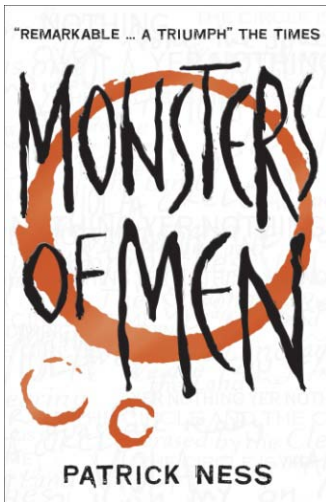


TALKING POINTS

CILIP Carnegie Medal Shortlist 2011



The CILIP Carnegie
& Kate Greenaway
Children's Book
Awards



MONSTERS OF MEN

by Patrick Ness

1
The book begins with two battles, the first of many in this story.

What are the different factions fighting for? They do have a clear set of goals?

Todd remembers Ben saying 'war makes monsters of men'. But the Mayor says 'He's wrong. It's war that makes us men in the first place.' Who do you think is right? Who do you think the reader is more likely to side with?

2
How many different narrative voices are there in Monsters of Men? How does this vary from the two previous parts of the trilogy?

Who are the narrators? What effect is achieved by switching back and forth between the different voices?

How do their narrative styles compare? How are they identified to the reader? Are you familiar with all the voices straight away?

3
Simone and Bradley are two new characters in the Chaos Walking trilogy. How does Bradley react to his discovery that he has a Noise? What is his reaction, and how does it compare to Simone's?

At the same time, Todd is making some discoveries of his own about his Noise. What does he learn? How is he acquiring his new abilities? What does he do to improve his control?

Think about the noises around you constantly. How would you cope with Noise of your own?

Would you want to learn to control it?

4
In what way is the Mayor different to other characters in the book? Why is he so fascinated by Todd? How does he regard him?

Does Todd trust the Mayor? If not, why not?

Why does Todd save him when Mistress Coyle tries to blow him up?



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5

As Todd learns to control his Noise, what is Viola's reaction?

Is it easier or more difficult for her to read Todd? Why should this matter to her?

At the end of the book when Viola can see Todd's Noise again, what is her response?

6

Why does Mistress Coyle commit suicide? Is she trying to destroy herself, or someone else? What is her ultimate objective?

Is it an act of bravery, or one of cowardice?

What are the results of her actions? Does she achieve her aim?

7

Bradley remarks of the Spackle, '...their Noise is more than just communication... it's who they are. I think they are their voice.'

Are the Spackle more advanced than the humans they are fighting? In what way are they different?

Are they peace-loving creatures? If they are, then why are they fighting?

Bradley talks of the Spackle uniting with the humans as 'one people'. Do you think this might ever be possible? What possible barriers are there to this outcome?

8

What kind of relationship does Viola have with Lee? How does this change when he loses his sight?

What effect does Lee's loss have on Viola? Is this something she can ever come to terms with?

9

At the end of the book, Viola is faced with an agonising decision. Why does she choose not to kill 1017? What are the reasons she gives? Do you think she made the right choice?

What would have happened if she had killed him? How do you think this might have affected what was to follow?

10

How does the book present war, its causes and its effect? Do you have a better understanding of why nations take up arms? Once they have taken them up, why is it so difficult to put them down again?

To what degree is war about perceptions? How can one side view the Mayor as a mass murderer for example, when another side views him as a victorious general?

Are the Answer brave freedom fighters, or determined terrorists?

Throughout the book, Viola and Todd are often on opposing sides? How does this happen?

