

### **Themes for discussion in *The Calling of Katie Makanya***

The overall theme we want to emphasize in studying this book is the way in which European civilization spread to the non-Western world, and what the consequences of this spread were.

1. What features of European civilization are attractive to Katie and other Africans like her? What are these attractions?
2. What aspects of European civilization does Katie reject or find unacceptable?
3. How does Katie view the non-Westernized culture of her father's native village? What are the differences between this style of life and the one she has adopted? Why is this culture changing, even though it has little direct contact with Europeans?
4. What is the role of women in South African society? How does it differ from 19th-century European society?
5. What impact does Katie's trip to England have on her? What does she find strange about European life, and what does she find impressive? Why does she decide not to make her career in Europe? Why does her sister decide to go to the United States?
6. How is Katie treated by whites in South Africa? Why is her relationship with Dr. McCord different from that with other whites?
7. What forms of protest against white rule does Katie involve herself with? Why does she refuse to follow the leader of the ICU, Champion?
8. What is the significance of Katie's disagreement with Dr. McCord about whether she should tell patients that the doctor's treatments are "magic"? Why is the doctor respectful of the native healer?

### **Topics for paper on *The Calling of Katie Makanya***

Write a short (2-3 pp double-spaced) essay on **one** of the following topics. Be sure to support your argument with specific information from the book:

1. Should Katie Makanya be considered 'Westernized' or not? Explain your answer.
2. Compare the place of women in South African society with their place in 19th-century European society (you can use Dickens' *Hard Times* as a model of 19th-century middle-class life). What are the advantages and disadvantages of women's situations in these two societies?

3. What are the major changes that European colonialism brought about in African society, as they are depicted in this book? What was gained and what was lost in this process?