

ZANELE SITU: MY STORY

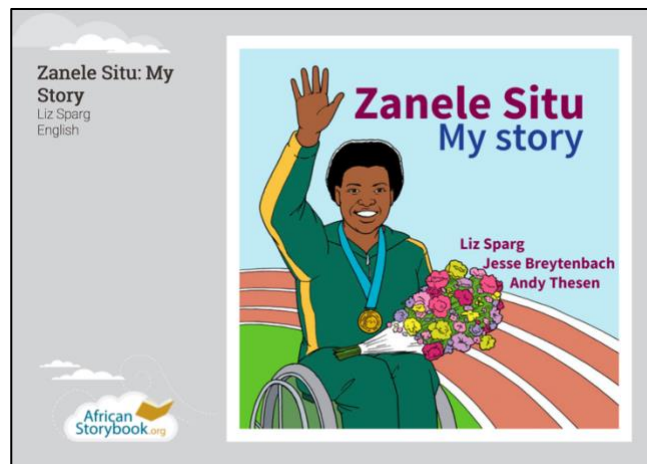
Suggested Activities for using READS to Develop Literacy Skills

Background

Here are a variety of suggestions on how teachers can use the story 'Zanele Situ: My Story' to support the development of literacy skills with older pupils (grade 6). Teachers are encouraged to tailor these activities to suit their classrooms.

To access this story:

- 1) Open up the READS catalogue.
- 2) Press on the search button and type in "Zanele Situ".
- 3) Press on the submit button.
- 4) Press on the read button.
- 5) Choose a language. The story will load in a new tab.



Comprehension Activities

PREDICTION

- 1) Tell learners you will read them a story.
- 2) Explain that you will pause periodically to ask them questions as you read.
- 3) Read the story aloud to the whole class.
- 4) Pause at the following pages and pose questions:
 - a) Cover: What do you think this story is about?
 - b) P.3: How do you think Zanele will explore her love for sports now that she isn't able to walk?
 - c) P.6: Do you think Zanele will succeed?
 - d) P. 9: Do you think Zanele will be make it to the Paralympics?
 - e) P. 11: Do you think Zanele will go home or stay to compete?
- 5) Solicit answers from several learners before moving on.
- 6) If desired, you can pose additional questions after you've finished reading the story. Learners can answer individually or in small groups.

SEQUENCING

Teacher Preparation

- 1) Print copies of the *Sequencing: Zanele Situ* worksheet found at the end of this document. Ensure you'll have enough for each group.
- 2) Cut out each row of the table you see on the worksheet.

Class Activity

- 1) Read the story aloud to the whole class.
- 2) Divide the class into groups of 4-6 learners.
- 3) Give each group the cut-up strips from the worksheet.
- 4) Instruct the groups to put the strips in the order they happened in the story.
- 5) Ask a group to state the order. The rest of the groups either agree or suggest a different order.
- 6) If the class isn't able to build the correct sequential order, reread the story and have them try again.

Additional challenge: you can print each page of the story. Groups pick 3-5 pages at random and put them in sequential order. You can repeat this process several times.

STORY ELEMENTS

- 1) Read the story aloud to the whole class.
- 2) Divide the class into groups of 4-6 learners.
- 3) Assign roles to the learners so each learner has something specific to do. Here are some examples:
 - a) Facilitator: leads the discussion and ensures everyone has a chance to speak.
 - b) Recorder: takes notes of the discussion.
 - c) Timekeeper: keeps track of remaining discussion time to help the team stay on track.
 - d) Summarizer: quickly restates the key points discussed. Ensures everyone agrees and nothing was left out.
 - e) Presenter: shares the group's work with the rest of the class.
- 4) Give each group one or two of the following questions:
 - Where and when does the story take place?
 - Who is Zanele?
 - What problems did Zanele overcome?
 - What are the Paralympics? How is Zanele involved in them?
 - Who helped Zanele on her journey? How did they help her?
 - How did the story end?



Tip: To help learners remember their question, print or write it out on a slip of paper.

- 5) Give learners time to discuss their questions with their group.
- 6) Bring the whole class back together, and pose each question one at a time. The learners should discuss the answers, with the group(s) that worked on the current question leading the discussion.

STORY RESPONSE

- 1) Read the story aloud to the whole class.
- 2) Divide the class into groups of 4-6 learners.
- 3) Assign roles to the learners so each learner has something specific to do. Here are some examples:
 - a) Facilitator: leads the discussion and ensures everyone has a chance to speak.
 - b) Recorder: takes notes of the discussion.
 - c) Timekeeper: keeps track of remaining discussion time to help the team stay on track.
 - d) Summarizer: quickly restates the key points discussed. Ensures everyone agrees and nothing was left out.
 - e) Presenter: shares the group's work with the rest of the class.
- 4) Give each group one of the following questions:
 - What lessons do you think Zenele wants people to learn from her story?
 - Do you think Paralympic winners feel differently about their medals? Why or why not?
 - Zenele demonstrates her resilience in this story. Describe a situation where you or a family member had to overcome a hard obstacle.
 - What do you like about this story?

Tip: To help learners remember their question, print or write it out on a slip of paper.

- 5) Give learners time to discuss their questions with their group.
- 6) Bring the whole class back together, and pose each question one at a time. The learners should discuss the answers, with the group(s) that worked on the current question leading the discussion.

SUMMARIZING – PAUSE DURING READING

- 1) Tell learners you will read them a story.
- 2) Explain that you will pause periodically to ask them questions as you read.
- 3) Read the story aloud to the whole class.
- 4) Pause at the following pages and pose questions:
 - a. P. 3: Who is this story about? What has happened so far?
 - b. P. 5: How does Zanele overcome her obstacles?



- c. P. 9: What are the Paralympics and why is it important to Zanele?
 - d. P.12: What has Zanele accomplished in this story?
 - e. End: Can you retell the story in your own words?
- 5) Solicit answers from several learners before moving on.
 - 6) If desired, you can pose additional questions.

SUMMARIZING – DISCUSS AFTER READING

- 1) Read the story aloud to the whole class.
- 2) Divide the class into groups of 4-6 learners.
- 3) Assign roles to the learners so each learner has something specific to do. Here are some examples:
 - Facilitator: leads the discussion and ensures everyone has a chance to speak.
 - Recorder: takes notes of the discussion.
 - Timekeeper: keeps track of remaining discussion time to help the team stay on track.
 - Summarizer: quickly restates the key points discussed. Ensures everyone agrees and nothing was left out.
 - Presenter: shares the group's work with the rest of the class.
- 4) Give each group one of the following questions:
 - a) How did the story begin?
 - b) What is the climax of the story?
 - c) What happens at the very end of the story?

Additional challenge: you can print the *Summarizing Exercise: Zanele Situ: My Story* worksheet found at the end of this document. Ensure you'll have enough for all groups. Ask each group to answer all three questions.

- 5) Give learners time to discuss their questions with their group.
- 6) Bring the whole class back together, and pose each question one at a time. The learners should discuss the answers, with the group(s) that worked on the current question leading the discussion.

VOCABULARY – PAUSE WHILE READING

Teacher Preparation

- 1) Read the story with an eye towards vocabulary words learners are likely to struggle with.
- 2) List these words and the pages they appear on. Here are some suggestions:
 - a) Mountains (p.1)
 - b) Weak (p.2)
 - c) Hospital (pages 2 & 3)
 - d) Task (p.4)
 - e) Polish (p.4)



- f) Wheelchair (p.4)
- g) Disability (p.5)
- h) Competition (pages 5, 8, & 13)
- i) Bronze (pages 5 & 9)
- j) Medal (p.5, 8, 9, & 12)
- k) Train (pages 6, 9, & 13)
- l) Music (p.7)
- m) Prize (p.8)
- n) Paralympics (pages 8, 9, 10, 12, & 13)
- o) Olympic (p.9)
- p) Athlete (p.9)
- q) Proud (p.12)
- r) Motto (p.13)

Class Activity

- 1) Read the story aloud to the whole class.
- 2) Pause at the words previously identified as difficult vocabulary words.
- 3) Prompt learners to define the word. For example, say “Matatiele is near Lesotho where there are many mountains. What are mountains?”
- 4) Solicit answers from learners, steering them to a proper definition.
- 5) (optional) Reserve a section of your blackboard for “Words of the Week”. Select one learner to write down these vocabulary words on the board. Throughout the week, use these words in various activities, such as writing new sentences.

VOCABULARY – (LEARNER-LEAD) PAUSE WHILE READING

Teacher Preparation

- 1) Print copies of the *Unknown Words: Zanele Situ* worksheet found at the end of this document. Ensure you will have enough for each learner.

Class Activity

- 1) Assign learners to read the story in pairs or small groups. The learners should each get a chance to read the story to their classmates.
- 2) Direct learners to write down any words they are unfamiliar with on the worksheet.
- 3) Once all learners in the group have 3 words listed, they should help each other formulate definitions for these words. Allow learners to present their definitions in a variety of ways, such as listing synonyms, drawing a picture, or acting it out.
- 4) Learners practice using these words in a new context by creating their own original sentences using those vocabulary words. If possible, they should create sentences that relate to their lives. For example, if the vocabulary word was ‘proud’, one sentence they could write is “My family is proud of me when I do well in school”.



- 5) Bring the whole class back together, and ask learners to share at least one of their vocabulary words and their definition. If another learner has the same word on their worksheet, that learner should share their definition as well. In these cases, ask learners if the definitions are the same.
- 6) Once a definition is agreed upon, each learner shares their new sentence using that vocabulary word.
- 7) (optional) Ask the class to create another original sentence using that word. This might be a good strategy to use for additional practice if learners didn't choose the same words.

VOCABULARY – LEARNERS SELECT VALUABLE WORDS

Teacher Preparation

- 1) Print copies of the *Words That are Important to me: Zanele Situ* worksheet found at the end of this document. Ensure you will have enough for each learner.

Class Activity

- 1) Assign learners to read the story in pairs or small groups. The learners should each get a chance to read the story to their classmates.
- 2) Direct learners to write down any words in the story that have a special meaning in their own lives.
- 3) Guide the learners to develop their own definitions for the words. If they aren't sure how to express their knowledge, they can ask their classmates for help. Allow learners to present their definitions in a variety of ways, such as listing synonyms, drawing a picture, or acting it out.
- 4) Lastly, learners express why it is a valuable word to them. They could express why they think it's an important word, or they can create new sentences that use the word in various contexts.
- 5) Bring the whole class back together, and ask learners to share at least one of their vocabulary words and their definition. If another learner has the same word on their worksheet, that learner should share their definition as well. In these cases, ask learners if the definitions are the same.
- 6) Once a definition is agreed upon, each learner shares why they feel it is a valuable word.

Writing Activities

SPELLING WORDS

Teacher Preparation

- 1) Read the story with an eye towards vocabulary words learners are likely to struggle with.
- 2) Create a list of these words. Here are some suggestions:



- a) Mountains (p.1)
- b) Weak (p.2)
- c) Hospital (pages 2 & 3)
- d) Task (p.4)
- e) Polish (p.4)
- f) Wheelchair (p.4)
- g) Disability (p.5)
- h) Competition (pages 5, 8, & 13)
- i) Bronze (pages 5 & 9)
- j) Medal (p.5, 8, 9, & 12)
- k) Train (pages 6, 9, & 13)
- l) Music (p.7)
- m) Prize (p.8)
- n) Paralympics (pages 8, 9, 10, 12, & 13)
- o) Olympic (p.9)
- p) Athlete (p.9)
- q) Proud (p.12)
- r) Motto (p.13)

Class Activity

- 1) Ask learners to pull out a sheet of paper and a pencil.
- 2) Tell learners you will read them a story.
- 3) Explain that you will pause periodically to ask them to write down a word.
- 4) Read the story aloud to the whole class.
- 5) Pause after the sentence containing the word has been read, and ask learners to write down the chosen word. For example, you might say “Matatiele is near Lesotho where there are many mountains.... Please write down the word ‘mountains’.”
- 6) Continue until you finish the story.
- 7) Collect the papers to review at a later date.
Alternatively, you can call on learners to spell the word aloud.

Additional challenge: Use the vocabulary words in the story as a pool for a spelling bee competition. Ask learners to spell a word aloud. If they need a hint, you can use the sentences in the book to provide context.

SPELLING SENTENCES

Teacher Preparation

- 1) Print copies of the *Spelling Sentences: Zanele Situ* worksheet found at the end of this document. Ensure you will have enough for each group.
This worksheet contains one sentence from each page of the story. The sentences are of varying lengths and difficulty. You may want to modify them to suit the needs of your learners.



- 2) Cut out each row of the table you see on the worksheet. If you have added additional sentences, ensure that there are roughly equal amounts of sentences for every learner.

Class Activity

This activity should take place after learners are familiar with the story.

- 1) Ask learners to pull out a sheet of paper and a pencil.
- 2) Assign learners into pairs or small groups.
- 3) Divide the sentences among the learners. Place them face down on the table.
For classrooms with a large number of low-ability readers and writers, give the sentences to the two strongest readers in the group. However, this will mean that these learners will have less opportunity to practice writing the sentences. You may also decide that the learners should be given a chance to read the sentences (via the story or the worksheet), just prior to the following steps.
- 4) Guide one learner to pick up one of the strips and read the sentence aloud. The second learner (or all other learners if working in small groups) should not be able to see the sentences on the worksheet.
- 5) Ask the other learner(s) to write the sentence. They may ask the reader to repeat the sentence as needed.
- 6) Once the other learner(s) have finished writing, the reader places the sentence in the middle of the group so that everyone can compare it to what was written down. Learners should correct any errors they see.
- 7) The reader repeats this process until all of their sentences have been read.
- 8) The learners switch roles. The second learner reads their sentences one at a time.
Steps 4-7 are repeated.
If learners are working in small groups, this process continues until all learners had a chance to be the reader.
- 9) Circulate to help ensure that learners are pronouncing words correctly and clearly.

NEW SENTENCES

Teacher Preparation

- 1) Print copies of the *Vocabulary: Zanele Situ* and *New Sentences* worksheets found at the end of this document. Ensure you will have enough for each group.
The first worksheet contains vocabulary words from the story. You may want to modify them to suit the needs of your learners.
- 2) Cut out each cell of the table you see on the *Vocabulary: Zanele Situ* worksheet, and place them in a bowl so that the words are facing down.

Class Activity

- 1) Divide the class into groups of 4-6 learners.



- 2) Assign roles to the learners so each learner has something specific to do. Here are some examples:
 - Facilitator: keeps the group on task and ensures everyone has a chance to speak.
 - Recorder: fills in the worksheet.
 - Timekeeper: keeps track of remaining discussion time to help the team stay on track.
 - Presenter: shares the group's work with the rest of the class.
- 3) Give each group a copy of the *New Sentences* worksheet.
- 4) Ask one learner from each group to choose two vocabulary cards at random. Alternatively, you can assign words to groups if you want to ensure that they suit the abilities of the group.
- 5) Give learners time to create sentences with their group.
- 6) Bring the whole class back together, and ask each group to share their sentences.

LETTERS TO THE CHARACTERS

- 1) Read the story aloud to the whole class.
- 2) Ask "Why do people send letters to others?"
- 3) Write learners' answers on the blackboard. Responses might include: share what is going on, express feelings, or give their opinions.
- 4) Divide the class into groups of 4-6 learners.
- 5) Ask each group to pick a character from the story. Some characters include: Zanele, her parents, and her teachers.
- 6) Assign roles to the learners so each learner has something specific to do. Here are some examples:
 - Facilitator: keeps the group on task and ensures everyone has a chance to speak.
 - Timekeeper: keeps track of remaining discussion time to help the team stay on track.
 - Presenter: shares the group's work with the rest of the class.
 - (optional) Illustrator: Draws a picture related to the contents of the letter.

Note: as this is a writing activity, each group member should take a turn writing part of the letter.
- 7) Help learners as they write a letter to their chosen character. The letter should express how they felt about the character's action in the story.
 - If positive, why was this a good choice to make?
 - If negative, what is an alternative action they should have taken?



- 8) Give learners time to create letters with their group.
- 9) Bring the whole class back together, and ask each group to share their letter.

Connect this Story to Values, PCI and Life Skills

IDENTIFYING AND DISCUSSING THEMES

Teacher Preparation

- 1) Read the story with an eye towards relevant themes. There are a few suggestions below, but you may feel other themes are more relevant to your learners or better suit what you have been discussing in class.
- 2) Create at least one discussion question for each theme you've identified.

Class Activity

This activity should take place after learners are familiar with the story.

- 1) Divide the class into small groups. If possible, try to have the same number of learners in a group as there are themes. For large classes you may want to have two groups with the same theme.
- 2) Give each group a theme and discussion questions. Here are some suggestions:
 - Perseverance: How does Zanele overcome her obstacles? Describe a situation where you encounter obstacles and what helped you overcome them.
 - Patriotism: How does Zanele support her country? Would Zanele be considered an African hero? Why or why not? How much of what you do every day reflects on your country?
 - Disability: How are disabled people treated in your community? How do you think they feel if people pity them? Zanele achieved a lot in her life. In what ways does she challenge stereotypes about disabilities?
 - Sports: What are the benefits exercise? Should everyone be required to play a sport? What is the most popular sport in your country? Why do you think it is your country's favourite? Why are the Olympics and Paralympics important?
- 3) Tell learners they should take notes as they discuss their theme. Remind learners that when answering questions about the story, they should support their thoughts with examples from the text.
- 4) Give groups time to fully explore their theme.
- 5) Rearrange the groups so that they comprise of one member of each of the previous groups. For example, using the suggested themes above, this new group would comprise of one member who discussed courage, one who examined helping others, one who explored peace, and one who considered responsibility.
- 6) Ask each member of the group to summarize what they had discussed in the previous group.



- 7) Tell learners they should take notes of what was said by their new team mates.
- 8) Give groups time to fully explain their theme.
- 9) Have learners assemble in their original groups. They share what they learned about the other themes.

(OPTIONAL FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITY) WRITE A STORY WITH THE SAME THEMES

- 1) Explain that you want learners to use these themes to create their own stories.
- 2) Divide the class into groups of 4-6 learners.
- 3) Assign roles to the learners so each learner has something specific to do. Here are some examples:
 - Facilitator: keeps the group on task and ensures everyone has a chance to speak.
 - Timekeeper: keeps track of remaining discussion time to help the team stay on track.
 - Illustrator: Draws a picture related to the contents of the page in the story.
 - Presenter: shares the group's work with the rest of the class.

Note: as this is a writing activity, each group member should take a turn writing part of the story.
- 4) Give learners time to create stories with their group.
- 5) Bring the whole class back together, and ask each group to read their story. Afterwards, they should state how the story addresses each theme.
- 6) (optional) Arrange for learners to read their stories to younger learners in the school.



SEQUENCING: ZANELE SITU

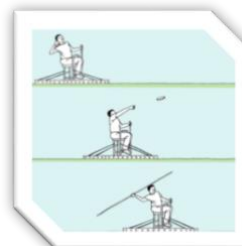
I had to stay in hospital for three years.



I went to a special school in Umtata, and my teachers encouraged me.



I decided to keep trying, and never give up. If you have a disability, you can still do something you love.



Then I heard that I was going to Sydney in Australia, to take part in the 2000 Paralympics.



I broke the world record and I got a gold medal! I was the first African woman to win a gold medal in the Paralympics.



SUMMARIZING EXERCISE

ZANELE SITU: MY STORY



How did the story begin?

What is the climax of the story?

What happens at the very end of the story?

UNKNOWN WORDS

ZANELE SITU: MY STORY



As you read the story, write down any words you are unfamiliar with. Ask your classmates to help you develop a definition for the word. Try thinking of synonyms as well. Finally, create a new sentence using that word.

Word	Your definition
	Create a new sentence

Word	Your definition
	Create a new sentence

Word	Your definition
	Create a new sentence

WORDS THAT ARE IMPORTANT TO ME

ZANELE SITU



As you read the story, write down any words that have a special meaning for you. Write down a definition for this word (you can ask your classmates for help). Finally, write down why this word is important and how it connects to your life.

Word	Your definition
	Why is it an important word? How it is relevant to your life?

Word	Your definition
	Why is it an important word? How it is relevant to your life?

Word	Your definition
	Why is it an important word? How it is relevant to your life?

SPELLING SENTENCES: ZANELE SITU

My father was a builder and he moved from place to place to find work.

I was very tired and I slept many hours every day.

It was a very busy school, with lots of activities like sport and sewing.

We had to clean our rooms, polish our shoes and clean our wheelchairs.

If you have a disability, you can still do something you love.

I wanted to get better and better at my sports, so I trained very hard.

I started to dream about maybe competing in the Paralympics one day.

I just wanted to go home again.

I broke the world record and I got a gold medal!

I was the first African woman to win a gold medal in the Paralympics.

I was so happy and very proud.

My motto is: Keep going, follow your dreams and never give up.

VOCABULARY: ZANELE SITU

Hospital	Task	Polish
Wheelchair	Disability	Competition
Bronze	Medal	Train
Prize	Paralympics	Olympics
Athlete	Proud	Motto

NEW SENTENCES

Ask your teacher to give you a vocabulary word. Write it down in the space below. Then create 5 unique sentences using that word.

Chosen Word	
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Write 5 sentences using this word.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

Chosen Word	
-------------	--

Write 5 sentences using this word.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____