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DEAR GRADE 11 LEARNER

When you read *Dreaming of Light*, you need to interact with the text.

As you read, ask yourself what lies behind a character's actions or words or reflect on the descriptions used by the author and the insights they provide into the emotions and feelings of the characters. Here is one example:

It troubles me when people make noise underground. These rock tunnels have their own sounds, the creaks and groans as troubling as explosions or the roar of rockfall. I imagine men's noise competing against the earth's voice, and the earth resenting it, and shifting to punish us. (p.24)

Questions you could ask

What lies behind Regile's words? A possible answer is that he knows what the sounds underground mean. He has come to see the earth as a powerful force that resents men coming into its space and uses rockfalls to take revenge.

How do the descriptions used by the author help us to understand what Regile feels? They create a sense of his powerlessness and his feeling that mining operations are wrong.

There are questions on each of the chapters to help you explore the text so you find it easy to read and understand it. The more personally involved you become, the more you will get out of reading.

The *pre-reading questions* invite you to predict what will happen in the chapter. To be able to do that you need to combine what you know about the setting, the events so far and the characters with your own experience.

The *reading questions* are there to guide your reading. Just jot down quick answers. It is important not to interrupt the flow of your reading. Of course, if you find that you are not sure what is happening, you may have to re-read (skim or scan) to find what you missed or did not notice when you read that part.

The *post-reading questions* will help you to see whether you have understood the characters' motives and the effect of their actions and remembered key incidents. Questions will not always ask you to give information that is explicitly given in the text. You will need to read between the lines (interpret) and apply information or insights to other situations. Look at the chart on page 21 for some examples.

There are also opportunities for you to try your hand at answering more formal contextual questions that will test how well you "know" the book.

The information in the first part of the book and at the back of the book is there to help you.

Chapter 9

Development of the plot

Falling action. Katekani persuades Regile to join Taiba and help him to find Spike Maphosa.

Questions

Pre-reading

What argument is likely to persuade Regile to help Taiba?

During-reading

1. Regile thinks that her physical injuries are not the thing that has hurt Katekani most. What seems to have hurt her most?

2. Regile seems unable to swallow. Why is this? What is he feeling?

3. What is Taiba's reaction to hearing that his escape has caused problems for Regile and Katekani?

4. Why does Regile find it difficult to sleep on the night before they begin their walk?

5. Why does Taiba have no difficulty in sleeping?

Post-reading

1. Regile has decided not to tell Taiba about the newspaper article. Why does Katekani not tell Taiba about Regile's decision?

2. Explain clearly why the other boys are afraid to go with Taiba when he leaves the shed.

3. Regile describes the entrances to the mines as “like gashes on the earth’s surface”. (p.114) Do you think this is a good description? Justify your answer.

Choose the best answer from those given below. Write down only the letter (A-D) next to the question number.

- A. Regile thinks that the entrances should not be left open.
- B. Regile thinks the entrances are too small.
- C. Regile thinks that the gashes destroy the beauty of the mountain side.
- D. Regile thinks that the mountainside looks as if it is bleeding.

4. Katekani says that Taiba is like her. He knows that Regile is a good person. What else do they have in common?

5. List three things that are going to make the trip to find Spike Maphosa difficult.

Definition of useful words

gashes (noun, plural)	<i>cuts or wounds</i> (the earth looks as if it has been wounded)
dying (present participle functioning as an adjective)	<i>fading, disappearing</i> (day is giving way to night)
scrape (noun)	<i>ground where the top layer has been roughly removed</i> (the ground at that spot is looking rather ugly)

Symbols

Darkness

Darkness is seen as something that robs one of hope and allows evil to triumph. Regile pictures Taiba alone and slowly losing hope in the dark. However, he is reminded that there is always some light at night. This means that the darkness of night does not signal there is no hope of reaching Spike Maphosa.

Themes

Caring and love

Regile really cares about Katekani and wants to reach out and comfort her, but does not know how to do this. When she sits down, he sees her as taking “her place on my bench”. He is able to

empathise with her in that he knows, without being told, what has hurt her most. He wants to comfort her and later he finds himself wanting to kiss her (p. 117).

Later she persuades Regile to go to Taiba's aid. She really cares about Regile and wants him to be the kind and helpful person he really is.

Bravery and courage

Although Katekani has just had a severe beating and is still feeling the after effects, she is willing to risk her father's anger again to ensure that the boys (and she) escape from this life of abuse and enslavement. She sits outside Regile's room determined to persuade him to join Taiba.

Enslavement and denial of human rights

Papa Mavuso attacks Katekani so viciously that she is afraid that she will be left worse off than the cripple she already is. He sees her only as a source of labour and his first words to her after he has finished beating her are "You shut up. Start with the food now. It should be cooking already" (p.110).

Cycle of violence

When Papa Mavuso finds out that Taiba has escaped, his first instinct is to use violence to force his daughter to tell him what she knows about the escape. Regile finds himself thinking of using violence to stop Papa Mavuso from injuring Katekani any further.

Regile reveals that the boys who are badly injured or unable to work are taken away. The boys who are taken away are never seen again. It may be that they are disposed of or it may be that they are handed to the police to be deported or punished. The boys who survive are likely to use the same tactics when they gain a position of power.

Innocence and the loss of innocence

Taiba is sure Regile will join him.

The power of hope

Katekani, like Taiba, is convinced that Spike Maphosa can rescue them. This allows her to dream of having a different life.

Chapter 10

Development of the plot

Resolution. The boys have found Spike Maphosa and with the aid of the police, he has set the boy zama zamas in the shed free. Regile, Taiba, and Aires are able to return home and Katekani will be able to start a new life.

Questions

Pre-reading

Look at the first paragraph of the chapter. What clue does it give that the boys are going to be successful or unsuccessful in finding Spike Maphosa?

During-reading

1. Why do the boys find it so difficult to get water along the road?

2. Explain why Taiba asks Regile to read the newspaper clipping again and again?

3. Why do they keep eating fruit that is not ripe even though it gives them a stomach ache every night?

4. Regile refers to the people on the street as "hawkers, beggars, the loafers and out of works." (p. 127)
What is the difference between those he describes as "loafers" and the "out of works"?

5. What would happen if Taiba asked people for directions?

Post-reading

1. Why is it so difficult for the boys to get a lift?

2. What does Regile mean when he says that the driver of the vehicle carrying rotting vegetables looks "soft and squashy"? What do you imagine he looks like?

3. Discuss the difference between the way Spike treats the boys and how Papa Mavuso treats them.

4. Spike knows that they are zama zamas although they have not given him this information.
What makes him so sure? Explain clearly.

5. Why do you think the other recruits hang back when Spike and the police arrive at the compound to set them free? Explain your view.

Definition of useful words

trickles (noun, plural)	<i>slow flow of liquid</i> (there is so little water in the streams that they move very slowly, when they do move)
trestles (noun, plural)	(trestle tables) <i>tables made using a board that is supported by trestles</i>
dehydrated (past participle functioning as an adjective)	<i>loss of water and essential salts from the body as a result of a lack of water, extreme physical exertion or intense heat</i>

Symbols

Light and darkness

On the gate outside Spike's house is a picture of the world of light (opportunity) waiting for those who emerge from the darkness and the closed world underground (enslavement).

Themes

Caring and love

Regile is aware that it is exhausting and painful for Taiba to walk and wants them to rest. He becomes aware of how much Katekani means to him when he thinks of going underground again and perhaps never seeing her again.

It has not even crossed Taiba's mind that he could take the opportunity to escape by slipping over the border, because his concern is for the boys that are locked up in the shed, especially Aires. Taiba cares about Regile and begs him not to return to the compound, because he knows that Papa Mavuso will do everything he can to harm him.

Spike is markedly different from the members of the syndicate. Unlike those who see people as objects to be exploited and expect the worst of them, Spike looks at them with bright eyes that reflect his interest in them and his pleasure at seeing them. He gives them his full attention: like a camera lens that zooms in on what is of special interest, he closes the distance between him and the boys.

Bravery and courage

Even though it is difficult and painful for him to walk because he has little strength and his injuries cause him pain, Taiba does not complain. He refuses to take a rest because he knows how important it is to keep going.

The power of hope

Regile compares Taiba to a giant because of the power he has to overcome his (Regile's) attempts to discourage him.

Regile starts to believe, to become optimistic: "I begin to catch his happy, excited feeling." (p. 127).

The book ends with the words: "I don't know which sight I like best – Katekani smiling at me, Taiba and Aires together again, or Spike Maphosa, who used to be hope" (p. 131). They are all free and in a position to look into the future with confidence. Their nightmare has ended.

Formal Assessment 2

Read the following extracts from the novel and answer the questions set on each. The number of marks allocated to each question serves as a guide to the number of points you are expected to make.

NOTE: Answer the questions set on BOTH extracts.

2.1 (Regile and Taiba are running away)

"You make trouble for everyone," I accuse him. "Katekani. Me."

"Sorry, my brother. But Spike, he will make good things for us. This I know."

"Not for me. Now listen." I'm harsh with him. "We need to start walking as soon as it gets light. Across the veld until we get on to the R38. We can't use the R40. Papa said that he and his friends will catch us before we get to Nelspruit. That means he thinks we'll use the R40. He knows we're going to Spike Maphosa. He beat Katekani badly and she told him."

"Sorry. Sorry." Regret shakes Taiba's voice. "Maybe Spike help Katekani also –"

"Shut up about him. The R38 is a lonely road, not too many cars, and we can jump into the bush and hide if one comes. It's too close to Barberton for us to hitch a lift. One of Papa's friends might be on the road. Or Faceman . . . Getting rides, we could reach Kabokweni in, I don't know, an hour, less than two hours for sure. But walking . . . I don't know. You're not better yet and you'll be slow. So . . . it could take days. I think we must cross straight over the N4 when we get to it, and then . . . we'll see."

"You will know the right thing, Regile."

Taiba is his usual confident self. It angers me, especially because he bases his confidence, like his hope, on me.

5**10****15****20**