



### **Harvesting Hope**

**by**

**Christian Ayling**

Readership: Secondary

Genre: Young Adult/Teen

#### **ABOUT HARVESTING HOPE**

Yasemin Sandulli, a young Muslim woman, finds her life spiralling out of control after her brother is wrongfully accused of brutally attacking a gay teenage boy.

After a rock is thrown through the bedroom window of their home as an act of revenge, her father fights for his life, as her brother fights for his freedom. Yasemin begins to question her identity and faith as a young Muslim woman living in a country fearful of who she is and what she represents. Will Yasemin find the answer she's been searching for her whole life?

Harvesting Hope is a story of a family who suffer racial affliction and violence as the local community take the law into their own hands.

Exploring the reality of racial intolerance that exists within Australia today, fuelled by overseas terrorism and riotous outbreaks on our own soil, will racial tension ease, or become part of our evolving culture?

## ENGLISH

### PRE READING ACTIVITIES

Harvesting Hope offers a delicately weaved tale of life, love and loss with an ensemble of poetry and prose to highlight the racial intolerance that exists within Australia today. It raises important issues about justice, the environment and the treatment of different cultures.

**In order to highlight these points, have students predict:**

Problems that could arise from:

1. a racist community.
2. a group of citizens enforcing the law.
3. when there are no witnesses at a crime scene.

Have students explain how the media distort the truth and the impact this could have on Muslim people in Australia.

### VOCABULARY

Find the meaning of the words listed below.

Feculent (page 55)  
Repugnant (page 5)  
Quandary (page 61)  
Besiegements (page 12)  
Perils (page 14)  
Indignant (page 5)  
Atrocities (page 19)  
Innuendo (page 29)  
Irrepressible quiver (page 30)  
Discrimination (page 33)  
Aesthetically (page 35)  
Fervent (page 40)  
Sporadically (page 45)  
Bigots (page 48)  
Depleted (page 54)  
Rendering (page 55)  
Enigma (page 57)  
Inhibitions (page 58)  
Eluded (page 63)  
Hybrid (page 65)  
Elusiveness (page 65)

## **PLOT STRUCTURE**

### **Timeline**

Harvesting Hope is not written in chronological order.  
Construct a timeline to show the order of important events.

## **SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS**

### **Chapter 1**

1. What are five things the reader learns about Yasemin's character in this chapter?
2. What is learned about Danni's character?

### **Chapter 2**

1. What sort of relationship does Yasemin have with her family?

### **Chapter 3**

1. Yasemin remembers the 'snowflake' story. What is meant by this passage?
2. What does the reader find out about Nevra and Sadun's relationship?
3. What was Yasemin's memory of her brother? What relevance does it have?

### **Chapter 4**

1. In this chapter the reader is introduced to Ralph, the prison officer. Explain his behaviour and reason/s behind it?
2. What was Yasemin's statement to the media?

### **Chapter 5**

1. Do you believe the newspaper report was accurate? Explain what impact this could have on the public?
2. Explain the meaning of Yasemin's poem and how this ties in with the story.

### **Chapter 6**

1. Who helps Yasemin after the brutal attack in the fruit store? Explain how this is in contrast to Yasemin's opinion of her.

### **Chapter 7**

1. In this chapter Yasemin reveals her reoccurring dream. What significance does this dream have to Yasemin's life?

## **Chapter 8**

1. What do you believe Issy was thinking about?
2. During the visit with Issy, what surprising action did Nevra take and why?
3. Explain what Yasemin has learnt about her mother. How might this change their relationship?

## **Chapter 9**

1. Yasemin had her first kiss. What sort of emotions would Yasemin feel for kissing a non-Muslim man?
2. Why did Yasemin show Wyatt the animals Issy had adopted? What impact did this make on Wyatt?

## **Chapter 10**

1. Sadun flat-line's in this chapter. How does the author show that Nevra is distraught?
2. What has Karla learnt since becoming a nurse? How could her belief assist her with her job?

## **Chapter 11**

1. When Issy finds out about his father's heart attack, what assistance did he need?
2. Explain Yasemin's predicament concerning Wyatt.

## **Chapter 12**

1. Name the 5 'life-changing' moments that were explained in this chapter.
2. Explain the roller coaster analogy.

## **Chapter 13**

1. What does the reader learn about Yasemin and Wyatt in regards to their new relationship?

## **Chapter 14**

1. What does the following statement imply?  
'She was being the loyal, truest friend of all.'
2. Yasemin jumped to conclusions about Danni's absence. How did this impact their friendship? What could both Yasemin and Danni have done to avoid this?

## **Chapter 15**

1. In the conversation between Danni and Yasemin, what does the reader gather about their friendship?
2. Yasemin finally gets to run down the beach in this chapter. Why was this such an important thing for her and what did it symbolise?

### **GROUP DISCUSSION POINTS**

#### **Topics**

Allocate small groups within the class and give each group a major topic in the novel. Each group will address these questions and present them to the class for debate.

1. How does (topic) affect our society?
2. What can we do to improve the way we approach (topic)?

#### **Suggested topics include:**

- Drawing false conclusions
- Racism in Australia
- Local community violence
- How religion impacts society
- Importance of relationships
- Media; moral responsibility and impact on our beliefs
- Persecution against minority groups (Eg. Gay community)
- Justice system

### **CHARACTER ANALYSIS**

Choose one character from Harvesting Hope and put them on trial. Question them about why they have made particular decisions throughout the book. Attempt to highlight the positive and negative aspects of the character.

### **CREATIVE ARTS**

Harvesting Hope explores the importance of relationships, both family and friends. Yasemin uses a diary to illustrate what is important to her and how she's feeling. Write 3 diary entries to symbolise the things that are important to you.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Christian Mathew Ayling is an Australian author. Ayling was born at Box Hill, Melbourne Victoria Australia on 15th January 1976. Growing up in Ferntree Gully, an outer eastern suburb of Melbourne, Christian lived with his mother Wendy, and sister Simone. In the years that followed, Christian engaged in many sports like basketball, tennis and swimming, but there was one sport that really caught his attention, theatre sports.

Entertainment, particularly the television industry, grabbed Christian's attention. At the age of thirteen, whilst attending high school, he enrolled into a local drama group called S.K.I.D.S. Christian performed in many theatre productions like 'Out of Sight' and 'Twisted Tales.' During the years he attended drama school, he was excited about the possibility of working within the entertainment industry as an actor.

After four years with S.K.I.D.S, Christian acquired the services of 'Jills Casting Agency' and worked on numerous television series and commercials which include, *Halifax fp*, *Neighbours*, *A Country Practise*, *Blue Heelers*, *Janus*, *Law of the Land* and *The Damnation of Harvey McHugh*.

Christian ceased working in the entertainment field for a few years after marrying high school sweetheart, Jennifer Macfarlane. With an invitation to help write and produce local drama productions for The Edge, Christian was glad to let out his creative frustrations by working on over thirty shows and skits like, *The Beauty of Christmas*, *Happy Days*, *The Brady Bunch* and many more.

Seven years later, Christian left The Edge drama group and wrote his first picture book, *Cryslow's Super Heroes*, published in 2005.

Christian has also contributed in writing a short story for Donard Publishing called *Donard Anthology*, his story is called *Small Indiscretions*.

Christian's latest title, *Harvesting Hope* was launched on 30th November 2007 at the Boronia library. The book was launched by Di Inchley, a Melbourne author with several writing credits to her name, including; *Resume for results* and *Getting the job you want*. The Novella attracted some great reviews. One even said, "Ayling shows a lot of potential as a writer."