

Scarred Lions

Questions Sheet

Questions: 1-16

Activities: 17

Compiled by Fanie Viljoen

Note:

Feel free to use, alter or copy these questions and activities. You may pass this document along to educators and students.

Chapter 1

1. Which two boys get into a fight?
2. Why does Buyisiwe feel like a stranger?
3. "Jonathan is xenophobic." Would you agree with this statement? Quote two sentences to support your answer.
4. Describe Buyi, the main character in Scarred Lions, as we get to know him in the first chapter.
5. How effective is the opening paragraph of the story?

Chapter 2

1. Who brings home the dinner?
2. Buyi's mother is displeased with him when she arrives home. Quote a line of dialogue to support this statement.
3. Why can't Buyi comfort his mother when she cries?
4. Only a few lines in the chapter tells us about Buyi's father. What kind of dad is he to Buyi?
5. Would you say there is tension between Buyi and his mother? Motivate your answer.

Chapter 3

1. What happens when Buyi's gets the opportunity to talk to his father on the phone?
2. Buyi knows a lot about Africa. Is this statement true or false? Explain your answer.
3. Quote a line of dialogue which proves that Buyi actually cares a lot for his mother.
4. Write the following events in the correct order:
 - a. Buyi thinks his father doesn't really care for him, or else he would've asked for a photo, or sent him gifts for his birthday.
 - b. Buyi and his mother say their goodbyes.
 - c. Buyi's mother tells him that he is going to stay with father in South Africa.
 - d. Buyi's mother packs his suitcases.
 - e. Buyi's mother arranges his passport.
5. Do you think Buyi accepts the new living arrangements by the time he says goodbye to his mother? Explain your answer.

Chapter 4

1. What is the name of the airport where Buyi lands?
2. Describe Buyi's first impression of the new country he sees from the plane.
3. When Buyi disembarks from the airplane, he instantly knows he does belong there either. Can you think of another time he didn't feel like he belonged?
4. Buyi feels like a stranger who doesn't belong anywhere. Do you have empathy for him? Explain your answer.
5. Place yourself in Buyi's shoes. Imagine you are seeing your father for the first time ever. How would you feel?

Chapter 5

1. Buyi has a misunderstanding in the arrivals hall at the airport. Explain what happened.
2. Give an example from the interaction between Buyi and Lwazi showing Buyi's lack of knowledge about the local culture.
3. Does Buyi's attitude towards strangers in South Africa differ from his attitude to strangers in London? Explain your answer.
4. Compare André's character with Simoshile's.
5. Can you think of a better way of welcoming Buyi at the airport in South Africa?

Chapter 6

1. Which languages does Simoshile speak?
2. André calls Simoshile a "show off". What does that mean?
3. Look at a squatter camp through Buyi's eyes. How would you describe it, should you see it for the first time?
4. Why do you think Buyi softly prays that the car won't stop at the squatter camp?
5. Do you think the writer should have rather left the part about the squatter camp and over-population out of the story, or was it added intentionally?

Chapter 7

1. At which town does Buyi and the others arrive?
2. When people arrive in strange places, they tend to compare it with places that are familiar to them. Explain how Buyi experiences it when he enters the shop.
3. Writers sometimes use familiar story elements, but they add a twist to make it sound fresh. This happens with a well-known fairy tale in this chapter. Quote the line from the fairy tale and explain how it is used in a different way.
4. Would you like to meet and become friends with Mama Unathi? Explain your answer?
5. Mama Unathi speaks both English and Zulu. Do you think it is important to be bilingual in today's world? Motivate your answer.

Chapter 8

1. Explain what happens when Buyi meets his father.
2. "Was he at all glad to see me?" Do you think Buyi's father was happy to see him?
3. Compare the attitude of Buyi's father with the attitude of his mother.
4. There is more to Mama Unathi's invitation when she says, "I've got some mouthwatering dessert, too." What is she really saying? Can you read between the lines?
5. Why does Buyi lie to his mother?
6. Would you be able to get along without a TV, or perhaps a video streaming service? Motivate your answer.

Chapter 9

1. How does Buyi arrange his new room?

2. Why is it strange for Buyi to hear his own clothes rustle?

3. We now see a different side to Buyi. How is the Buyi from London different from the Buyi who finds himself in a game reserve in South Africa?

4. Which one of the following events increases the tension in the chapter? Motivate your answer.
 - a. Buyi arranges his room.
 - b. Buyi tries to discern the strange smell in the air.
 - c. Buyi's father informs him about an accident.

5. Buyi's father has blood on his clothes when he returns to the chalet later that night. Predict what will happen next.

Chapter 10

1. Why is Buyi worried about his father?

2. What happened to Simoshile's father?

3. Do you feel sorry for Simoshile and her father? Motivate your answer.

4. Following the lion attack, Buyi doesn't want to join André for an outing to a game reserve camp. What does it say about Buyi's character?

5. Which one of the following words describes Mama Unathi's character? Motivate your answer.
 - a) Heartless
 - b) Caring
 - c) Troublemaker

6. This chapter lays out the different camps in the game reserve. Can you think of a better way of describing the lay of the land to the reader?

Chapter 11

1. Which Afrikaans word doesn't Buyi understand?
2. How does André and Buyi's school levels differ?
3. Explain the following line of dialogue: "At the rate you're going I reckon a tortoise would overtake you."
4. Would you say this chapter was written "filmic", in other words, can you almost see the pictures in your mind's eye?
5. How effective is the description of the plants in this chapter?

Chapter 12

1. What happens when the Buyi and his friends grow hungry?
2. Why couldn't Buyi's father and his team find the lion?
3. Why does Buyi have a poster of Amir Khan on his wall?
4. In this chapter Lwazi explains how he was attacked by the lion. Place the following events in the correct order:
 - a) The lion sinks his teeth into Lwazi.
 - b) Lwazi grabs his searchlight when a lion roars.
 - c) The Land Rover gets stuck in a pool of mud.
 - d) Lwazi puts his gun to his shoulder.
 - e) A tourist drops his camera.
5. How effective is Lwazi's retelling of the lion attack, using a dialogue, in this chapter? Wouldn't it have been better had the author written the attack as a suspenseful description?

Chapter 13

1. "I missed having a TV. Probably withdrawal symptoms. I felt fidgety. What was I supposed to do with myself?" What is the meaning of the words "withdrawal symptoms"?
2. Give an example of a spark of hero worship Buyi might start developing towards his father.
3. What is the underlying theme of this chapter, in your opinion?
4. How do you feel about Buyi's father calling the food Buyi cooked "a waste"?
5. Give a short description of Buyi's father as we grew to know him by now.

Chapter 14

1. Describe Buyi's feeling when he gets up this morning.
2. Quote a few lines of dialogue showing André's adventurous side.
3. How would you explain the following sentence? "A flurry of voices caught our attention."
4. The setting is a very important element in a novel. How effectively does the author use the setting in Scarred Lions to liven up the story for the reader?
5. Again, read the final paragraph of the chapter. Predict what will happen next.

Chapter 15

1. Briefly describe Buyi's experience at the zip line.
2. Explain why the marula tree is called the marriage tree.
3. André teases Simoshile with marula tree. Do you think Simoshile's conduct following André's banter is justified?
4. Do you think there is a special connection between Simoshile and Buyi? Motivate your answer.
5. The use of tension in a novel makes reading an unforgettable adventure. How does the author use tension in this chapter?

Chapter 16

1. Why didn't the hippos attack Buyi, according to André?
2. Which figure of speech is used in the following line? Motivate your answer. "It was like a gunshot had gone off indicating the start of a race."
3. Find an example of onomatopoeia in the chapter. (Note: Onomatopoeia is the use of words to imitate sounds.)
4. Explain how the author uses the presence of a lion to increase tension in the story.
5. How is the escape from the hippos similar to the escape from the lion?

Chapter 17

1. What happened when Buyi and his friends took shelter near the Namhlanje gate?

2. "Do you want the old man to freak out?" Buyi asked Umfana. Can you think of another instance where he angered Themba?

3. Buyi's mother tells him he can't escape the rain. What does she mean?

4. Which one of the following lines of dialogue points to the tension in the relationship between Buyi and his father? Motivate your answer.
 - a) "We got caught in the rain."
 - b) "And I don't want you carrying stories to Mama Unathi about me not taking care of you."
 - c) "There is a washing machine under the counter in the kitchen."

5. The status of the lion changes in this chapter. Explain.

Chapter 18

1. What does André have planned for today?

2. Which one of the adult characters can you identify most with – Themba, Lwazi or Mama Unathi? Motivate your answer.

3. Quote a sentence from this chapter that again play on a possible loving relationship between Buyi and Simoshile.

4. When André refers to Moira and the leopard, he says the following: “At least we only need to outrun her if something happens.” This sentence points to one of the following truisms.
 - a) If you don’t try, you won't succeed.
 - b) In nature, the fittest survives.
 - c) The more haste, the less speed.

5. How effective is the use of words imitating sounds in the book, for example the leopard’s growling Hghou! Hghou! in this chapter?

Chapter 19

1. Which title is bestowed on the elephants in this chapter?

2. Explain why elephants can move about so quietly.

3. Rearrange the following three events in order of the lowest tension to the highest tension:
 - a) Buyi and his friends see the lions.
 - b) Buyi and his friends hear the lions.
 - c) Buyi and his friends see sable antelopes, jackal, zebras and baboons.

4. There is description of Zulu dances in this chapter. Would you be able to perform the dance on this description alone? Motivate your answer

5. This chapter briefly tells the story of Shaka. How does this tale match Buyi's own story?

Chapter 20

1. Which story does Simoshile's father tell her?

2. How does the relationship between Simoshile and her father differ from the relationship between Buyi and his father?

3. Themba compares Buyi's room to a pig sty. When was the matter of orderliness also discussed in the story?

4. Can you think of a better way Themba could have addressed Buyi's messy room?

5. The chapter ends on a suspenseful note: "Umfana was gone!" Predict what will happen next.

Chapter 21

1. What happens when Buyi finds out that Umfana has gone missing?
2. Give an example of manipulation in this chapter.
3. Buyi tells André that he wants to be a winner, not a loser. Which would you say is he at this moment in the story? Motivate your answer.
4. Authors very often use symbols in their novels. They represent bigger ideas than the mere objects, character, setting or image. What is the symbolic meaning of the puff adder?
5. Forefather spirits form part of some South African's beliefs and culture. Do you believe in forefather spirits?

Chapter 22

1. Describe the erosion area.
2. Buyi is scared his ignorance of the culture could land him in trouble. Explain what is meant by this statement.
3. The theme of life and death comes to the fore again in this chapter when Themba says, "Life and death . . . They go hand in hand here." How is this different from the folk tale about life and death told earlier?
4. How effective is the description of the lion attack in this chapter? Isn't it told too gruesomely?
5. Themba orders Buyi to shoot Umfana. How do you feel about this?

Chapter 23

1. The events at the beginning of this chapter lends emotional depth to the novel. Did it affect you emotionally? Explain your answer.
2. Quote two lines of dialogue, following close on each other in the chapter, proving that Buyi and his father don't get along at all.
3. The author leaves Umfana's funeral to the reader's imagination and only refers to it briefly. How effective is it?
4. What does Buyi and his mother admit to finally?
5. Buyi's makes a shocking decision in the final line of the chapter. What possible implications could this decision have?

Chapter 24

1. What drives Buyi to take the drastic step of running away to London?
2. Explain shortly how Buyi plans on running away.
3. Can you think of something Buyi might have forgotten to pack that he might need later?
4. Explain why a flood of emotion rushes through Buyi when he looks at the poster of the boxer.
5. Predict what will happen next in the story.

Chapter 25

1. Buyi gained a lot of environmental knowledge thus far. But does it help him when he is out in the bush alone now?
2. What hope does Buyi cling to while he is out in the bush with the lion?
3. Would you view this chapter as the climax of the story? Motivate your answer.
4. Buyi's father treated him badly. Do his actions in this chapter make up for it?
5. If you were the author, what would you have done differently in this chapter?

Chapter 26

1. Do you look at Themba differently now that he was prepared to give up his life for his son?
2. What is the symbolic meaning of Themba's surname?
3. How would Themba feel about the dead lion, according to Lwazi?
4. What does the Swahili people believe about the roar of a lion?
5. How effective is the reconciliation between father and son in this chapter?

Chapter 27

1. How does Mama Unathi describe Lwazi?
2. Explain Simoshile's reaction when she hears of Buyi's plan to return to London.
3. When a character changes in a novel, we say there was character growth. How did Buyi's character grow?
4. Explain how the title of the book gets a deeper meaning than being merely about a man-eating lion with a scar above its eye.
5. Evaluate the novel and give it a mark out of ten. Motivate your score. What did you like and what didn't you like?
6. What do you think was the overall theme of Scarred Lions?

Activities

1. Use the information in chapter 10 and draw a map showing the layout of the reserve and its different camps.
2. Design a poster to advertise Scarred Lions in a book shop.
3. Make a short video to be used as trailer for Scarred Lions. Use a program like Microsoft's Moviemaker or any app available on cell phones to edit your video. Finally, upload the trailer to YouTube.
4. Imagine you are responsible for the marketing of the book. Work out a marketing plan and budget for Scarred Lions.
5. Design a pamphlet informing tourists of possible dangers lurking in a in game reserve.
6. Draw up a set of rules for a game reserve.
7. Write a poem about being a stranger in a strange land.
8. Buyi finds comfort in the music of his land of birth. What kind of music will comfort you should you have to stay in another country for a length of time? Why these songs of this style of music? Discuss the answers in class.
9. Write a short play depicting the climax of the story and perform it in class.
10. Parents and their children can become like strangers to one another at times. Have you also experienced this? Break up into groups and find ways in which parents and their children can reconnect with one another.
11. Debate one of the following statements in class: The Big 5 is nothing more than a marketing ploy, or the Big 5 is very important to South African tourism.
12. "Animals who kill humans have to be put down." Do you agree with this statement? Debate this in class.
13. Discover a pen pal in another country. Find out how they live. Tell them about your country, what people do from day to day, your school program and activities, what you do for fun, and more.