

### *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind*

## Educator Information and Directions

This PDF provides the materials that accompany the lesson “Elements of Literary Nonfiction and *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind*.” This PDF contains activities for students to complete before, during, and after they read the passage. Highlighted words within the passage indicate vocabulary words that will be referred to in assessment questions.

### Student Reading Guide

#### Before Reading

- Watch the video.
- Review the anchor chart.
- Complete the Online Practice.
- Read some information about today’s passage.
- Start thinking about the topics in the passage by answering the questions.

#### During Reading

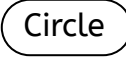
- Read the **Purpose for Reading**.
- Read the passage.
- Take notes and annotate what you are reading.

#### After Reading

- Reflect on what you have read by answering the questions.
- Complete the **Online Assessment** questions.

### Taking Notes and Annotating

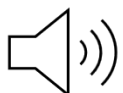
Here are some strategies for annotating and taking notes **in the text itself**:

- **Highlight** or underline important words or words you don’t know.
-  key concepts and ideas.
- Use abbreviations or symbols. For example:

?	To show confusion or questions
<b>M</b>	To show the mood
★	To show important details
❤	To show the main character’s feelings

Here are some strategies for annotating and taking notes **in the notes section** under the text:

- Summarize key points in your own words.
- Write brief comments and questions.



If you would prefer to listen to the passage, click the link to access an audio recording: [Link to Audio Recording of Passage](#)

# Elements of Literary Nonfiction – Anchor Chart

## Literary Nonfiction

Literature that uses elements of fiction writing to immerse readers in **real-life** stories

**Point of view** - perspective or angle from which the story is told



The **plot**, **characters**, and **setting** tell the reader what happens in the story, who it is happening to, and when and where it is taking place.

**Tone** - author's attitude toward a subject

*gentle* *worried*  
*negative*  
*critical*  
*sarcastic*



**Symbols** - people, actions, or objects that represent a bigger idea

**Figurative language** - language that develops a deeper meaning than what the text actually says



**Imagery** - descriptions to create a picture or idea in the reader's head



**Mood** - a feeling that the story evokes in the reader

The author uses all of these elements to develop a **theme**, which is the overarching idea or lesson in a story.

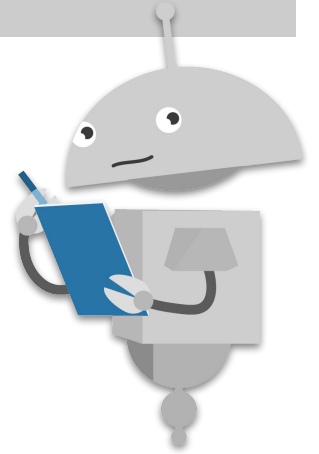
**TRUE STORY**

## Types of Literary Nonfiction Texts

<b>Diary</b>	a personal record of daily life events, thoughts, and feelings
<b>Autobiography</b>	literature that someone writes about their own life story
<b>Biography</b>	literature that someone writes about someone else's life story
<b>Memoir</b>	a personal story about key experiences from the author's life that work together to explore specific themes
<b>Personal Narrative Essay</b>	a personal essay that focuses on a specific event or experience from a person's life

## Before Reading

Today's passage is an excerpt from a book titled *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind*, written by Bryan Mealer and William Kamkwamba. This is a true story about William's real experiences as a child in Malawi. He got an idea from a book and used it to make a big difference for his community.



Before you read today's passage, think about problems you or others in your community have faced and how new ideas or inventions could help to overcome those problems.



Think about or imagine a situation where you or someone you know faced challenges. How did you or they try to overcome those challenges, and did you or they find a solution? Draw or write about your experience.



Think about a big idea or a dream you want to achieve. What is it, and what steps would you need to take in order to turn that dream into reality? Draw or write your thoughts below.

## During Reading



**Purpose for Reading:** The following passage is an excerpt from the literary nonfiction book *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind*, by Bryan Mealer and William Kamkwamba. As you read, think about why the authors chose to tell the story through literary nonfiction. Pay attention to the details you can infer about the narrator’s life and how they help to develop the theme of the passage.

While you read, remember to annotate and take notes! You can review strategies for annotation on page 1 of this PDF.

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

(1) I noticed a book I’d never seen, pushed into the shelf and slightly **concealed**.

What is this? I thought. Pulling it out, I saw it was an American textbook called *Using Energy*, and this book has since changed my life.

(2) The cover featured a long row of windmills—though at the time I had no idea what a windmill was. All I saw were tall white towers with three blades spinning like a giant fan. They looked like the pinwheel toys Geoffrey and I once made as kids when we were bored. We’d find old water bottles people threw away in the trading center, cut the plastic into blades like a fan, then put a nail through the center attached to a stick. When the wind blew, they would spin. That’s it, just a stupid pinwheel.

(3) But the fans on this book were not toys. They were giant beautiful machines that towered into the sky, so powerful that they made the photo itself appear to be in motion. I opened the book and began to read. . .

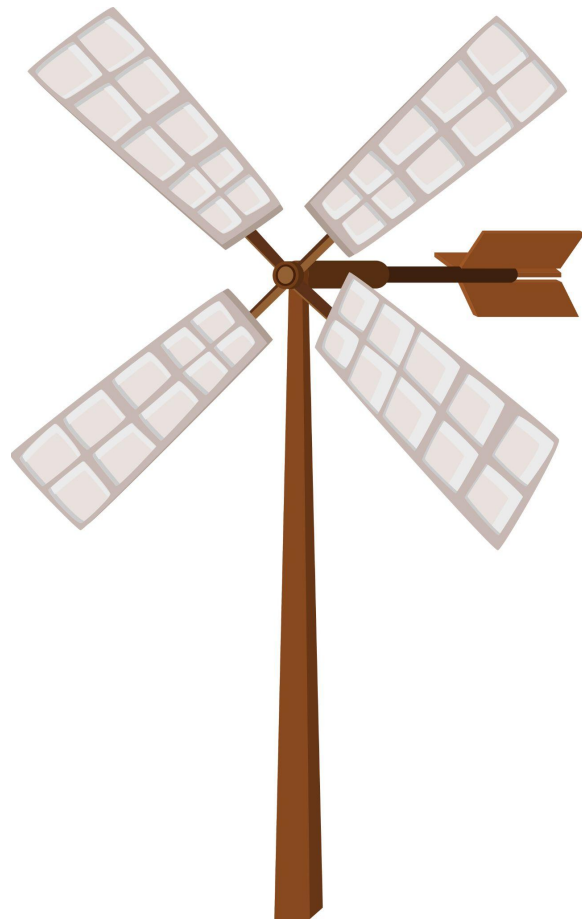
**(continued)**



Excerpt from *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind*  
by Bryan Mealer and William Kamkwamba (continued)

(4) Just like with the sun, windmills could also be used to **generate** power. . . The wind would spin the blades of the windmill, rotate the magnets in a dynamo, and create electricity. . . All I needed was a windmill, and then I could have lights. No more kerosene lamps that burned our eyes and sent us gasping for breath. With a windmill, I could stay awake at night reading instead of going to bed at seven with the rest of Malawi.

(5) But most important, a windmill could also rotate a pump for water and irrigation. Having just come out of the hunger—and with **famine** still affecting many parts of the country—the idea of a water pump now seemed incredibly necessary. . . A windmill and pump could also provide my family with a year-round garden. . .



(continued)

## During Reading (continued)



### Excerpt from *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind* by Bryan Mealer and William Kamkwamba (continued)

(6) No more skipping breakfast; no more dropping out of school. With a windmill, we'd finally release ourselves from the troubles of darkness and hunger. . . A windmill meant more than just power, it was freedom.

(7) Standing there looking at this book, I decided I would build my own windmill. I'd never built anything like it before, but I knew if windmills existed on the cover of that book, it meant another person had built them. After looking at it that way, I felt confident I could build one, too.

Mealer, Bryan, and William Kamkwamba. *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind*. Puffin, 2016.

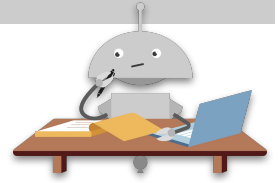


### Notes

## After Reading



Think about this quote from the passage: “A windmill meant more than just power, it was freedom.” What does this statement mean to you and what details from the passage support it?



Imagine the narrator, William, writes in his diary on the day he finally finishes building his own windmill. What details might he share? What would he be feeling? Write or draw what you think he might include in his diary.

**Dear Diary,**

After you are done reading and answering these questions, you may want to ask yourself some more questions, like...

- Why did the authors choose a literary nonfiction style for this story?
- What is the the theme of the passage?

You may even want to read the passage a second or third time! When you feel ready, go ahead and take your assessment!