

Breezes of Confirmation

Introduction

Young people must be exposed to a wide range of texts if they are to reach a level of proficiency where they can read with ease. *Breezes of Confirmation* was prepared by the William Mmutle Masetlha Foundation with this in mind. It is intended to be used as one item in a series of materials developed by a group of organizations with the aim of enhancing the powers of expression of junior youth between the ages of 12 and 15. In this context, the book is considered an entry-level text, designed for youth aged 11 or 12 who already possess basic literacy skills. The Foundation hopes that *Breezes of Confirmation* will strengthen those skills in the young people who read it, will help them begin to articulate ideas with some degree of precision and clarity, and will ready them for the study of higher-level texts.

All the organizations associated with the William Mmutle Masetlha Foundation hold to a worldview cognizant of the material and spiritual dimensions of human existence. The educational materials they produce for junior youth in the area of language, at whatever level of proficiency, strive to create within them the moral structures that will underlie their decisions and guide their actions as they mature into young adults and active members of society. To this end, the materials seek to impart essential moral concepts and build certain attitudes required to live a fruitful and rewarding life. *Breezes of Confirmation* represents a modest beginning in this long-term educational process. It tells the story of Musonda, a young girl who has just turned 13, and her older cousin Rose, who has come to visit for the school holidays. Together with Musonda's brother Godwin and his friend Chishimba, the girls think about their future and discuss their hopes and possibilities. A theme that runs throughout the story is that of making an effort and receiving God's confirmations. This is just one of the many possible themes on which young people need to reflect in order to develop sound moral reasoning.

The book is made up of fourteen lessons. Each includes a short reading followed by a series of exercises designed to increase comprehension and to enhance language skills. Quotations for memorization, songs and discussion questions are interspersed throughout the various lessons. The book is best studied in a tutorial setting, that is, in a small group with the assistance of a trained tutor.

The readings in the book try to maintain a certain level of simplicity in terms of sentence structure and flow. However, where needed, difficult words and phrases are readily employed. The lessons draw out the meaning of such words by placing them in different contexts, and through the use of exercises. By allowing for a rich vocabulary in this way, the story avoids the tendency of becoming childish and superficial. It should be recognized by those working with the junior youth that they are not children and are eager to think about the many issues to which their tender consciences are slowly awakening.