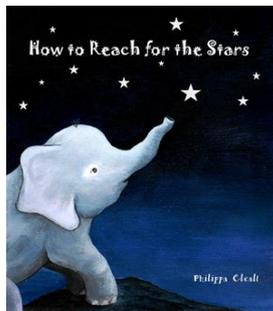


## How to Reach for the Stars – Teacher Notes



*How to Reach for the Stars* has been written as a picture book for **Early Stage 1 – Stage 2** (Kindergarten to Year 4) aged readers. The story introduces Little Tembo who wonders aloud what she should do when she grows up. Wise Grandma Bibi says that she should reach for the stars. The story explores how Little Tembo reaches high to achieve goals for her future.

The text in this book is written in both English and KiSwahili to assist young readers who are learning a second language.

### Exploring themes from the text

#### Language Learning

**Explain:** Although the story in this book is written in both English and Swahili, some of the character's names in the English story are Swahili words.

**Activity:** Ask students to find these names and identify the English name for these characters. [Eg. Tembo – Elephant, Twiga – Giraffe, Simba – Lion]

**Activity:** Ask students to list as many African animals as they can think of and write their names in both English and Swahili (using the internet or language dictionary if required).

**Extension:** Ask each student to choose an African animal to research and write as many facts as they can find out about them. Share this animal research with other class members.

#### Personifying Animal Characters



**Explain:** In the story the animal characters have been created to almost seem like people.

**Activity:** Ask students to come up with a list of animal character actions in the book that would be something a person would usually do, not an animal. [Eg. Driving a bus, Teaching a class, Climbing a tree...]

**Discuss:** Why do students think the author has created Little Tembo to be like a person instead of just an elephant?

**Ask:** Are there any other characters in the story who behave like a person?

#### Idioms

**Explain:** The title of this story uses an *idiom* – ‘*reach for the stars*’. An idiom is where a phrase or group of words has an extra meaning beyond what the words would normally mean. Idioms are understood to be helpful advice or a wise saying that different cultural groups understand.

**Ask:** What does ‘Reach for the Stars’ really mean in this story?

**Activity:** *Discussing other idioms*

Identify some other idioms that students might know. Write down these phrases and ask students to write down what the idiom is saying using other words.

[Eg. *Bite off more than you can chew* – Taking on a project or work that is too much. *Barking up the wrong tree* – having the wrong idea or accusing the wrong person. *Let the cat out of the bag* – sharing something that needed to be kept a secret.]



## Having Different Skills and Abilities



**Explain:** In the story Little Tembo was thinking about jobs she might like to do with the skills she is good at (remembering directions, lifting and building heavy things and teaching others what she knows).

**Explain:** People have different skills and abilities and in our community all the skills people contribute in workplaces are important. Jobs where people drive public transport and sell us items in shops are just as valuable as those where people build bridges or work in hospitals.

**Ask:** Which of the jobs Little Tembo was thinking about do you think might be the best choice for her?

**Ask:** Is there another job the author and illustrator of the story could have imagined Little Tembo doing that she might have enjoyed?

### Activity:

Ask students to write down a list of things that they are good at (these could be academic subjects, sports, practical skills or personal qualities eg. Being a good listener).

Ask students to write down 3 jobs they might be interested in doing when they are older.

Ask students to find other students in the class they know well and suggest a job they think their friend might be good at.

## Effort to Achieve a Goal



**Explain:** When Grandma Bibi told Little Tembo to 'reach for the stars' in the story, Little Tembo thought she needed to reach high up to touch a star in the sky.

**Ask:** What did Grandma Bibi really want Little Tembo to do?

**Ask:** What does a star represent in the story? (An achievement or goal)

**Explain:** Whenever we achieve something important it usually involves hard work.

**Ask:** Students to think about a time they have achieved something special that they are proud of.

**Activity:** Ask students to write down what they achieved and to explain what work was involved in reaching this achievement (Eg. Practising every day, training twice a week, reading lots of books, studying and remembering school work...)

## Encouragement

**Ask:** What is encouragement?

**Explain:** Although having skills and talents to use in the work we do in the future is important, so is the need to feel encouraged in what we are doing.

**Ask:** Who encourages Little Tembo in this story?

**Ask:** Students to think about and write down the names of people who encourage them the most. Who do they encourage?

