

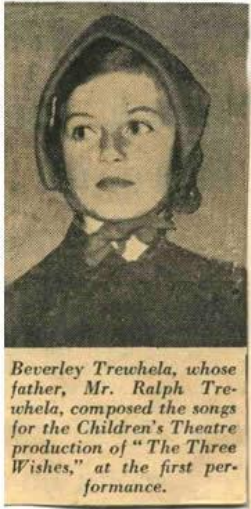
Monday 1st March

LO: Comprehension

Autobiography - Beverley Naidoo

Our lives are made of many thousands of stories and what I tell you here is just one version! Another day I might tell you other stories. The pictures below catch only a few moments in time... The photo on the left shows me in 1954, aged 11, attending the first performance of 'The Three Wishes'. My dad had composed the songs for the Johannesburg Children's Theatre. Was I actually wearing a Red Riding Hood Hat?!

My parents arranged for the portrait on the right to be taken in March 1965. This was a few days before I left on a boat for England, not knowing when I would see them again or my brother who was in jail. He and his comrades were waiting to be sentenced for their role in underground resistance to apartheid.



Fifty years later, here I am back in South Africa, with my writer friend Maren Bodenstein, exploring a special place from my past. It's a farm beneath a mountain near Rustenburg which my dad had visited since he was a boy. We lived in Johannesburg and I used to love coming here. A rambling, untidy farm, with patches of wildness, it has lived on in my imagination and in a number of my stories.



During the long years when I was not allowed to return to South Africa, there were people whom I missed. One of those was MmaSebate who had looked after our family in the city, separated from her own because of apartheid laws.

I dedicated my first book Journey to Jo'burg to her (although in the early editions it was too dangerous to include her proper name). I took this photo in 2007, two years before she passed away, with her great spirit still shining.



In England, although I remain a 'townie', I have always loved getting out into the countryside. When our children were young, we spent many holidays in Yorkshire. This photo from summer 1981 shows us at the bottom of Gordale Scar after a long 'trek' down from Malham Tarn! I began writing my first draft of *Journey to Jo'burg* about a month later.



As a child who went to a 1950s convent school where the library was kept locked. (True!) These two photos taken at the British Library in London are very special for me. They were taken on the day I received the 2000 Carnegie Medal for *The Other Side of Truth*. Lauren Child received the Kate Greenaway Award for *I will not ever NEVER eat a tomato* and, yes, Nigella Lawson presented us with our medals and certificates. The students with whom I'm talking were from St Martin-in-the-Fields High School in south London. I think my husband Nandha took this photo and I like the way it captures the media in action!



Retrieval

1. How old was Beverley in 1954 ?
2. Why was Beverley's brother in jail ?

Words in context

3. Explain what the word 'townie' means.
4. Explain what 'her great spirit still shining' means.
5. Find and copy a phrase which means 'a group working against the government'.

Inference

6. Why do you think the last two photos are very special for Beverley ?