



Worksheet

*The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind*¹

Ages 10–16 | Reflecting on William Kamkwamba's Story



Section 1: The Problems William Faced

Instructions: Write down the problems William dealt with in the book or the film. Try to describe how they affected him and his family.

Problem	How it affected William and his family
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	



Section 2: How William Solved Them

Instructions: Think about what William *did* to overcome these challenges. What tools, skills, or actions helped him?

¹ Image: By IMDB - <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt7533152/>, Fair use, <https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?curid=59767883>

Problem	William's solution
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	



Section 3: Reflect & Respond

Answer the following in 1–3 sentences each.

1. What motivated William to keep working even when others doubted him?

2. What's one time *you* solved a problem creatively?

3. What qualities or skills do you admire in William?

4. If you were William, what would you have done the same—or differently?

5. What would *you* invent to help your family, school, or community?



Section 4: Creative Challenge (Choose one)

OPTION A: Draw an invention that would solve a problem in your home, school, or neighborhood. Label its parts and explain what it does.

(Attach a separate sheet.)

OPTION B: Write a journal entry from William's point of view the night before he tested his windmill. What do you think he was thinking and feeling?

[illegible]

Section 5: Quotes

Here are some quotes from the book by William Kamkwamba.
Discuss each one. Circle your favourites. Why do you like them?

1. "If you want to make it, all you have to do is try."
2. "Don't insult me today just because I'm poor, you don't know what my future holds!"
3. "Cool! Where did you get such an idea?" "The library."
4. "Even though we lived in a small village in Africa, we did many of the same things kids do all over the world; we just used different materials. After talking with friends I met in America, I know this is true. Children everywhere have similar ways of playing with one another. And if you look at it this way, the world isn't such a big place."
5. "The pictures in the library book had provided the idea, hunger and darkness had given me the inspiration, and I'd set out myself on this long, amazing journey."
6. "In science we invent and create," I said. "We make new things that can benefit our situation. If we can all invent something and put it to work, we can change Malawi."
7. "Think of your dreams and Ideas as tiny miracle machines inside you that no one can touch. The more faith you put into them, the bigger they get, until one day they'll rise up and take you with them."



William Kamkwamba's old windmill²

² Photo: By Erik (HASH) Hersman from Orlando Uploaded by Church of emacs, CC BY 2.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=9424456>



Parent Guide

Overview of the Story

This inspiring true story tells the story of William Kamkwamba, a 13-year-old boy from Malawi who, facing poverty, hunger, and lack of access to education, invents a way to bring electricity and water to his drought-stricken village—using parts from a junkyard and a library book.



Section 1: Understanding William's Problems



What Problems Did William Face?

1. **Hunger and Drought** – There wasn't enough food because of failed crops.
 2. **No Access to School** – His family couldn't afford school fees.
 3. **Family Struggles** – Tension grew in his family as resources ran low.
 4. **Limited Resources** – He had no money or tools to build his invention.
 5. **Skepticism from Others** – People didn't always believe in his ideas.
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Section 2: How Did William Solve These Problems?

- He **determined to find a solution** to bring water to the fields.
- He **found a book** in the library and **taught himself** how windmills work.
- He used **scrap materials** to build a working **wind turbine**.
- He **stayed determined**, even when others doubted him.
- He **used his invention** to power a water pump and save the crops.



Discussion Starters

- What did you learn from William's story?
- Why do you think education was so important to him?
- How do we handle challenges or hard times in our family?
- How can I support your creativity or problem-solving at home?



Big Ideas to Remember

- Great ideas can come from **anyone, anywhere, at any age**.
- **Education** doesn't only happen in classrooms.
- **Perseverance** means trying, failing, learning—and trying again.
- Helping others often begins by **noticing a need** and using what you have.