



## Inquire to Learn!

There are many ways in which *Dawa, the Wise Woman*/*The Roof of the World* can be used as a base for Inquiry Learning. This is just one suggestion.

## Session 1

Using the Big Book, share-read *Dawa, the Wise Woman*, stopping at natural points for discussion. Draw on the students' prior knowledge of kings and advisors, invasions/warring countries, wisdom, tests, and problem solving.

### Possible Starter Questions for Discussion

**Kings and Advisors:** *What is an advisor?* (A person who gives advice in a professional capacity.) *Why would a king need advisors?* Discuss that kings and other leaders, such as prime ministers, rely on information given to them by advisors, or experts in a field, because one person cannot be an expert in everything.

**Invasions:** *Why would one country invade another country?* Discuss that countries sometimes invade other countries to increase their territory and power. Make sure the students understand that such invasions are an aggressive act that often lead to war.

**Wisdom:** *What is wisdom?* Define wisdom as the quality of having experience, knowledge, and good judgement. *Can anyone gain wisdom? Why/why not?*

**Tests:** *Can you test for wisdom? Why/why not?* Brainstorm tests you could give a person to see whether or not he/she was wise.

**Problem Solving:** *How do we solve problems?*

Discuss problem solving, creative solutions, and the transference of knowledge and experience from one area of life to another.

### Text and Illustration Based Inquiry Questions

Cover: Look at the cover of *Dawa, the Wise Woman*. Ask, *Are women wiser than men? Are older people wiser than younger people?* Discuss that different groups and different individuals can have different forms of wisdom.

PP. 2–3: Review the text and illustration and identify which king is Yeshe and which king is Drashi. Note the word *border* and define it as a line that separates two countries. Ask, *What problems might come from sharing a border, particularly when one country is big and one country is small? Is bigger always better? Why/why not?*

PP. 4–5: Note the word *tricky* and discuss its meaning. Brainstorm synonyms for tricky e.g. cunning, deceitful, crafty, sly, devious, sneaky, wily, slippery. Review the text: *He knew that he had more money and more men than Drashi.* Ask, *What does more money and more men equal in this context?* (more power) Review the word *invade* and define it as the entering of a country or region by an armed force with the plan to take over the area. Ask, *Would it be a good move to invade a country that although weak, had a wise leader? Why/why not?*

# Dawa, the Wise Woman/The Roof of the World

## Teacher's Notes continued

PP. 6–7: Review the first sentence and ask, *What is a mare and what is a filly?* If the students don't know the answer, tell them that a mare is an adult female horse and a filly is a young female horse less than four years old. Direct the students to the illustration and note how the illustrator has added to the meaning of the text by making Drashi and his advisors look confused. Ask, *How would you go about trying to tell the horses apart?* Discuss the need to use creative problem solving when faced with a tricky test.

PP. 8–9: Review the text: *He had been sure that he would be the one to solve the problem. Kalden was so upset that he told his wife, Dawa, all about it.* and note that Kalden is not expecting his wife to solve the problem, he is simply sharing the events of his day over dinner. Note too that Dawa is eating with chopsticks, which is traditional in Tibet. Review the text: *"Why, that's easy!" Dawa cried.* and talk about how different people bring different experiences and ways of thinking to a problem. Remind the students that this folk tale is set *Long, long ago* (P. 2) and discuss the assumption that a woman from long ago, with presumably little education, would be unlikely to be able to solve a problem that her husband, a royal advisor, could not. Ask, *Is wisdom related to education? Why/why not?* Review Dawa's proposed solution and ask the students to predict whether or not it will work.

PP. 10–11: Read the text and ask, *Is this what you predicted would happen? How do you think Kalden was feeling? How do you think Drashi was feeling?* (relieved and pleased) *How do you think Yeshe (the other king) felt when he heard that Drashi had successfully solved his first test?* (disappointed and slightly annoyed)

P.P 12–13: Read the text and ask, *How do you think Drashi and his advisors are feeling?* (confused, foolish) *How would you solve this problem? What do you think Kalden will do?*

PP. 14–15: Read the text and note the confidence with which Dawa answers the problem: *"Of course!" said Dawa.* Ask, *Is confidence a reliable*

*way to tell whether someone is correct or not? Why/why not?* Ask, *Does Dawa's solution sound logical? Do you think it will work?*

PP. 16–17: Review both the text and the illustration and note that Drashi and Kalden are standing together with the two other advisors standing apart. *How do you think Kalden is feeling?* (relieved, thankful for Dawa's wisdom) *How do you think Drashi is feeling?* (relieved, impressed with Kalden) *How do you think the other two advisors are feeling?* (foolish, left out)

PP. 18–19: Reread the first two sentences and ask, *Why was Yeshe very mad?* (Because his failure to trick Drashi so far means that Drashi is smart, so it would be unwise for Yeshe to invade Drashi's country.) Reread the remainder of the text and remind the students that this story is set in a time and place where there is no Internet, reference books on snakes, zoos, or vets. Brainstorm creative solutions that Drashi and his advisors could use to solve the problem. Ask, *What do you think Kalden will do?*

PP. 20–21: Reread the text and note again the ease with which Dawa comes up with a solution. Ask, *Do you think a female snake is more likely to prefer a soft bed than a male snake?* Point out that while a female snake that is about to lay eggs may prefer a soft nest, it is unlikely that in real life a female snake is more likely than a male snake to be attracted to soft material. Discuss that folk tales do not always follow the rules of reality. Reread P. 21 and note that Dawa is right for the third time. Discuss that things often go in threes in folk tales and brainstorm examples e.g. *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* (porridge, chairs, beds); *The Three Little Pigs* (straw house, stick house, brick house); *The Three Billy Goats Gruff* (Smallest Billy Goat, Middle-Sized Billy Goat, Big Billy Goat). Tell the students that the number three is often used in stories as it is a simple yet effective way to make a pattern. Discuss that a pattern helps a person remember a story, which is an important feature of folk tales as they were originally told rather than written down.

# Dawa, the Wise Woman/The Roof of the World

## Teacher's Notes continued

PP. 22–23: Revisit the first paragraph and note that Yeshe had not expected Drashi to have been able to pass the test. Reread the second paragraph and discuss that Drashi has won the day by using intelligence (even if it is the intelligence of others) to defeat power. Continue reading then discuss with the students that Kalden has done the right thing by telling Drashi that the true source of wisdom is Dawa. Discuss the phrase *give credit where credit is due*, meaning that the acknowledgment, or thanks, should go to the person who deserves it. Ask, *Why do you think Kalden did not tell Drashi from the beginning that it was Dawa who was providing the answers?*

P. 24: Reread the text and note the word *granted*. Explain that in this context it means given or transferred in a formal manner. Discuss that the author has used *granted* rather than *gave* to indicate that the king has formally given or bestowed gifts to an ordinary woman, thereby also giving her honour. Discuss the saying: *Behind every great man is a great woman*, particularly as it applies to **Dawa, the Wise Woman**, and explain that in history stories of great deeds achieved by men have often been told, but these men would never have achieved greatness without the help of the women in their life; such as their wife, mother, or sister; whose stories were often not told. Introduce the modern version of this saying: *Behind every great man is not a woman. She is beside him. She is with him, not behind him.* and note that Dawa is now Drashi's lead advisor.

## Further Discussion and Inquiry Extension

Dawa has common sense, which she uses to solve problems. Invite the students to research and write a definition of common sense, then use the words *common sense* in three different sentences.

Learn about significant New Zealand women and their achievements e.g. Whina Cooper, Kate Sheppard, Jean Batten, Katherine Mansfield, Nancy Wake, Valerie Adams, Helen Clark, Janet Frame, Jane Campion, Kerry Fox, Lorde (Ella Yelich-O'Connor). Encourage the students to present oral reports on their chosen subject.

Invite the students to write a formal letter from Drashi to Yeshe thanking him for the opportunity to complete his tests, but declining to take part. Ask the students to use creative thinking to discourage Yeshe from invading their country. Email the letters to [info@cleanslatepress.com](mailto:info@cleanslatepress.com) with the writer's name, age, and school. The best letters will be posted on the Clean Slate Press Facebook page and the writer will receive a prize.

Research other "great women behind great men" e.g. Eleanor Roosevelt, Coretta Scott King, Eva Peron, Fatima Jinnah, Jackie Kennedy, Kasturba Gandhi, Michelle Obama, Winnie Mandela. Invite the students to select a "great woman" and write a research report on her life and work.

Share other folk tales from Tibet e.g. *The Story of the Donkey and the Rock*, *The Tiger and the Frog*, *The Man and the Monkeys*.

Invite the children to write stories that feature tests and problem solving. Encourage them to use the rule of three.

# Dawa, the Wise Woman/The Roof of the World

## Teacher's Notes continued

### Session 2

Using the Big Book, share-read *The Roof of the World*, stopping at natural points for discussion. Draw on the students' prior knowledge of Tibet, travelling to new places, Mt Everest, Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay, yaks, and peacefulness.

#### Possible Starter Questions for Discussion and Inquiry

**Tibetan Greeting:** *People in Tibet speak Tibetan. Does anyone know how to greet someone in Tibetan? It is tashi delek.*

**Cover:** Look at the cover and read the title *The Roof of the World*. Ask, *What kind of country do you think Tibet might be?* (A high, mountainous country.)

**Location of Tibet/Geography:** Look at the map on P. 1 of *The Roof of the World* and note the location of Tibet in Asia, and in relation to Australia and New Zealand. Revisit the first paragraph and note the explanation for why it is called the “roof of the world”. Note that Tibet is the home of Mt Everest – the world’s tallest mountain. Ask, *Why is Mt Everest important to New Zealanders?* (Because the first person to reach the summit of Mt Everest was a New Zealander – Edmund Hillary.) Revisit the second paragraph and note that most Tibetans do not live in cities. Ask, *Why do you think the majority of Tibetans live on farms in the country?* Discuss that Tibet’s economy is mostly agricultural and many people live by raising livestock such as sheep, cattle, goats, camels, and yaks and growing crops such as barley and wheat. More people are now travelling to Tibet, so tourism is a growth industry. If any of the students come from Tibet or have visited there, invite them to share their experiences.

**Travelling to New Places:** *What do you do when you go to a new place?* Discuss that visitors to new places like to see the sites, or the tourist locations that make that place special. Point out that PP. 2–3 of *The Roof of the World* are written and designed

as a travel diary with attached photos. Guide the students’ reading through the travel diary entries. On P. 2, note the sentence: *That might not sound far, but because Tibet is so high, Mum and I became breathless!* Explain to the students that there is less oxygen in very high places, so visitors to Tibet may notice that they become breathless easily. Tell the students that the main religion in Tibet is Tibetan Buddhism, which influences the culture and beliefs, art, music, and festivals of Tibet. On P. 2, revisit the text: *At New Year, thousands of monks come to pray.* and explain that monks are boys and men who live a simple, religious life based around a monastery. There are around 460,000 monks in Tibet. Ask, *What do you notice about how the travel diary is written?* (It is written in first person.) *Why do people make travel diaries?* Share with the students that people make travel diaries to help them remember the interesting things they have seen and done. By having a place to write about their experiences, they will be able to reflect on what they have learned. Travel diaries are also a great way to share your travel experiences with other people.

**Mt Everest:** *Why would someone want to climb to the top of Mt Everest?* Share with the students the answer given by British mountaineer George Mallory (who died on the mountain during his third expedition there in 1924), “Because it’s there.” Lead a discussion about why people are driven to achieve extreme goals, with a focus on the sense of achievement gained in completing a very difficult task. Share with the students that for some people reaching the top of Mt Everest is seen as the ultimate life achievement.

**Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay:** Read PP. 4–5 of *The Roof of the World* and ask, *Do you think Edmund Hillary prepared for climbing Mt Everest?* Make sure the students understand that Hillary didn’t just go for a few jogs around the block and then attempt to climb Mt Everest. It was his fourth expedition to the Himalayas in two years and he was at the peak of fitness. He had previously climbed



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## Teacher's Notes continued

Aoraki/Mt Cook (New Zealand's tallest mountain) and he had been climbing in the Swiss Alps. He had also crossed Antarctica. Tenzing Norgay had spent his life working in the mountains and had been part of expedition teams to Mt Everest for 18 years before the pair became the first to make it to the summit. Emphasize that Hillary and Norgay made it to the top together, working as a sub-team of a much larger team.

**Yaks:** *What is a yak?* Read PP. 6–7 of ***The Roof of the World*** and discuss the importance of yaks to the life and culture of Tibet. Ask, *Has anyone see a yak? What was it like?* (There are Himalayan yaks at Orana Wildlife Park in Christchurch.)

**Peacefulness:** *What is meant by a peaceful life?* Read PP. 8–9 of ***The Roof of the World*** and follow it with a discussion on the value of peacefulness. *What can we do to help ourselves and others have a peaceful life?*

### Further Discussion and Inquiry Extension

Using PP. 2–3 of ***The Roof of the World*** as a model, invite the children to make a travel diary. They could write about a trip they have already taken, or they could plan a trip they would like to take in the future. Ask them to include pictures, either from a personal collection of photos and brochures or from the Internet.

Challenge the students to work in groups to answer the following research questions: What is the average height above sea level in Tibet? What is the height of Mt Everest? What are the other mountains of Tibet? How high are they? Why are mountains and lakes sacred to the people of Tibet? What is the climate of Tibet?

Show the students that Sir Edmund Hillary is featured on the New Zealand \$5 note and encourage them to learn more about the most well-known New Zealander to have ever lived. Encourage the students to write short biographies of Hillary's life and achievements, as both a mountaineer and a humanitarian.

Invite the students to learn more about Tenzing Norgay. Encourage them to write short biographies of Tenzing's life and achievements, including his background as a Sherpa guide and his role in reaching the summit of Mt Everest.

Invite the students to write about a goal they would like to achieve. What is the goal? What steps can they take to achieve their goal? Remind them to set a goal that is based on action and is measurable e.g. If they want to improve their long-distance running, word the goal as: *I will run for 20 minutes after school three times a week.* Suggest that they put their written goal in a place where they can see it every day.

Make peace flags to hang in the classroom. Each small flag could include a fact on life in Tibet or a suggestion for a more peaceful world.

Watch online videos of songs that promote peace e.g. "A Song of Peace" (Snowlight), "Imagine" (John Lennon), "We've Had Enough" (Michael Jackson), "Give Peace a Chance" (John Lennon), "Song of Peace and Hope" (Jonathan van der Lugt), "Blowin' in the Wind" (Bob Dylan).

Choose one or more of the following statements about peace to discuss as a class:

- Peace is more than the absence of war.
- Peace is living in harmony and not fighting with others.
- If everyone in the world were peaceful, this would be a peaceful world.
- Peace is being quiet inside.
- Peace is a calm and relaxed state of mind.
- Peace consists of positive thoughts, pure feelings, and good wishes.
- Peace begins within each one of us.
- To stay peaceful requires strength and compassion.
- World peace grows through nonviolence, acceptance, fairness, and communication.
- Peace is the main characteristic of a civilized society.

– Mr Javier Perez de Cuellar, former Secretary-General of the United Nations

