

TALKING POINTS

CILIP Carnegie Medal Shortlist 2014



The CILIP Carnegie
& Kate Greenaway
Children's Book
Awards



The Bunker Diary By Kevin Brooks

The setting

Do you have a clear picture in your head of the place the book is set?

Is this meant to be somewhere in the real world?

The story

How does The Man set the six prisoners against each other?

What did you find the most shocking moment of the story? How did Kevin Brooks create that shocking effect?

What do you think happens at the end – and how do you know?

The ending of this book has been controversial; how did you find it? Would you have changed anything about it?

The characters

Linus is the character who is talking to us throughout, but what sort of person is he?

How does Kevin Brooks's writing show Linus's state of mind changing over the course of the book?

Throughout *The Bunker Diary* there is the looming presence of The Man upstairs whom we never see – while you were reading, did you imagine clearly what he was like, and what his motives were?

All six characters we meet in this book are victims of The Man; as victims, was it important for Brooks to make all of them sympathetic?

How the story is told

The author has chosen to tell this story in the first person (in this diary form) rather than from an outside perspective; why do you think he made this choice?

Linus is addressing a “you” throughout – who do you think this is?



Some themes

What does *The Bunker Diary* tell you about how people behave under pressure?

The characters are in a situation that is very extreme. But for the book to speak to readers, they have to relate to this situation somehow. Do you think the story is a metaphor or allegory for something?

The Man is all-powerful in this story, toying with these six characters in what seems like an arbitrary way, never explaining his motives. Which is sort of what writers do, isn't it?

The book begins with a lot of unanswered questions, many of which are still unanswered at the end. Do you think it's a writer's job to ask questions or to answer them?

