

Dear fellow book lovers,

It did not take long for me to decide which two picture books I wanted to share with you.

The first is my favourite, a book I discovered quite by chance while sheltering from the rain in a charity shop. This book brightened up my day when I first read it, and it continues to do so whenever I get the opportunity to read it again.

For me, it is picture book perfection.

My second choice is a book that was given to me by a very good friend of mine who, sadly, is no longer with us. Each time I pick it up it gladdens my heart. I still remember the conversation we had about this book over a cup of lemon tea and a slice (or two) of Battenberg in her back garden, the birds singing, her cat napping. And I am grateful for having been given such a beautiful gift and wonderful memory from such a loving friend.

This is how we discover books and why we treasure them - for the happiness they bring into our lives.

Passing on our passion for books and for stories is a pleasure in itself. But more than that, it helps us to understand and connect with each other. Sharing this passion helps us to grow and become better people.

If you get the chance to read these two books, you will notice a close link between the two.

Both include a character who lives in a world of uncertainty. Both characters have to face their fears while living in a land where they don't feel they belong. Yet Idris and Yuyi both overcome these challenges through the telling of stories. More importantly, they tell us their story and we are enriched because of it.

Whether spoken under the stars and into the wind or written down on the pages of a book sewn together by their own hand, stories will always find a way of being told. They tell others about who we are and what we hope to be. They allow our dreams to breathe.

On my travels, I often hear people say that reading is a gift. It is not. It is a human right. Without being able to read, many doors of opportunity remain forever closed.

Like keys, books and stories enable us to fulfil our potential, they allow us to discover ourselves as well as to appreciate others. They fuel our creativity and our imagination.

Books make us think. They make us smile. They make us laugh. They move us.

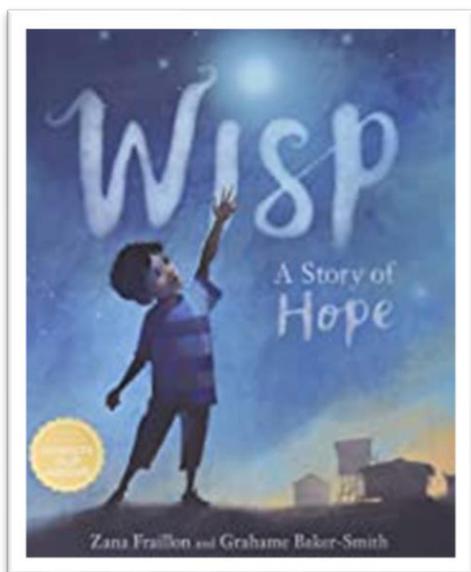
I hope you enjoy these books as much as I do. And if you do, please pass that pleasure on.

John

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,

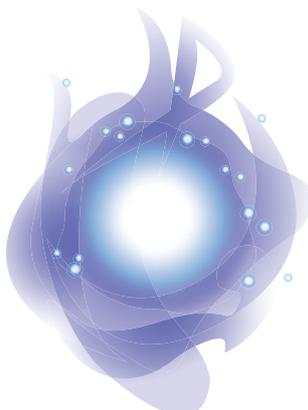
Title Talk

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

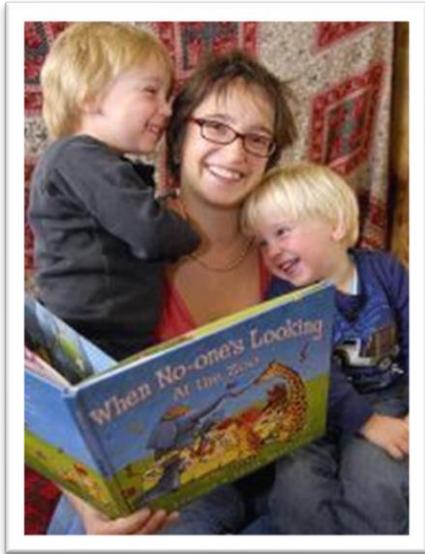
- What does Idris dream of doing?
- Why do you think he dreams of doing this?
- Again, we see a tree and a river but we also see a bird flying in the sky above Idris' head. What might this be a symbol of? Discuss.



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**

[@ZanaFrailon](#)



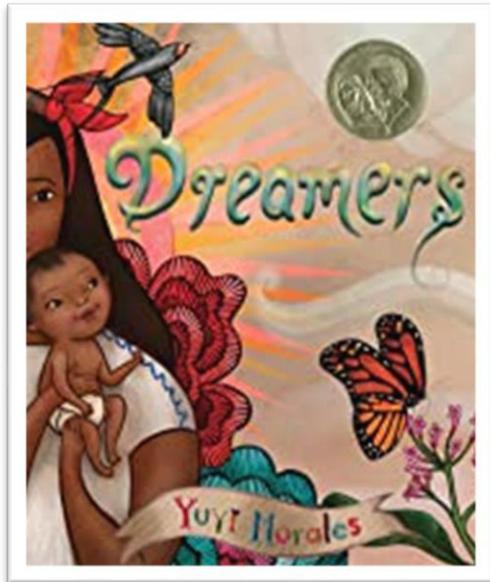
For a long time, my favourite picture book was Carol Ann Duffy's *The Tear Thief*. If you have ever heard me speak about why I love this book, you will understand that it would have to have taken something very special to knock it off my number one spot.

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.

Read for Pleasure

Dreamers

By Yuyi Morales



What if you dreamed of a new life...
and it came true?

What if that new life led you to a new
country where no one spoke your
language, where you felt alone and
ignored?

What if you had to make that new place
your home?

What if you found that home
in a world full of books?

Based on the experiences of the author,
who immigrated to the United States from
Mexico in 1994.

Title Talk

The title of this story is: Dreamers.

- Where and when do we usually dream?
- What might we dream of? Why might we dream of this?
- We can also dream of a better life, one filled with happiness and hope. What might we have to do to achieve such a dream?
- What would you do if the only way to fulfil this dream was to move to a new country, a country where no one spoke your language, where you felt alone and ignored? Would you still go?
- If you did go, what could you do to overcome these barriers to happiness?
- Would such barriers be easy to overcome? Why might this be?
- Who might help us if we were finding it difficult? Why is this important?
Discuss.



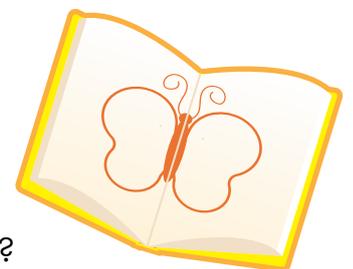
Cover Chat

Now look at the cover of this picture book.

- Open the book and lie it flat so that you can see its cover in full.
- Here we see a mother holding her child. Which of these two characters looks happier? Why might this be?
- When we have a dream, it is often about the life we hope to live in the future. Where is the baby looking? Might this be significant?
- Where is the mother looking? Why might she be looking at us directly?
- How might she be feeling at this time? What might she be thinking?
- This cover is really very clever. Look at the mother's warm, gentle smile. Slowly tilt the book as though you were putting the book face down and no longer wanted to read her story. What happens to her smile? What happens to her eyes? Why might this might be? Discuss.
- Now slowly lift the book as though you were picking it up to show and to share her story with someone else. What do you notice? What happens to her eyes? What happens to her smile?
- What message might the author be trying to send the reader? Discuss.
- To the left of the mother and child, what can you see in the distance?
- What might this smoking volcano represent? Why might it have been placed on the back of this book cover and not the front?
- To the right of the mother and child, what can you see?
- What might a bird flying in the sky and a butterfly feeding on a beautiful flower represent?
- Might these images have been placed on the front cover for a reason?
- Finally, behind this image of a loving mother holding her baby, we glimpse the sun rising in all its glory. Why might this be?

Page 1-2

- Why do you think the author begins this story with I?
- This story is her story. How is this reflected in the illustration?
- How important is it that we know that the story we are about to read belongs to the author herself? Discuss.
- Can you spot the Spanish word for LOVE?
- Why might the word AMOR appear on these pages twice?



Remember: The author is from Mexico and is about to journey to the United States. Might seeing these two languages placed side by side be significant?

Why might these particular words have been written by hand?

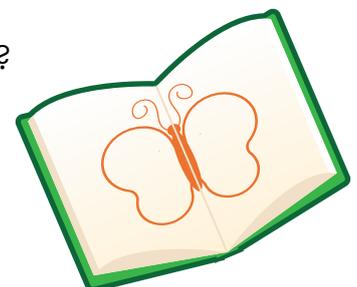
- Look up the word RESPLENDENT. What does it mean?
- Why do you think the author chooses to use this word to describe her life after the birth of her first child?
- How is the brightness and the beauty of her life at this time depicted? Have we seen this before on the front cover? If so, where?

Page 3-4

- Look at Yuyi's backpack. Why might she have packed a pencil?
- Have we seen this pencil before? Where? What did it write?
- Yuyi tells us that she crossed a bridge, a crossing that felt as long as the universe itself. Explore this idea. Why might Yuyi feel that crossing this bridge was A] a long and difficult journey to take and B] a journey that was full of infinite possibilities and hope?
- Do you notice the barbed wire on the bridge? Why might it be there?
- The phrase ADIOS CORAZON is seen at the foot of the page, hand stitched into a piece of ribbon. It means GOODBYE HEART. Might this be why her journey felt so long and so difficult? Discuss.
- Can you see the birds and the butterflies again? Do they remind you of anything? If so, what?
- Can you spot a snake in this scene on page 4? Why might it be there? What might this snake suggest about this Yuyi's journey?

Page 5-6

- Here we see Yuyi and her baby looking out over the new country she is about to call home. How did she feel at this time? Why would this be?
- What is an IMMIGRANT. Look this word up using an online dictionary. How is this word A] edged with excitement and filled with expectation and B] tinged with sadness? Discuss.
- What do you notice in the night sky on page 6?
- Why might both the snake and the butterfly be there?



Page 7-8

- Look up the word MIGRANT? What does this word mean? Does it remind you of a word we have already looked at? Which word is this? How do you think these two words are linked?
- Which words and phrases can you see written in the clouds?
- Why do you think these words have been written backwards?
- How might this make you feel? Why would this be?
- What kind of shop do you notice nearby? Might this be significant?

Page 9-10

- On page 9 Yuyi speaks a single word of English when speaking on the phone. Why is this small positive step so important?
- Did Yuyi ever make any mistakes when she first lived in America?
- How is this depicted on page 10?
- Can you spot the butterfly on this page? Why do you think it is here?

Page 11-12

- There is a Spanish word on these pages. Can you find it?
- What do you think CAMINANTES means? How do you think it might be pronounced?
Knowledge: Translated into English, this word means WALKER.
- Why do you think Yuyi had to walk everywhere? How is this depicted?
- Interestingly, Yuyi has found a stroller she can push her baby around in. What does this tell us about Yuyi as a mother?
- We are told that she takes thousands of steps while looking around until the day she finds something. We see them both staring up towards a building or sign of some sort. What type of building could this be?

Page 13-14

- Where has Yuyi and her baby stepped into and found?
- Why would finding the public library be so important for Yuyi? Discuss.
- Notice that the butterfly (a symbol of migration). It is as though it has been leading Yuyi to this place of knowledge and possibilities.

- Look back at pages 7-8, when Yuyi was stood on the edge of the city. What kind of shop did she not go in?
- If books are important and would help her, why do you think she passed by this shop and did not go in at this stage of her journey? Discuss.

Interestingly, her butterfly does not appear on these pages.

- A library is a PUBLIC building, where books can be taken out FREELY and SHARED with ANYONE. Why is this so important?
- What would this opportunity mean to A] Yuyi and B] her child? Why?

Page 15-16

- Only two words appear on these pages. Which words are they?
- Are these words positive or negative in nature here? Why is this?
- Contrast this with the two words that Yuyi felt when she first entered the library on the previous two pages.

Interestingly, when Yuyi is feeling negative, she reverts back to Spanish. However, when she feels positive, she continues to speak English. Why might this be? Discuss.

Page 17-18

- Books are like keys. They open doors to knowledge and unlock our potential. How is this depicted on these pages?
- What else can reading and sharing books unlock? Discuss.



Page 19-20

- Which word stands out on page 19?
- Why is this important when you don't know a language very well?
- Who does Yuyi learn to TRUST?
- What does the librarian give Yuyi and her baby?
- Why might it be said that the librarian is also trusting when she does this?
- Why is this important when it comes to building a strong community? Discuss.

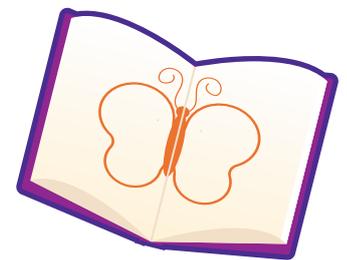
Notice that the butterfly reappears and flies towards the librarian.

Page 21-22

- What did Yuyi learn to do?
- Did it surprise you that some adults can't read and have to learn?
- What does this tell us about Yuyi and her strength of character?
- Why do you think she wanted to learn to read at this time?
- What did books become to Yuyi?
- What does this tell us about how important the library and its books were to Yuyi?
- Is our school/class/local library as important to us? Discuss.

Page 23-24

- Why did Yuyi learn to read?
- Is Yuyi the only one learning to read and write?
Notice the use of the word OUR on page 24.
- What is Yuyi making? Why do you think she is making it?
- What is the baby holding? Why is this significant?
- How might making and writing a book enable Yuyi to tell us her story?
- Why might she want to do this?
- How important is it that we read and listen to her story once it has been written? Discuss.



Page 25-26

- Here we see Yuyi and her child drawing on the blank pages of the book Yuyi has created herself. What is Yuyi drawing?
- Why do you think Yuyi would want to write down and illustrate her story?
- We see her drawing a bird. Yet no birds appear in her story. Why do you think she is drawing it?
- We also see the drawing of a shooting star. Might this be significant?
- What is Yuyi's child (now standing on his own two feet) holding?
- Why might he be holding a rocket and reaching for the stars?

Page 27-28

- What does Yuyi tell us she and her son are? Discuss each one. Relate them to yourself where possible.
 - * We are **stories**: what stories might these be?
 - * We are **two languages**: which two languages are they?
How is this depicted on page 28? Who is writing these words?
Compare how Yuyi writes these words at the start of this story.
 - * We are **lucha**: what does this Spanish word mean? Why use it?
 - * We are **resilience**: why is this an important quality to have?
 - * We are **hope**: what hope do libraries and books give us? Why?
 - * We are **dreamers (sonadores)**: why do we all dream of a better life?
 - * We are **Love**/We are **Amor**: why must we always remember this?

A note about this book:



The perfect companion to
Reading Rocketeers: **Unit 2.6**

WWW.YUYIMORALES.COM



Following her story, the author gives us a factual account of her being an immigrant and decorates this with butterflies.

“One of the most important things I learned at the library is that through books we can find our path and our purpose.”

It is here we learn why Yuyi gave her book the title: Dreamers.

“Kelly (her son) and I were Dreamers in the sense that all immigrants, regardless of our status, are Dreamers: we enter a new country carried by hopes and dreams, and carrying our own special gifts, to build a better future.”

She goes on to provide us with a list of books that have inspired her (and still do). This list of books she shares freely in the hope that it will inspire others.

“To Dreamers of all kinds, especially those who have brought their abundant gifts to a new land – you are the inspiration for this book.”