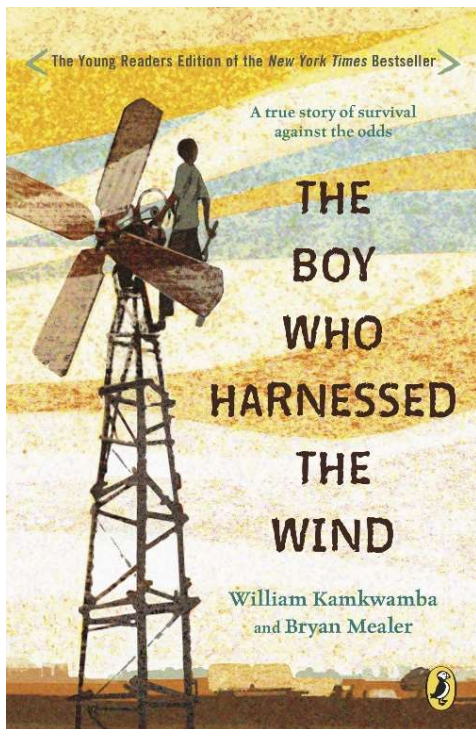




# Family Guide



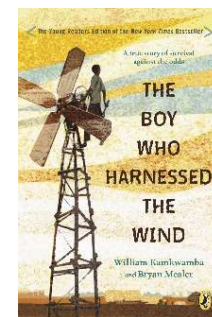
## *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind* by William Kamkwamba and Bryan Mealer

*Creating a culture of literacy in every home.*

[www.readtothem.org](http://www.readtothem.org)

@readtothem





## Discussion Guide

# *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind* by William Kamkwamba and Bryan Mealer

### Quotes to Discuss

**Chapter One: When Magic Ruled the World** – *“Even though we lived in a small village in Africa, we did many of the same things kids do all over the world; we just used different materials.”* (p. 20) What do you and your friends have in common with William and his friends? What is different?

**Chapter Two: Khamba** – *“As always, I kept my tools and trap-making materials inside a cloth sack that tied to the end of my hoe.”* (p. 40) We all have things we carry with us whenever we leave home. How do your things compare to William’s? He is preparing to set traps with his items. What are you preparing for with yours?

**Chapter Three: Discovering a Thing Called Science** – *“I was filled with the desire to understand, and the questions never stopped coming.”* (p. 51) Do you share William’s insatiable curiosity about science? If not science, what are you curious about?

**Chapter Four: The Uncertain Life of an African Farmer** – *“Growing a good maize crop is difficult and takes a whole year.”* (p. 63) Most people are pretty removed from the process of producing food. Have you ever thought about the work that goes into the apple you had in your lunch or the grain that went into your cereal? Pick your favorite food and think through the process that brings it to your plate.

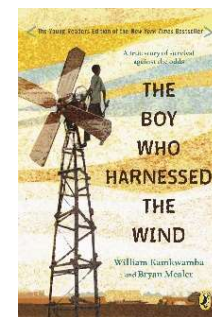
**Chapter Five: Malawi Begins to Starve** – *“To these men, the hunger was invisible.”* (p. 96) William observes this about some wealthy men eating near starving villagers. Is there hunger that is invisible in your community? Why does that happen?

**Chapter Six: My School Assignment** – *“I had allowed myself a glimpse of the dream, and now it was crumbling all around.”* (p. 111) Would it have been better for William if he had never gone to school at all to avoid this disappointment?

**Chapter Seven: A Time of Dying** – *“So long, Khama. You were a good friend.”* (p. 127) This is such a sad chapter. Can you identify with what William is going through? How would you comfort him?



## *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind* by William Kamkwamba and Bryan Mealer



### Discussion Guide

#### Quotes to Discuss

**Chapter Eight: Twenty Days** – *“There’s plenty of dowe for everyone.”* (p. 134) After being so hungry for so long, finally there is enough food for everyone. What food would you choose for your first meal after near starvation?

**Chapter Nine: The Library** – *“A windmill meant more than just power. It was freedom.”* (p. 150) How would a windmill give William freedom? Freedom from what? Freedom to do what? Is there something in your life that can give you the same kind of freedom?

**Chapter Ten: Harvest Time** – *“...the maize rows appeared like the bars of my own prison.”* (p. 171) The corn that saves the family from famine also imprisons William. How can both be true? What invisible prisons do we live in? What can we do to escape?

**Chapter Eleven: The Windmill Comes to Life** – *“Since there is no word in Chichewa for windmill, I used the phrase magesti a mphepo. ‘Electric wind,’ I answered.”* (p. 198) Have you ever thought about the need to create new words when a new idea or invention enters a community? Can you think of words that had to be created for inventions you use? What about for new ideas?

**Chapter Twelve: Bigger and Brighter** – *“Not long after wiring the house, I walked into the living room one night and found my family sitting together.”* (p. 215) Having electricity meant that William’s family could have hobbies like crocheting or listening to the radio. We use electricity all the time, but sometimes it goes out. What changes in your home when the power goes out? (Are there any benefits?)

**Chapter Thirteen: The Restless Inventor** – *“It was around then I started noticing the ghosts. Not real ghosts, but boys who’d dropped out of school and now loitered in the trading center without purpose.”* (pp. 226-227) Can you understand how a person could become a ghost like this? How can a person fight against that tendency?

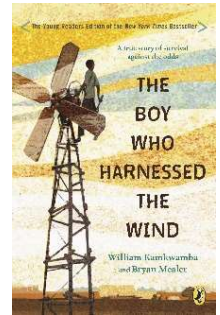
**Chapter Fourteen: The World Discovers Wimbe** – *“Mchazime, this chap is a genius.”* (p. 247) What does it mean to be a genius?

**Chapter Fifteen: Meeting Ted and Tom** – *“A huge weight seemed to leave my chest and fall to the assembly hall floor. I could finally relax. I was now among colleagues.”* (p. 267) What does it feel like when you finally find your people?



## Connection Guide

# *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind* by William Kamkwamba and Bryan Mealer



### Connect with Read to Them

Hashtags: [#ReadtoThem](#), [#1School1Book](#), [#1District1Book](#)

Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Pinterest: [@readtothem](#)

Email: [programs@readtothem.org](mailto:programs@readtothem.org)

Website: <https://www.readtothem.org/>

### Connect with author William Kamkwamba

Twitter: [@wkamkwamba](#)

Website: [www.williamkamkwamba.com](http://www.williamkamkwamba.com)

### Connect with author Bryan Mealer

Twitter: [@bryanmealer](#)

Facebook: [@bryanamealer](#)

Website: [www.bryanmealer.net](http://www.bryanmealer.net)

### Connect with the publisher, Puffin Books, a division of Penguin

Facebook: [@PenguinGroupUSA](#)

Instagram and Twitter: [@PenguinUSA](#)

Website: [www.penguin.com/youngreaders](http://www.penguin.com/youngreaders)

*Creating a culture of literacy in every home.*

[www.readtothem.org](http://www.readtothem.org)

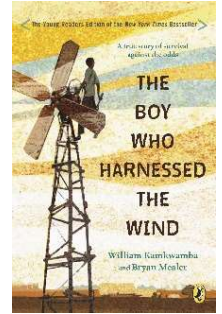
[@readtothem](#)





## Next Book Connections

# *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind* by William Kamkwamba and Bryan Mealer



If you loved *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind*, here are some other books your family might enjoy reading together...

### Picture books with similar themes:

- *I Built a Car* by Chris Van Dusen
- *The Most Magnificent Thing* by Ashley Spires
- *Rosie Revere, Engineer* by Andrea Beaty, illustrated by David Roberts
- *Balloons Over Broadway: The True Story of the Puppeteer of Macy's Parade* by Melissa Sweet
- *Earmuffs for Everyone!: How Chester Greenwood Became Known as the Inventor of Earmuffs* by Meghan McCarthy
- *Mr. Ferris and His Wheel* by Kathryn Gibbs Davis and Gilbert Ford
- *Planting The Trees of Kenya* by Claire A. Nivola
- *Mama Miti* by Donna Jo Napoli, illustrated by Kadir Nelson
- *Galimoto* by Karen Lynn Williams, illustrated by Catherine Stock
- *Malala's Magic Pencil* by Malala Yousafzai, illustrated by Kerascoët
- *Children Just Like Me* by Catherine Saunders, Sam Priddy, and Katy Lennon (DK Publishing)

### Novels and non-fiction books with similar themes:

- *Toys!: Amazing Stories Behind Some Great Inventions* by Don Wulffson
- *Project Mulberry* by Linda Sue Park
- *Malala: My Story of Standing Up for Girls' Rights* by Malala Yousafzai
- *A Long Walk to Water* by Linda Sue Park
- *Willodeen* by Katherine Applegate
- *What Color is My World?: The Lost History of African-American Inventors* by Kareem Abdul-Jabbar
- *It's Trevor Noah: Born a Crime, Stories from a South African Childhood* by Trevor Noah
- *Wangari Maathai* by Eucabeth A. Odhiambo
- *Earth Squad: 50 People Who Are Saving the Planet* by Alexandra Zissu
- *Hidden Figures - Young Readers Edition* by Margo Le Shetterly
- *Cosmic* by Frank Cottrell Boyce
- *See You in the Cosmos* by Jack Cheng