

# Reading for Meaning

**Welcome to the Reading for  
Meaning programme.**

**We hope that you will have fun  
reading stories and doing activities  
with learners.**

**Remember, nurturing and  
supporting a child is important  
for their physical, emotional and  
academic development.**



**Part of the Zero Dropout campaign working towards  
halving the rate of school dropout by 2030.**

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for Meaning

# The boy, the bullies, and the bicycle

STORY GUIDE

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## **EACH READER NEEDS...**

The story

Pens or pencils

Paper

# The Story



## INTRODUCE THE STORY

Vuzi and Siphon were the biggest bullies at their school. Everyone was scared of them. One day their bullying turned into their most horrible nightmare. After that fateful day, things were never the same again...



## READ THE STORY...

Read the story aloud, with expression. Change your voice when different characters speak.

Pause briefly for commas, full stops etc. and between paragraphs.

# The boy, the bullies, and the bicycle

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One hot summer afternoon, when I was riding my new bike home from school, my life changed. The bike was the best present I had ever been given, and I had shown it off at school that day.

But when I was near my home, Vuzi and Siphon were waiting for me. They blocked my way on the narrow path from the road to my home. "Oh no!" I thought. "Not this. Oh please, not this."

Vuzi and Siphon were two bullies from school who had made my life miserable for the whole of the first term. Vuzi was large and round, like a hippo on two legs, and Siphon was thin and fast like a lizard.

I slowly came to a stop in front of them. I tried to hide the shaking in my legs.

Vuzi sneered at me: "You think you are a rich boy on your bike? Too rich to walk home, are you?"

"Hey bra," said Siphon. "Why don't we show him

how to ride properly? This country boy rides his bike like a donkey.”

Then Vuzi kicked my leg from under me and sent me, my bike and my school books flying into the dust. Quick as a flash Siphso grabbed my bike and rode off wildly through the veld, laughing at me and shouting insults. “Donkey! Donkey!”

I tried to run after him, but Vuzi grabbed me from behind and started squeezing the breath out of me.

I don't know what happened inside me, but something changed. Maybe it was all the weeks of their bullying that I had suffered. Or maybe it was because I was scared of my bike being broken. Or maybe it was Vuzi's hot breath on my neck and feeling my life being squeezed out of me.

Whatever it was, I made a snap decision to defend myself. I thought “No! Here is where I stand up for myself.” I stamped the heel of my

shoe onto the top of Vuzi's foot. With a yell of pain and surprise he let me go.

I jumped away and he dived at me. But as he did this, he tripped and fell on the ground hard. He started bleating like a baby goat.

A little way up the path I saw Siphon skid to a stop, turn and come rushing back to see what the noise was. I thought: "Uh-oh! Here comes trouble!" and dived into the long grass. I was really hoping he wouldn't see me but as he came racing past me, I thought: "Okay, it's now or never!" I leaped out and grabbed my bike handlebars.

Siphon went flying and landed with a thud against an ant-hill, and all the breath was knocked out of him. He lay there, kicking his legs like an overturned beetle, and made horrible gurgling noises as he battled for air. Then he started crying and groaning.

It was over. As Vuzi bleated and Siphon groaned,

I stood up straight and said very clearly: “Don’t you ever try to bully me again!” Then I calmly picked up my books, grabbed my bicycle and rode the rest of the way home.

I couldn’t believe what I had done, and now my legs were really shaking, but I suddenly felt stronger. It felt as if a heavy load had been lifted from my shoulders.

The next day they were absent from school.

When they did eventually come back to school, limping and bruised, everybody knew what had happened. Siphon and Vuzi never bothered me again.

I do not think fighting should be used to solve problems, but this experience taught me the importance of standing up for myself.

And that is the end of the story.

*Based on Mike Hart 'The Bicycle' (Fundza)*



## WORD FOCUS

Ask the Readers to choose words that they find difficult and write them on a sheet of paper.

Ask them to use a dictionary or ask someone else at home what those words mean in their home language. Help them out if necessary.



## SECOND READING...

Once you've worked out the meaning of the words, read the story again out loud.

# Activities

## CHARADES

- 1 Ask the Readers to write down the following words each on a piece of paper:

**scared**

**walking**

**limping**

**tripped**

**leaped**

**kicked**

**squeezed**

**stamped**

All these words can be found in the story.

**2** If they have a person to play with at home, they must ask them to play the charades game.

**3** The Reader (who has the words) acts the action of the word *without saying it out loud* and the other person has to guess what the word is. For example, if the Reader chooses the word **scared**, they must act like they're scared and the person they are playing with must guess what they are, and say it out loud.

They can add more words, they don't even have to be words that are in the story!

**4** If the Reader doesn't have someone at home to play with, you can play with them by asking them to send you an emoji/emoticon/picture that describes the action and you must guess what it is.

# Ending

Praise the Readers for their participation.

Ask if they enjoyed the story, and what they liked best. Tell them you enjoyed it too.

Say goodbye, and say how much you look forward to seeing them next time.

**ZERO  
DROP/OUT**

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