



## *Shaka Rising* Discussion Questions

### **Questions and ideas for going deeper**

The way in which the material in this book is organized uses the following pattern:

- You start by reading (and viewing) the story just as it is.
- Next, there are questions and ideas to help you get a deeper understanding of what you have read.
- Finally, you think about how this applies to life as you know it (your own life, or the world in which you live). You have read the story of Shaka as a boy and young man. In the notes and questions on pages 69-87 you have focused in more detail on particular aspects of Shaka's life. The questions which follow will challenge you to think about what Shaka's life has to do with yours: What is different? What is the same? What have you learned from reading his story?

### **Critical Thinking Questions**

How accurate is this story? How do we know?

- In what other ways might the history have been skewed?
- What other instances throughout the world do you think might have been subject to fabricated history?
- Do you think it is likely that Shaka would have had a relationship with a woman, or do you think there would have been more accounts of it if he had?

The history of Shaka's time

- What was going on in other parts of the world at that time?
- How did the events at Delagoa Bay shape what happened in the story?
- How did the events in the story help shape history up to the present day?

Shaka as a leader

- To what extent do leadership positions exist today in the same social structures as in the story?
- Think about some of the leaders in society today. What are their roles and how were they chosen?

- Think about the leaders of some groups that you may have been in (sports team captain, school cheerleader, etc.). What are the roles of those positions? Were the ways in which they were chosen suitable for the positions, or could they have been done a different way?

#### The role of women

- Think about the role that women play in the society in which you live. In what ways is it different to that of the women in this story?
- Are the roles of women changing in our modern society? How so, and why?

#### Brothers and sisters

- When we compare the relationships between siblings in the story with those in our own society, what does it bring to light about the meaning we hold for the labels of “brother” and “sister”?

#### Social structures

- To what extent do you think this telling of the story resonates with how the characters themselves would have interpreted the situation in the context of their own culture?
- To what extent do you think the idea of a royal bloodline, such as the Zulus, was an attempt by European writers to align what they observed with their preconceived notion of monarchy, based on Western culture?