren't stated directly?

Purpose: Infer possible messages or deeper meanings.

On My Own

Connect the text to broader ideas
Students consider what the story suggests about life beyond the events of the book.

Questions to ask:

- What might Herman's story help us understand about life?
- Give an example of where you could apply these ideas in your own life.
- Does the story challenge an assumption we might have about people or the world?

Purpose: Explore the broader significance of the story.

References

Fisher, D., Flood, J., Lapp, D. and Frey, N. (2004). Interactive Read-Alouds: Is There a Common Set of Implementation Practices? The Reading Teacher, 58(1), pp.8–17. doi:https://doi.org/10.1598/rt.58.1.1.

Lemov, D., Driggs, C. and Woolway, E. (2016). Reading reconsidered : a practical guide to rigorous literacy instruction. San Francisco, Ca: Jossey-Bass & Pfeiffer Imprints, Wiley.

