

The Cage: Savitri Hensman

Starter activity: Note taking

Who is a writer?

Work in groups of three or four. Use the flipchart paper to draw a profile of a writer:

- What does a writer look like?
- Where do you think they live?

Feedback your ideas to the rest of the class.

Activity 1: Discussion

See the cover of Savitri Hensman's book on the whiteboard and photos of other writers published by Centerprise.

- Do your profiles fit with the photos of Centerprise writers?
- If yes, explain why.
- If no, explain why.

Activity 2: Read and discuss

'The Cage' by Savitri Hensman

In pairs, read the poem and make notes on these questions:

- Is the cage a literal cage?
- What does Savitri mean by the cage?
- How does she describe the way it is built?
- Who is it for?
- What do you think the poem is saying in the last two lines?
- Do you agree with Savitri's image of racism and racists?
- Who does racism hurt and how?
- What does the poem achieve by using the image of the cage?
- Can you think of other metaphors for racism?
- Do you think racism is a problem in your area?
- How easy is it to talk about racism?

Activity 3: Extension task

Read and write a summary on **'If you think'** by Lotte Moos

- Are there any similarities with Savitri Hensman's poem?
- How is it different to **'The Cage'**?
- What poetic forms does **'If You Think'** use?

Plenary

- List one thing you know at the end of the session you did not know at the start.
- Have you developed new ideas about what a writer is?
- What did you find most challenging?
- What are you most pleased you have learned?
- If you could add or change one thing about the session, what would it be?