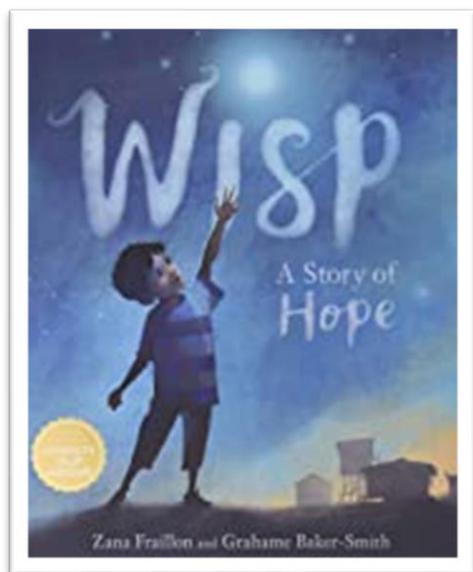


# Read for Pleasure

## Wisp – A Story of Hope

By Zana Fraillon and Grahame Baker-Smith



One day, a Wisp flew in on the evening wind.

Dust rose up in swarms around it, feet trampled it into the dirt, nobody noticed it.

Nobody, except Idris.

The powerful and uplifting story of a young refugee who discovers the power of storytelling as well as the importance of hope,

### Title Talk

The title of this story is: *Wisp – A Story of Hope*.

- Say the word WISP in your head. How do you think it might be said? Choose three words from the grid and discuss why you think this might be.

soft	unkind	gentle	hard	kind	dangerous
heavy	safe	unfriendly	light	rough	friendly

- Now read the second part of this book's title. Which of these four words do you think is the most important? Why?
- What might this word tell us about A] the Wisp and B] the story?



## **Cover Chat**

Now look at the cover of this picture book.

- After considering the blurb, who do you think we see?
  - What do you think Idris is reaching for? Why might this be?
- Link this to the word HOPE.
- How might he be feeling? Why might he be feeling this way?
  - What do you notice in the bottom right-hand corner? Describe them. Do they look like ordinary homes that you or I might live in?
  - What might this tell us about where Idris lives and his childhood?

Knowledge: each home silhouetted on the front and back cover is depicted in more detail on the opening two pages of this book.

## **Page 1-2**

- In what kind of world does Idris live?
- What colour dominates these opening pages?
- What feelings might we associate with this colour?
- Which word does this colour remind us of on the first page?
- How can SHADOWS rule? Discuss.
- Can you spot the wall on page 2?
- Why do you think it has been built? Why do you think it's so tall?
- Which word is repeated twice in the opening sentence?
- Might this have been deliberate? Why?
- What might it tell us about how Idris feels about himself?
- How are the ideas of loneliness and isolation depicted on page 2?



## **Page 3-4**

- As well as the wall, what else can you see? Why might this be there?
- What does this tell us about how the people who live in this camp are being treated? How would this make them feel?
- Why do you think we are told there are no trees and no rivers or seas where Idris lives?
- How can you live in a world full of people but still feel alone? Discuss.

### **Page 5-6**

- One day, a Wisp flies into the camp. How beautiful does it look?
- Why might nobody except Idris notice it when it looks so bright and beautiful? Discuss.
- There are two words that aren't real words written on page 6. Can you find them?
- Why might the words GENTLIED and SOFTLIED appear on this page? What might it suggest about Idris and his learning of English?
- What did Idris feel when he picked up the Wisp? Might this be significant?

### **Page 7-8**

- The Wisp becomes excited. How is this depicted A] by the words that are chosen to describe the Wisp's journey and B] how these words have been placed upon page 7?
- Can you see the Wisp? Who might they want to visit and why?
- Why do you think Idris is running after it? Might he be feeling excited too?
- At whose feet does the Wisp eventually stop?
- What do you notice about these feet? Why might they be bare?
- Can you spot a wooden staff on page 8? Why might it be needed?

Remember: we have been told there are no trees in the camp. What might this tell us about how long this man has had this staff and why he continues to hold it?

- What question does Idris ask? Why do you think he asks it?

### **Page 9-10**

- What are we told about the man's eyes?
- Why do you think he picks up the Wisp and cradles it in his hands?
- What do you think the Wisp says to the old man when he holds it to his ear? Why would this make him smile?

Remember: When telling stories from long ago, we often begin them with the word ONCE.

- We are about to be told the story of the old man. Look at the illustration on page 10. Whose memory do you think this is? Why?



### **Page 11-12**

- Look at how the old man's telling of his story has been depicted. What do you think the old man used to do for a living when he was younger?
- The old man is telling HIS story. Why is this important? Discuss.
- Why do you think the old man begins to sing?
- Does the Wisp enjoy listening to the old man's story? How can you tell?
- Who else enjoys listening to the old man? Why might this be?
- Why might the telling of his story and remembering happier times brighten the man's eyes? Discuss.

### **Page 13-14**

- Having heard this story, the Wisp is keen to hear another. Who does the Wisp want to listen to next?
- Why do you think the Wisp chose this person? Might it have chosen her for the same or different reasons than when it chose the old man? Discuss.
- Look at the woman on page 14. We are told that a sad was ETCHED into her face. What does this word mean? What does it tell us about this woman's life?
- Might this be why the Wisp wants to hear her story?
- Again, we do not hear what the Wisp says to the woman when she holds it to her ear, but a light flickered in her eyes. Why might this be?
- Which word does she use to begin her story? Have we heard this word before? From who?
- How does the Wisp feel when the woman says ONCE? Why might this be?

### **Page 15-16**

- The woman's memory RIPPLED through the air. This is a word we often associate with WATER. And yet we have already been told that there are no rivers to drink or seas in which to swim. Why, then, do you think this word has been used?
- The woman is telling HER story. Why is this important? Discuss.
- What story does she tell the Wisp? How is this depicted?
- Who else enjoys listening to the woman's story? Why might this be?

- Why might telling her story and remembering happier times make the sad on her face not as deep as before? Discuss.

Knowledge: a rainbow (a symbol of hope) appears on these pages, as do many colourful butterflies (a symbol of migration and an image of fragile beauty). You may wish to discuss these symbols in connection with the woman in more detail with older readers.

### **Page 17-18**

- What does the Wisp do over the next coming days?
- What would this mean for those telling their stories and for those who listened to them? Discuss.
- Why would this be a joyous time for those living in the camp?
- Why do you think planet Earth is illustrated on page 17? What does it suggest about where the stories that are being told come from?
- Why do you think the Wisps enjoy listening to stories told from A THOUSAND KINGDOMS?
- What might this suggest about the stories WE might want to listen to and read? Discuss.

### **Page 19-20**

- Why could Idris not tell HIS story?
- How would this have made him feel? Why?
- How is this depicted on page 19?



### **Page 21-22**

- Idris does not hold the Wisp to his ear like the others. This particular Wisp does not speak to him. Idris simply holds it close to his heart and is comforted by it. What does this Wisp give young Idris?
- Look at how this PROMISE is illustrated on page 22 and how these words appear brightly in the shadow of the wall. Idris' seed of understanding begins to grow taller and stronger than the wall itself.

What do you think the Wisp's promise to Idris will be? Discuss.

### **Page 23-24**

- What does this PROMISE mean to Idris? How does it make him feel?
- Why do you think everyone stops and smiles when Idris begins to dance with joy?
- Why do you think they all feel this promise, when it was only given Idris? Discuss.
- The colour of the Wisps has changed from a cool blue to a radiant gold. Might this be significant?

### **Page 25-26**

- Here we see the life that Idris has forgotten, the life he should be living if it wasn't for him living in the camp. Describe this scene. What makes it so happy and loving?
- Do you think the Wisp might be showing Idris a scene from the future rather than the past? Why might this be? Discuss.
- Can you spot Idris riding his bike?
- Who do you think the other people in this scene are? What are they doing? Why are they there?
- Do you notice the river and the trees? How does this contrast to where Idris lives now? Look back at pages 3-4.

### **Page 27-28**

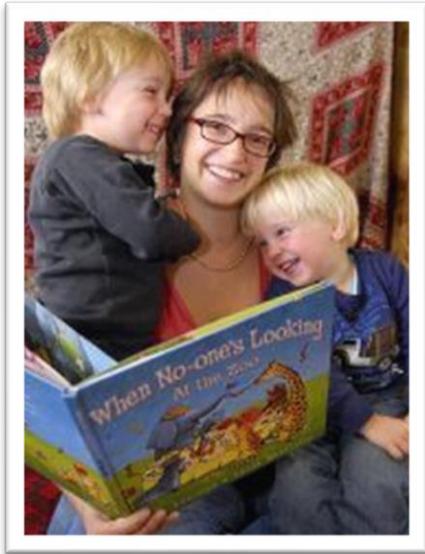
- What does Idris dream of doing?
- Why do you think he dreams of doing this?
- Again, we see a tree and a river but we also see a bird flying in the sky above Idris' head. What might this be a symbol of? Discuss.



### **Page 29**

- Whose hands do you think we see holding the final Wisp?
- This Wisp shines bigger and brighter than any Wisp we have previously seen. Why might this be?
- Which word is written in the Wisp?
- Why do you think it is the only word that appears on this final page and completes Idris' story?

**A note about this book:**



The perfect companion to  
Reading Rocketeers: **Unit 5.7**

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For a long time, my favourite picture book was Carol Ann Duffy's *The Tear Thief*. If you have ever heard me speak about why I love this book, you will understand that it would have to have taken something very special to knock it off my number one spot.

This book did just that and I doubt that any picture book will be as powerful and as poignant so as to take away its crown. This truly is the most wonderful and precious of picture books and it is a sheer delight to both read alone and to share with others.