

# A TEACHER'S GUIDE TO

## SPIRIT OF THE MOUNTAIN by Shelley Davidow



www.florisbooks.co.uk

### Themes/issues addressed in this book

South Africa; anorexia; healing; spirits and traditional beliefs

### Book Summary

The hot South-African summer is getting to fifteen-year-old Emily. She escapes to her Uncle Tim's farm where she meets green-eyed Joey and can relax. But Emily has an eating disorder, and each day she slips further away from those around her. Only Anna can help her – Anna the healer, the herbalist, who possesses the wisdom of ancient customs and traditions. Anna offers Emily knowledge of a world she could scarcely imagine, and slowly, Emily comes to terms with her illness and rejoins the living world. Told partly through brutally-honest diary entries, this is a powerful story.

## BEFORE READING

### Individual Work

- How do you imagine South Africa to be? Write three paragraphs on what Christmas is like in South Africa, describing the weather, scenery, and people.
- Have you ever kept a diary? Write a diary entry for yourself for one day last week (at least two paragraphs). Be as honest as you can about what you did and how you felt. Now pick someone else in your family or group of friends and write their diary entry for the same day.

### Group Activities

- Discussion: what is anorexia? What causes it, and what are the dangers?

## AFTER READING

### Individual Work

- Write a paragraph describing how you felt when:
  - a) Joey found the baby (chapter 4)
  - b) Emily first ate the tomato (chapter 5)
  - c) Emily met the sangoma (chapter 5)
- What did Emily's mother think of the farm, Uncle Tim and Anna? What was she afraid of? How does it show in her reaction to Emily's vegetable garden (p. 106)? Imagine you're Emily's mother, and write a letter to Emily on the farm telling her how you feel.

### Group Activities

- Discussion: what are the tell-tale signs of Emily's anorexia? Find specific examples in the book.
- Discussion: what is a sangoma? Do you believe in spirits like those in the book? Do you believe that the type of healing in the book can really happen? Why/why not?

### Vocabulary

- Check you know what the following words mean:

glistening	luminous
ancestor	tranquility
remedies	ambled
mummified	granite
anticipation	haunches
township	flustered
eucalyptus	viscous
nauseous	

### *FLYWAYS*

#### Series Summary

*Flyways was conceived in response to the general decline in children's literacy levels. The series provides high quality, imaginative and thought-provoking fiction to children who are currently unchallenged by the majority of available reading material. The Flyways series includes a high percentage of prize-winning international literature, as well as books by new and established authors.*

### CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS COVERED

#### 5-14 Curriculum (Scotland)

Years: P6-P7, S1-S3

Reading:

Reading for Information

Reading to Reflect

Awareness of Genre

Talking:

Talking in groups

Talking about texts

Talking about experiences, feeling and opinions

Writing:

Functional

Imaginative

#### National Curriculum (England, Wales, Northern Ireland)

Key Stages 2 and 3

English: Reading

Reading Strategies

Response to Texts, inc analysing and evaluating

Reading for Information

National Literacy Strategy:

Text-Level Reading

Text-Level Writing

Vocabulary