

## UNLIMITED FUTURES: SPECULATIVE, VISIONARY BLAK AND BLACK FICTION

EDITED BY RAFEIF ISMAIL & ELLEN VAN NEERVEN

ISBN (PB): 9781760990701

ISBN (EBOOK): 9781760991463

YEAR LEVEL: Y7–12

CROSS-CURRICULUM PRIORITY: Sustainability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures

### ABOUT THE BOOK

Unlimited Futures is an anthology of speculative, visionary fiction from First Nations writers and Black writers, reflecting visionary pasts, hopeful futures and the invisible ties between First Nations and Black people.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Rafeif Ismail, who identifies as a third-culture youth of the Sudanese diaspora, is an award-winning emerging author committed to creating accessible spaces for young people of marginalised backgrounds in the Arts.

Ellen van Neerven is an award-winning writer, editor and educator of Mununjali Yugambah and Dutch heritage with strong ancestral ties to south-east Queensland.

For biographical notes on all of the authors in this collection, see pages 303–311 of the anthology.

### THEMES

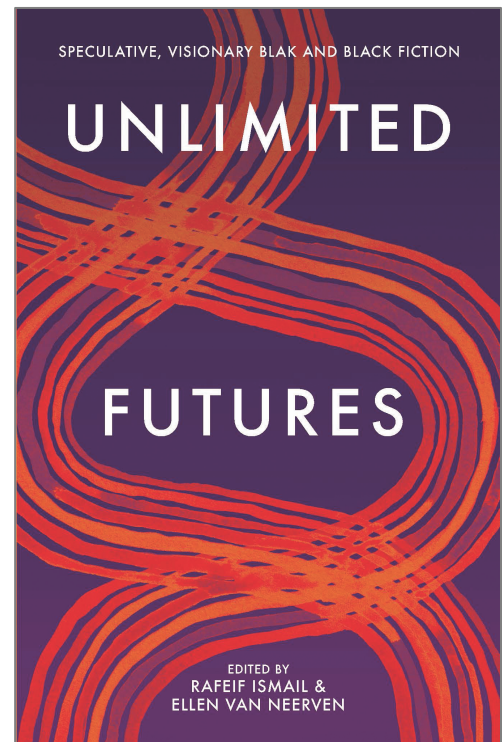
- First Nations and Black people, cultures and experiences
- Connection to Country, caring for Country: 'responsibility to land, water, air'
- Interconnectedness of past, present and future
- Cultural traits shared across the globe – similarities, uniting features
- The impact of colonisation
- Stolen generations and intergenerational trauma
- Strength in culture, community leadership, the value First Nations cultures can add to our community
- Family
- Old People (Elders) and ancestors
- Technology
- Reclaiming of sovereignty
- Racism
- Power
- Inequality
- Colonialism
- Community
- Identity

### AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM OUTCOMES

9–12 English

9–12 History, Civics and Citizenship

9–12 Science



9–12 Digital technologies

Cross-curriculum priority: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories

## SENSITIVITY WARNING

The collection addresses sensitive topics including death, suicide and a simulated experience of forced removal of children from families and placement in children's homes.

## USEFUL WEBSITES

- Rafeif Ismail website: [rafeifismail.com](http://rafeifismail.com)
- Ellen van Neerven website: [ellenvanneervencurrie.wordpress.com](http://ellenvanneervencurrie.wordpress.com)
- Dispatches from the Future: [thethingswedidnext.org/dispatches-from-the-future/](http://thethingswedidnext.org/dispatches-from-the-future/)

## DISCUSSION ON FIRST NATIONS SCIENCE FICTION

- Ambelin Kwaymullina's '[Edges, centre and futures: Reflections on being an Indigenous speculative fiction writer](https://search.informit.org/doi/10.3316/INFORMIT.372650608798607)' (search.informit.org/doi/10.3316/INFORMIT.372650608798607) and her essay '[Reflecting on Indigenous Worlds, Indigenous Futurisms and Artificial Intelligence](http://motherofinvention.twelfthplanetpress.com/2017/09/16/reflecting-on-indigenous-worlds-indigenous-futurisms-and-artificial-intelligence)' (motherofinvention.twelfthplanetpress.com/2017/09/16/reflecting-on-indigenous-worlds-indigenous-futurisms-and-artificial-intelligence).
- Mykaela Saunders' website, an author with special interest in Black speculative fiction who has done important research in this area: [mykaelasaunders.com](http://mykaelasaunders.com)

For a list of other novels and comparison multimodal texts, see 'A note about First Nations writers in speculative fiction' in the State Library of Queensland's [Sovereign Stories Education Resource](http://curriculumconnect.slq.qld.gov.au/resources/sovereign-stories) (curriculumconnect.slq.qld.gov.au/resources/sovereign-stories).

## KEY BACKGROUND READINGS AND RESOURCES ABOUT FIRST NATIONS CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

- [Black Words Historical Events Calendar](http://austlit.edu.au/austlit/page/5962401) (austlit.edu.au/austlit/page/5962401) – a resource outlining key people and events during various stages of colonised Australia, including the Government Protection Acts leading to the removal of children for placement in missions and foster homes (Stolen Generations).
- Stolen Generations and Bringing Them Home report: [National Museum of Australia](http://nma.gov.au/defining-moments/resources/aborigines-protection-act) (nma.gov.au/defining-moments/resources/aborigines-protection-act) resource.
- [Importance of land and connection to country](#) – a resource explaining the role of country in First Nations culture, how central it is to wellbeing and what the connection to land means for First Nations people.

For an overview of cultural and historical contexts with key resource links, see Reading Australia's teacher resource for [Ellen van Neerven's Heat and Light](http://readingaustralia.com.au/lesson/heat-and-light) (readingaustralia.com.au/lesson/heat-and-light).

## OTHER RESOURCES

- [Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies](http://aiatsis.gov.au) (aiatsis.gov.au)
- [Australian Museum](http://australian.museum/about/history/exhibitions/indigenous-australians) (australian.museum/about/history/exhibitions/indigenous-australians)
- State Libraries, e.g.
  - [QLD](http://slq.qld.gov.au/discover/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-cultures-and-stories) (slq.qld.gov.au/discover/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-cultures-and-stories)
  - [NSW](http://sl.nsw.gov.au/aboriginal) (sl.nsw.gov.au/aboriginal)
  - [VIC](http://slv.vic.gov.au/search-discover/explore-collections-theme/koori-victoria) (slv.vic.gov.au/search-discover/explore-collections-theme/koori-victoria)
  - [WA](http://slwa.wa.gov.au/collections/aboriginal-collections) (slwa.wa.gov.au/collections/aboriginal-collections)
- Art galleries (e.g. [SA](http://agsa.sa.gov.au/education/resources-educators/resources-educators-ATStart), agsa.sa.gov.au/education/resources-educators/resources-educators-ATStart)

## CLASSROOM IDEAS

### Discussion questions: general

1. The cover art work of *Unlimited Futures*, by Larrakia woman Jenna Lee, symbolises the interaction of people, the interconnectedness of people and environment, and the 'infinity' of continued culture and continued conversations about our pasts and futures (p. 10). It is also reminiscent of the double helix symbol in genetics, which reminds us of the interconnection of all living forms through the same structure of DNA communication ([genome.gov/genetics-glossary/Double-Helix](http://genome.gov/genetics-glossary/Double-Helix)). Explore the ways in which First Nations cultural knowledge can affirm and inform Western scientific knowledge. Some resources to assist include:
  - a. *Dark Emu* ([readingaustralia.com.au/books/dark-emu](http://readingaustralia.com.au/books/dark-emu)) and *Young Dark Emu* ([readingaustralia.com.au/books/young-dark-emu](http://readingaustralia.com.au/books/young-dark-emu)) teaching resources by Reading Australia.
  - b. Indigenous Knowledge Project ([indigenousknowledge.unimelb.edu.au/curriculum](http://indigenousknowledge.unimelb.edu.au/curriculum)), University of Melbourne.
2. The title of the collection is perhaps counter-intuitively optimistic for a collection of speculative fiction: 'unlimited' giving the impression that anything can be achieved or attained, the possibilities are endless. In the introduction, it is noted that 'When we engage in activism, we're imagining new worlds' (p. 15) and that there is incredible hope in the stories: '... hope for humanity ... the hope that we can and we should do better.' (p. 16) Select two of the stories that imagine better worlds and discuss how they promote optimism and hope. Suggestions: 'Guyuggwa', 'The Prime Minister', 'Dispatch' and 'Today, We Will Rise'.
3. Discuss and research the definitions of the following terms:
  - a. Blak (see definition provided by editors in the introduction on page 7)
  - b. Black
  - c. Speculative fiction
  - d. Visionary
  - e. Climate fiction
  - f. Country (First Nations use of the term)
  - g. multiverse
  - h. metaverse
  - i. simulation and virtual reality
4. The introduction is presented as a transcript of an interview, or conversation, between the two editors. Rafeif Ismail explains that this is fitting because they wanted the anthology to be a conversation, and to provide a platform for conversation between Black people globally (pp. 7–8). Discuss the power of conversation in building community and shared understanding, and reflect on the effectiveness of the introduction being presented as a conversation between the editors. Teachers may also like to explore the concept of yarning and [yarning circles](http://qcaa.qld.edu.au/about/k-12-policies/aboriginal-torres-strait-islander-perspectives/resources/yarning-circles) ([qcaa.qld.edu.au/about/k-12-policies/aboriginal-torres-strait-islander-perspectives/resources/yarning-circles](http://qcaa.qld.edu.au/about/k-12-policies/aboriginal-torres-strait-islander-perspectives/resources/yarning-circles)) as a methodology to use in the English classroom.
5. It is widely accepted that apocalyptic themes such as war and invasion, and rebuilding after invasion, are the current reality for First Nations people: 'we are post-apocalyptic and not yet post-colonial, so all those violent histories of invasion and colonisation must be read as apocalyptic by any standard' (Saunders, M. *This all come back now*. Brisbane, UQP, 2022, p. 9). Further, in the introduction for *Unlimited Futures*, Ellen van Neerven points out that the recent global COVID-19 pandemic was not exactly 'unprecedented': 'This is our reality. This is the world that we're living with as Blak and Black peoples; we're in a constant state of panic and alarm and survival.' (p. 9) Does speculative fiction written by Blak and Black people offer a better way to challenge colonial structures and ongoing discrimination?
6. This collection of work was created at a time where the 'Black lives matter' movement had swept across the globe after the killing of Black American George Floyd by police in Minneapolis, USA in May 2020. The movement sparked protests in Australia and reignited a spotlight on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander deaths in custody. Dr Sandy O'Sullivan discusses this police brutality in terms of colonial power: 'First Nations Peoples have had our agency denied through the ongoing actions of colonisation' ([australian.museum/learn/first-nations/deaths-in-custody-what-can-museums-do](http://australian.museum/learn/first-nations/deaths-in-custody-what-can-museums-do)). Further, the incarceration rate of First Nations children continues to increase, unchecked: learn about the personal experience of [Dylan Voller](http://abc.net.au/4corners/australias-shame-promo/7649462) ([abc.net.au/4corners/australias-shame-promo/7649462](http://abc.net.au/4corners/australias-shame-promo/7649462)) and the [Don Dale Youth Detention Centre](http://abc.net.au/news/2016-07-25/four-corners-evidence-of-kids-) ([abc.net.au/news/2016-07-25/four-corners-evidence-of-kids-](http://abc.net.au/news/2016-07-25/four-corners-evidence-of-kids-)

- tear-gas-in-don-dale-prison/7656128). Discuss how the matter of deaths in custody and police brutality toward Black people globally reinforces the idea that we are not post-colonial: Black and Black peoples are still very much living in a colonial 'apocalypse'.
7. Mykaela Saunders suggests that there is a proliferation of 'Un-Australian futurism anthologies' in the current literary landscape (Saunders, M. 2022. *This all come back now*. UQP: Brisbane, p. 5). Explore other anthologies such as *After Australia* edited by Michael Mohammad Ahmad and *This all come back now* edited by Mykaela Saunders. Discuss how these works reflect changes in our national identity and how we see ourselves.
  8. *Unlimited Futures* is an #OwnVoices work. This hashtag was created in 2015 by writer Corinne Duyvis to celebrate books where the author and protagonists share a marginalised identity, so that the voices of these marginalised groups are centred ([corinneduyvis.net/ownvoices](http://corinneduyvis.net/ownvoices)). Write an opinion piece following the style of *The Guardian* about the importance of minority and marginalised groups being represented in fiction by writers from their own group. Can writers ethically write characters who are from different backgrounds to the writer? Where does creative freedom end and cultural appropriation or misrepresentation begin? What are the specific advantages of having an author from a marginalised group in society write about their people's experiences, even if via a fictional character?
  9. Compare and contrast *Unlimited Futures* to either [Octavia's Brood: Science Fiction Stories from Social Justice Movements](http://akpress.org/octavia-s-brood.html) (akpress.org/octavia-s-brood.html) (2015) or [So Long Been Dreaming](http://arsenalpulp.com/Books/S/So-Long-Been-Dreaming) (arsenalpulp.com/Books/S/So-Long-Been-Dreaming) (2004). The introduction notes that art will always be political and stories such as these are 'pockets of resistance' (p. 16). In what ways does the speculative fiction genre facilitate such political resistance? Discuss with reference to stories from the abovementioned collections.
  10. In the closing editors' note, it is acknowledged that this visionary fiction is not new: we are always building on the work of our ancestors (p. 300). Of significance is the story contributed by the family of the late Uncle SJ Minniecon, whose vision of a utopian future in 'The Prime Minister' was written the 1940s at a time where the author and Aboriginal people generally were still very much oppressed under government Protection Acts. The author had not received an education but taught himself to read and write: perhaps the single most powerful act of resistance: to adopt the coloniser's tools and use the tools against them. Research some of the key changemakers in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities on whose shoulders the younger generations stand. To get started, see the [National Museum of Australia's Civil Rights](http://nma.gov.au/explore/features/indigenous-rights/civil-rights) (nma.gov.au/explore/features/indigenous-rights/civil-rights) feature and the informative picture book *Heroes, Rebels and Innovators: Inspiring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People from History* written by Karen Wyld and illustrated by Jaelyn Biunaiwai.
  11. Some of the contributions in this anthology connect with each other through a common trope or theme. Teachers can therefore select pieces for a particular topic or theme, perhaps within the context of a broader novel study. Some include:
    - a. A not-too-distant future world reflecting the colonial reality we still live in: 'Fifteen Days on Mars', 'History Repeating', 'Thylacine'.
    - b. Connection to Country, mourning Country, Country personified: 'Night Bird', 'I have no country'.
    - c. Keeping memories alive through stories: 'Bridge' and 'Tea'.
    - d. Post-apocalyptic future: First Nations reclaiming sovereignty – 'Guyuggwa', 'Today, We Will Rise', 'Dispatch', 'August 2029'. 'Today, We Will Rise' hints at a rebirth or reclaiming only at the end of the story. 'Guyuggwa' and 'Dispatch' could be read in the context of answering 'Today, We Will Rise'.
    - e. The importance of language in preserving culture, stories using language: 'Songs of the Nawardina', 'Guyuggwa', 'I have no country'.

## Discussion questions: specific to stories within the collection

### 'The River', Tuesday Atzinger

Written specifically from a Northern Ndebele (Zimbabwean Ndebele) cultural lens, the story is part oral history, part creation story, part law/lore story reminding of certain dangers or transgressions that must be avoided. Discuss how the author creates imagery in the reader's mind? What mood is



established? In what ways is the River, the giver of life, something to be feared? How does this story work as a cautionary tale to be handed down from generation to generation?

## **'Fifteen Days on Mars', Ambelin Kwaymullina**

1. Ambelin has said of this story that it is at once about the future and the past, about the world that is and the world that is to come. What do you learn about the future world that Billie comes from? Ask students to imagine a hopeful vision of a future Australia – what would they want Australia to be like?
2. The story is titled 'Fifteen Days on Mars' but doesn't take place on Mars. Explore with students why Billie refers to the neighbourhood she's living in as 'Mars'. What does this say about how she feels about where she's living?
3. Ambelin describes her work as Indigenous Futurisms and has said that Indigenous Futurisms are a form of storytelling whereby Indigenous writers use the speculative fiction genre to challenge settler-colonialism and imagine Indigenous futures. In what ways does 'Fifteen Days on Mars' do this? Explore with students how they might use speculative fiction to challenge an injustice happening in the here and now.

## **'Night Bird', Claire G Coleman**

1. In this story, Country is explored through a First Nations standpoint that in Western literature would be considered 'personification'. It is imbued with spirit. How do the descriptions of Country help the reader to understand the nature of First Nations peoples' connection?
2. At the end of the story, Country telephones the narrator. Does this stretching of personification beyond reality serve to further reinforce what connection to Country means, or do you think it runs the risk of 'fictionalising' First Nations conceptions of Country in general?

## **'Bridge', Alison Whittaker**

This story includes non-standard punctuation such as // and the absence of quotation marks. Why do you think the author has made this choice? The protagonist understands that some stories in Bridge's technology are filtered through the 'white gaze'. Do you think this is a reflection of the dominant narrative of Australian history? In what ways are Bridge and his family shown to have more power than the protagonist and his family? This story is told in a conversational tone. What effect does this have on the reader?

## **'Guyuggwa', Laniyuk**

1. The opening paragraph orients the reader in the story. Write three facts and three inferences from the introduction.
2. War is a main theme in this story. Do you know any other stories about war?
3. The story takes place on the night the war is declared to be over. What do you think the setting would be like another ten years after this night?
4. List five traits that Guyuggwa or Ahai demonstrate in this story. Include a supporting quote from the text for each trait.

## **'Tea', Flora A. Chol**

1. The poem describes some of the simple pleasures that make up the best day in the world. What would your best day in the world look like?
2. Write a poem exploring the significance of a drink or food item to you, your family or your culture.
3. Compare and contrast how tea features in this poem and 'Fifteen Days on Mars'.

## **'Alt-Dream', Merryana Salem**

1. Identify three times the author has withheld information to create suspense in the story.
2. What is the 'multiverse'? Write an explanation in your own words.
3. In the ALT-DREAM video without the painting, what do you think is the most significant thing that has changed from reality?

## **'I have no country', Yirga Gelaw Woldeyes**

The poem ends with the lines 'I do not have a country, I am a country myself', suggesting that identity with and connection to Country can live within the body. This empowering viewpoint decreases the

power of the coloniser to displace and diminish people, and resonates with the Indigenous viewpoint that we don't own country – we belong to it, we are interdependent, it is part of us and we are part of it. Discuss and, where possible, invite local First Nations community members into the classroom to share, what Country and connection to Country means. Is there one definition? Is there diversity within and between people and groups in the community? What are the key tenets, principles or laws common to most people when talking about Country?

## **'Thylacine', Jasper Wyld**

1. Encourage students to share their viewpoints on the ethics of cloning – do they agree that it is cruel to clone and re-generate extinct species? Would it be more acceptable if cloning could ensure good health? Would it be more acceptable if scientists found a way to imbue a cloned creature with a 'spirit' and 'soul'?
2. The narrator makes the point that cloning could reduce the value we place on lives: 'If we have the power to bring things back later, why fight so hard to keep them alive now?' (p. 131) Do you agree with this? Why/why not?
3. What is the essence of a living thing or human? Examine and discuss the concept of the 'spirit' and the 'soul'. See the [Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy's](https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/ancient-soul/) (plato.stanford.edu/entries/ancient-soul) article on ancient theories of soul for discussion points.
4. Discuss the idea that such cloning is a way to alleviate guilt for past destruction of the planet and species, a way to rewrite history and erase past sins.
5. What parallels can you draw between the cloned Thylacine experience and the way in which First Nations people have experienced colonisation? Is it too optimistic to think that the intergenerational trauma and damage to First Nations peoples' spirits can really be reversed? And if so, do we just give up? Or are there other things to gain by addressing these past wrongs?

## **'Dispatch', Zena Cumpston**

1. The dispatch states that Aboriginal grassroots community services have evolved to be so effective because of a sustained historical deficit in government services. Do you agree or disagree with this premise? Why?
2. According to the story, describe what life is like in 2029 from the point of view of a BLAKFULLAS student, and from an ally in the wider Australian community.
3. What are the core values of the Barak University BLACKFULLAS Campus? Create a brochure or poster to promote the university to prospective students.
4. What role do festivals such as BLEED Festival play in the creation of art?

## **'August 2029', Genevieve Grieves**

1. Compare and contrast the futures imagined in 'Dispatch' and 'August 2029'.
2. What does the term 'climate refugee' (p. 150) mean?
3. How would you describe the writing style of this text? What effect does this style create?

## **'The Debt', Chemutai Glasheen**

1. Comparing the motorbike police/wheelchair incident to real life scenarios, such as the George Floyd incident, how would you feel as the child of a police officer involved in such an incident? What would you think or say to rationalise your parent's actions? Could you reconcile your loving parent harming or killing a person in the course of their employment?
2. It is easier to feel guilt and remorse for the consequences of your actions when you personally experience the consequences, as opposed to your actions impacting someone else far removed from you. What other examples can you think of where the actions of a person or company have consequences on a community that person/company has no connection with? (E.g. mining companies on Aboriginal land).
3. Write a short story where, like in 'The Debt', the circumstances change and the consequences will now be turned back on the wrongdoer. How will that look? What will happen?

## **'Song of the Nawardina', Maree McCarthy Yoelu**

1. Use context clues to determine the meaning of these words from the story: Nawardina (p. 168), Bapa (p. 169), kawa (p. 171), wangga (p. 172).

2. Describe what you would see, hear, smell, taste and feel at the wangga (corroboree).
3. Find an example of each of these literary devices from the story: figurative language, repetition, onomatopoeia, personification, alliteration.
4. Bapa speaks of the need to mati nya-mu (sit still) and listen to country. In what ways do you think time spent on reflection and introspection can benefit all people?

## **'The Breakup', Jasmin McGaughey**

1. The first sentence in a story should capture the reader's attention. Did this story draw you in immediately?
2. In this story, Zillah feels she must choose between her family and her boyfriend. Have you ever had to make a difficult choice? How did you decide?
3. Artie's powers could be considered a metaphor. If so, what might they symbolise?

## **'DIS/SIMULATION', Aisha Trambas**

'DIS/SIMULATION' describes the characters going through simulation experiences to experience the past. Research [simulation](#), and find out the current capabilities in the area and how it may develop in the future. Is it ethical to use this technology to go back through history and experience your ancestors' worlds? How does this kind of technological simulation compare to the social simulation discussed in 'The Girls Home' by Mykaela Saunders? Justify your answers, making references to both the text and to research around the topic.

## **'History Repeating', Lisa Fuller**

In 'History Repeating', an apocalyptic future for First Nations people is imagined where a conservative, Nationalistic political party gains power and rounds up First Nations communities for transportation to another planet. Consider the language: 'off-world deportation' (p. 208) and 'This is for your benefit ... You just don't know any better. We're saving you.' (p. 207). Consider the experiences: in the first year, the protagonist's white boyfriend broke up with her; in the second year, the school requested First Nations students do not attend and home-school for their own safety; friends dropped away and it became safer to stay at home at all times (p. 201). People the protagonist had grown up with 'looked at us like we were animals in a sale yard now' (p. 203). Research the Aborigines Protection Act and Stolen Generations in Australia, and the Holocaust in Europe. Prepare a class debate: that repeating past atrocities in society can happen more easily than you might think.

## **'White Dunes', Afeif Ismail**

If appropriate for the class context, this story's concept could be a prompt for creative writing on the topic of the afterlife: what happens when you die? Where do you go? What happens to your memories? How conscious are you? What do you think about in the moments before death?

## **'The Girls Home', Mykaela Saunders**

1. Discuss the different personalities of the girls and how they coped differently with the challenging situation of being in the home.
2. Is this an ethical experiment? Would it be valuable to remind young people of what their ancestors went through and the freedom they fought for? Would it stop young people from taking their current freedom and opportunities for granted? Would it encourage vigilance and activism to ensure such atrocities did not get repeated?
3. Compare this to Jane Elliott's [Blue Eyes/Brown Eyes Exercise](#) experiment of 1968, and Phillip Zimbardo's [Stanford Prison Experiment](#) of 1973. Is such simulation, aimed at increasing understanding and empathy, actually too traumatic and harmful to really be effective? Many say that these experiments would not meet ethical standards and would not be allowed today.
4. What is your idea of what a true community leader is? Does it resonate with the ideas in the story about the way the girls showed leadership?

## **'Today, We Will Rise', Meleika Gesa-Fatafehi**

1. What statement do you think the author is trying to make with this quote from the story? The dome built by the rich colonisers to keep the poor outside, left to deal with the consequences of what the colonisers had done to his land – his country.

2. This story switches between the first person and third person points of view. What effect does this have on the reader?
3. What role does the boy without a body play in the story?

## **'Mami Wata', Sisonke Msimang**

1. Draw a picture representing Mami Wata.
2. Retell this story from Nyami's point of view. How does the story change when considered from his perspective?
3. A theme in this story is the power of women united. Find three quotes from the text to support this idea.

## **'The Prime Minister', SJ Minniecon**

1. When the Prime Minister describes the Equaliser Plan (p. 290) he explains that they started with a small community before expanding out to towns, cities and then the whole state. Other stories in this anthology have also suggested that change should start small at the 'grassroots', rather than be directed 'from the top'. Do you agree or disagree that this is the best method of affecting change?
2. The timeline of this story switches between different time periods and it is not always clear how much time has passed. What effect does this have on the reader?
3. In the editors' note (p. 300) the reader is reminded, no work of visionary fiction was ever created in a vacuum. Explain what the editors mean by this, and whether you believe the statement is applicable to the creation of all art.

## **Extension – social theory and politics**

Complete a literature review of social theory around speculative fiction: what does speculative fiction offer the world? How can it help to decolonise social structures? How can it influence progressive thinking and positive change?

Some articles to get started:

- [Decolonial Speculative Fiction and Fantasy – GLOBAL SOCIAL THEORY](https://globalsocialtheory.org/topics/decolonial-speculative-fiction-and-fantasy): [globalsocialtheory.org/topics/decolonial-speculative-fiction-and-fantasy](https://globalsocialtheory.org/topics/decolonial-speculative-fiction-and-fantasy)
- [How science fiction and fantasy can help us make sense of the world](https://theconversation.com/how-science-fiction-and-fantasy-can-help-us-make-sense-of-the-world-110044): [theconversation.com/how-science-fiction-and-fantasy-can-help-us-make-sense-of-the-world-110044](https://theconversation.com/how-science-fiction-and-fantasy-can-help-us-make-sense-of-the-world-110044)
- [The Link Between Speculative Fiction & Progressive Politics | by Hamza Sarfraz | Medium](https://hamzasar.medium.com/the-link-between-speculative-fiction-progressive-politics-fee2e10b6189): [hamzasar.medium.com/the-link-between-speculative-fiction-progressive-politics-fee2e10b6189](https://hamzasar.medium.com/the-link-between-speculative-fiction-progressive-politics-fee2e10b6189)
- [The Power of Speculative Fiction in Imagining the Future of Climate Change: Culture, Social Movements, and American Studies – UC Press Blog](https://ucpress.edu/blog/33093/the-power-of-speculative-fiction-in-imagining-the-future-of-climate-change-culture-social-movements-and-american-studies): [ucpress.edu/blog/33093/the-power-of-speculative-fiction-in-imagining-the-future-of-climate-change-culture-social-movements-and-american-studies](https://ucpress.edu/blog/33093/the-power-of-speculative-fiction-in-imagining-the-future-of-climate-change-culture-social-movements-and-american-studies)