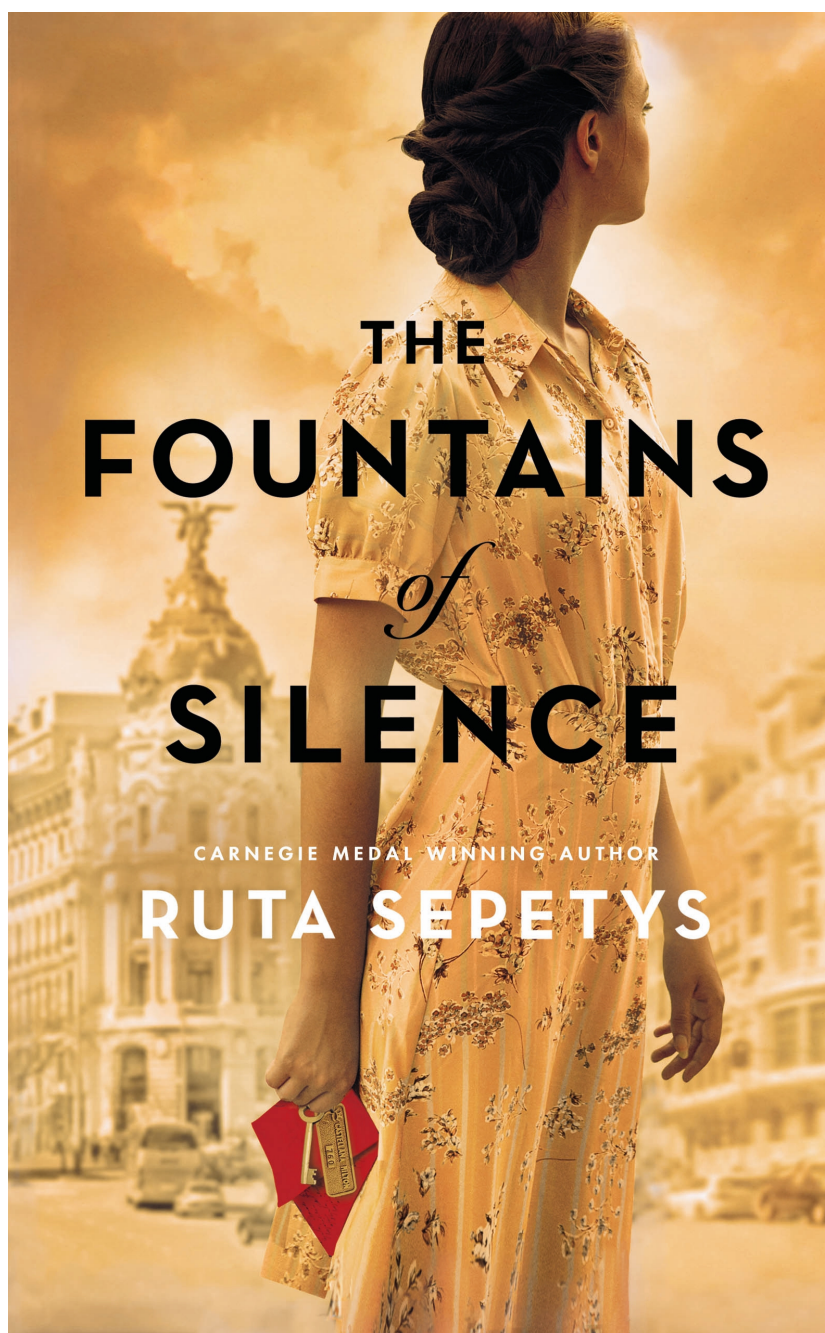


# CILIP Carnegie Shortlist 2021

## Shadowing Resources



The CILIP Carnegie  
& Kate Greenaway  
Children's Book  
Awards

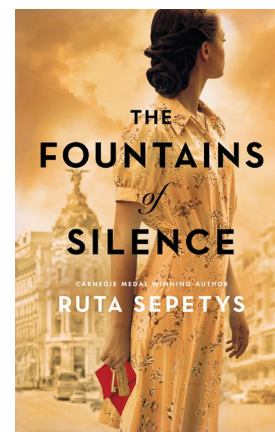


Title: **The Fountains of Silence**

Author: **Ruta Sepetys**

Publisher: Penguin Random House Children's

Age: 14+



### Before you begin

- You might find it helpful to read through the book and make notes using the CILIP Carnegie Medal criteria to help prompt thinking and ideas
- Keep notes of key themes, character personality and motivations

### Getting Started

- Use the blurbs, first lines and covers and encourage group members to match them up, this can be a good way to provide a sense of the different books and their subjects.
- Encourage the group to write key words and ideas they associate with the book to create a word map that helps to describe each title. You might like to make the words bigger or smaller depending on the number of times each is mentioned so as to create a tag cloud
- Encourage group members to list the shortlisted books by those they are most keen and interested to read and those they are least interested in. What are their reasons for these? If you keep a record of these, it can be an interesting way to see which books have challenged expectations! You might like to create the lists by piling the books from least favourite (on the bottom) to favourite on top.
- If working virtually, you could create a PowerPoint presentation with a few words to describe the book by the side of the cover to help introduce them
- Encourage group members to use their senses to describe the shortlist – if the book was a food what would it be and how would it taste? What are the reasons for their choices?

### Activities

Here are some activity ideas you might like to use with all of the CILIP Carnegie shortlisted books.

- Creating book haikus can be a way to help encapsulate the spirit of a book and different group members' feelings and perspectives on them.
- Encourage group members to think about who they would cast in a film or television version of the book, who would they pick and what would be the reasons behind their choices?

- Once the book has been read encourage group members to think about the cover, how well does it capture the feel of the book, encourage them to create a reimagined cover.
- If group members were to create a playlist for the book, what music would they use? Would particular characters and scenes have songs or pieces of music as their themes?
- Create a postcard with a scene from the book and a message from one of the characters to the reader, what kind of language would they use and what would their message say?
- You could run a **Guess Who's Coming to Dinner** introduction to the book. Have different props which relate in some way to the book. Use props for each book to describe certain characters. This idea is one which could be used physically or virtually.
- Use mood boards or mood clouds to show or describe emotions felt when reading one of the books on the shortlist.
- **Hot Seating** encourage group members to work with a partner and fire questions at each other about specific characters in the book: what do they look like, how do they speak, do you as the reader like the character, how do they respond with other characters in the book?
- Encourage group members to fill in a crib sheet detailing their hobbies, likes, dislikes, reading tastes, television taste and favourite film. Choose one of the shortlisted books based on their answers.

We have devised a number of activity ideas to tie with **The Fountains of Silence** and to encourage further exploration and thinking around the book.

- You might like to hold a debate around bullfighting, what are the pros and cons, do you feel that it has a place in modern society and what are the reasons for your decision?
- Investigate the history, geography, culture and traditions of Spain at the time?
- What do you think life would be like under Franco? You might like to use this as an activity to springboard into discussions and further thinking around human rights.
- Find images to represent parts of the story and combine these to form a photojournalistic report.

# *The Fountains of Silence* by Ruta Sepetys

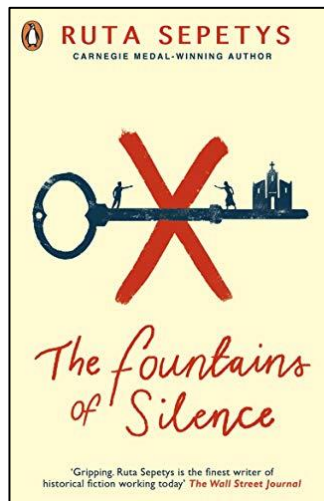
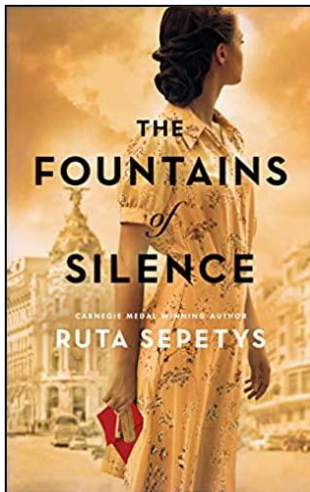
## Before Reading

### Making predictions

- Working on your own, in a pair, or in a small group, complete the three prediction tasks, below.
- If possible, discuss your ideas with other readers.
- Keep a note of your ideas so that you can refer back to them as you read.

### The front cover

- Examine the two front covers, below. The one on the left is for the hardback, the one on the right for the paperback and Kindle editions.
  - What do you think the book will be about?
  - What is the likely audience for the book?
  - Do the covers remind you of any other books? Do they make you want to pick the book up and start to read? Do you prefer one to the other? Why?



## The title

The title of the novel you are going to read is *The Fountains of Silence*.

- Think about the title. What meanings and connotations can you think of for each word separately, and then for the whole title?
- Draw together your ideas, questions and predictions about the novel, including what genre of story you might expect. If possible, discuss your ideas with other readers.

## Information about the setting

*The Fountains of Silence* takes place in Spain.

- Read this information about the setting and then answer the questions that follow.

*The novel begins in the 1950s. At this time Spain was ruled by General Francisco Franco, who ruled the country for 36 years (from 1939 until his death in 1975). His title was Caudillo, which is a term used to describe charismatic military dictators in Spain and Latin America. Especially in the early years, Franco's regime was brutally oppressive to any opposition. State-controlled media and the education system were used to indoctrinate people. Catholicism was the only religion allowed. A huge state police network spied on citizens. In the mid-1940s Franco admitted that he had around 26,000 people in prison for their political beliefs.*

*Although Franco was heavily influenced by fascism, Spain did not fight with Germany and the Axis powers during World War Two. This led to Spain being isolated after the war. In the 1950s the regime began to open up to the outside world and police controls and press censorship began to be relaxed somewhat. America helped Franco with financial aid and built military bases in Spain. Along with economic reforms, these changes resulted in what was called 'the Spanish miracle' with Spain becoming a much wealthier country and Franco becoming more popular as a leader.*

- What types of characters might appear in a novel set in this context?
- Why might a writer choose to set a novel in a real historical time and place like this?

## During Reading

We recommend working through the novel without pausing too often, then doing some more substantial work afterwards. The novel does offer lots of opportunities to pause for reflection, particularly about the different relationships described and the issues raised.

- Keep a journal while reading, pausing to write down your reflections about some or all of the points below. Where possible, have a discussion with other readers before putting your thoughts down on paper.
  - ‘They stand in line for blood.’ Is a dramatic first sentence. From your reading of the beginning of the novel, why do you think Sepetys opens with this sentence? You might like to come back to this question several times as you read the novel.
  - How does Sepetys present some of the differences between Ana’s life and Daniel’s?
  - What effects have Rafa and Fuga’s experiences when they were younger in the boys’ home had on them? How do they deal with their trauma differently?
  - Do you think Daniel will get to journalism school and become a photographer? Or join his Dad’s oil drilling company as expected of him?
  - What draws Ana and Daniel together?
  - Puri has the most questions, and yet she also keeps quiet about many of them. Why do you think this is?
  - Is Nick a good friend? How do your opinions of him change as you find out more about him and his father?
  - What does Ben see in Daniel? What does Miguel see in Daniel? How does each man help Daniel?
  - Daniel is frequently uncomfortable at the smart, formal functions for wealthy Americans that he has to attend. What does this show about him?
  - Why is Ana so cautious about getting into a relationship with Daniel?
  - What are your theories about what’s going on at the Inclusa?
  - What different attitudes do the characters have towards religion and, specifically, confession?
  - Why is becoming a bullfighter so important to Fugo?
  - How does Sepetys present life in Vallecas? Are there any positives?
  - How do your attitudes towards Puri change as she changes?
  - What do you think Julia’s big secret is?
  - What does Daniel realise about both his father and Shep Van Dorn in the car on the way back from the photoshoot with Franco? His father calls him ‘a gentleman’. What do you think he means?
  - How did you respond when Daniel took Ana’s advice about leaving Spain?
  - What was your response to the way the book ends?

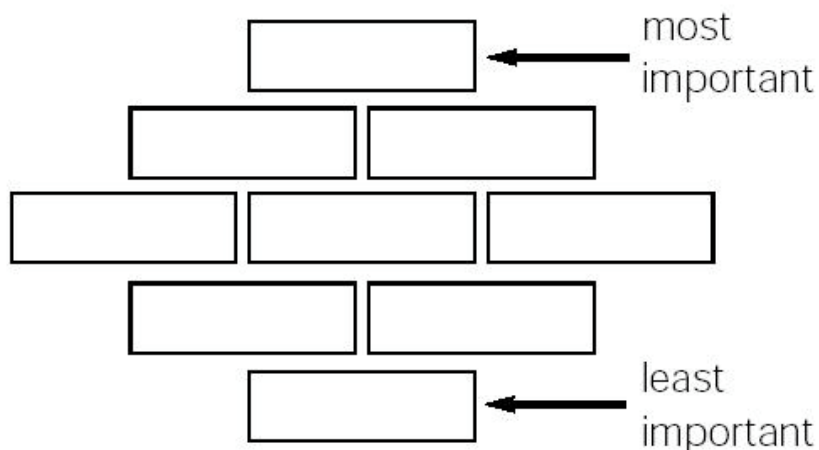
## After Reading

### What is the novel about?

- Below are nine suggestions for what *The Fountains of Silence* is about.
- Working on your own, in a pair, or in a small group, rearrange them into a 'Diamond 9' formation, as shown below.
- If possible, compare your ideas with other readers and discuss any differences.

<i>Fountains of Silence</i> is about ...		
loyalty	what it's like to live under an oppressive regime	love finding a way to overcome obstacles
standing up for what you believe in, even if it puts you in danger	Spanish history	fear, silence and secrets
the effects of poverty	the difficulty of understanding someone else's experiences	friendship

### Diamond 9 pattern



## Exploring relationships

Much of the novel centres around Daniel and Ana. However, there are lots of other characters who feature prominently.

- Remind yourself of the role played by each of the following characters.

Daniel	Ana	Lorenza	Daniel's father
Nick	Julia	Rafael	Daniel's mother
Fuga	Ben	Shep Van Doren	Miguel
Puri	Sister Hortensia	Carlitos	Cristina

- Working on your own, in a pair, or in a small group, cut out the names of the characters and move them around to show different relationships in the novel. E.g. family.
- Re-shuffle the names and come up with one or more different sets of relationships. E.g. rich and poor.
- Stick down the names on a large sheet of paper in a way that you think best shows different relationships in the novel. Draw arrows and insert comments to make it clear what the relationships are.
- If possible, compare your ideas with other readers.
- Write a short piece on your own with the title: *What the novel shows about human relationships*.



## Exploring the book further

- Use one or more of these tasks to consider some of the ideas arising from the book. If possible, share your ideas with other readers.

### The ending

- How would the last part of the novel be different if Daniel's mother was still alive? Or if Daniel had not returned home to help bring up Cristina?
- What do you think of the Spanish policy of not prosecuting those who committed crimes under Franco, but instead trying to forgive and move forward?
- Did you expect Daniel and Ana to be reunited? Or that one or both of them would get together with someone else? Or that they would both be on their own, but never see each other again?
- Why do you think the novel ends before Cristina finds out the full truth about her past?

### Love will find a way

- Do you find it believable that Ana and Daniel have such an amazing connection that their love survives for 18 years without them seeing each other? You might like to think about their very different lives and interests but also some of the values and attitudes that they have in common.

### Clothing

At various points in the novel, clothing is described in some detail and used to show something about the characters. Think about what is being shown in the examples, below:

- Daniel in jeans with a Texan belt buckle at an event where everyone else is in a suit.
- Daniel's parents mentioning how much they like it when he wears a suit.
- Ana in her maid's uniform.
- Ana in the thin and worn dresses she wears outside work, even at the dance in Vallecas.
- Ana looking at Daniel's mother's clothing when cleaning her room.
- Ana modelling the evening dress on the catwalk, and not being recognised by Daniel's mother.
- Julia's hands, damaged from her sewing work.
- Fuga emerging at the small, local bullfight in his suit of lights.
- Ben's clothing – always untidy.
- Rafa trying to wash the dirt and smell out of his grave digger's uniform.
- Puri's apron with the red arrows of Franco's regime.
- Puri in her nun's habit, towards the end of the novel.

### **Secrets and silence**

- Choose two of the Spanish characters in the novel and consider how the culture of silence, secrets and lies affects them. Next choose two of the American characters and think about the secrets and lies they are involved with and how this affects them. Think about similarities and differences in what kinds of secrets the characters are keeping and how this affects them.

### **Daniel the photographer**

Think about some of the questions below to help you to reflect on how Sepetys uses Daniel's interest in photography in the novel.

- How does his interest in photography help Daniel to get to know some interesting people and see the secret side of Spain?
- How does his interest in photography get Daniel into trouble and create tension in the novel?
- How does photography bring Ana and Daniel together and help Daniel to be accepted by her family?
- Why do you think Sepetys chose to have Daniel give up photography for Cristina's sake?
- Which of the photographs Daniel takes in Spain really stick in your mind? Why?

### **The outsider**

In the Author's Note, Sepetys says that while she was doing her research for the novel, the Spanish people she spoke to about that time often said to her 'It's very difficult to explain', 'It's nuanced and complex for an outsider' or 'You just can't understand'. She found herself thinking 'What right do we have to a history other than our own?'.

- How does Sepetys put these thoughts and questions into the character of Daniel?
- Why do you think she chose to write about Franco's Spain from the point of view of an American, but one with some Spanish heritage?
- Having read the novel, what is your opinion on the question 'What right do we have to a history other than our own?'.

## Defending the novel

Imagine that your school has decided to ban *The Fountains of Silence* from its school library because it contains many themes and scenes likely to cause upset and emotional distress.

- Write a letter to the headteacher challenging their decision, explaining to them why this is a book that should be made available to your school's students.

## Reading the reviews

The extracts, below, are all from reviews of the novel.

- Working on your own, in a pair, or in a small group, consider which reviewer comes closest to your own view of the book.
- Working individually, write your own paragraph to express your views about the novel. You can draw on the review extracts you have read if you wish.
- If possible, compare your ideas with other readers.

A. I'm not a fan of books that moralize and tell me how to feel, and somehow *The Fountains of Silence* manages to be a story that is deeply concerned with morality and justice without ever feeling preachy. The parallels that Sepetys draws between the past and current political events are like rapier blades pressed so delicately against flesh that they manage not to break the skin. Between chapters we find quotes from speeches, letters, and articles from the time that let us see the way that the American government and capitalist leaders forgave fascism in order to do business with Franco's regime, and the central mystery of the book circles around the fates of children who are being labeled as orphans and redistributed to 'desirable' families. Sepetys never says, *look at this, then go and watch the news*. She doesn't have to. *The Fountains of Silence* may be about things that went unsaid for decades, but it speaks its truth loud and clear.

Caitlyn Paxson on [www.npr.org](http://www.npr.org)

B. Thoroughly researched and beautifully written, Sepetys has created yet another masterpiece that crosses over from young adult to general historical fiction. Like her other novels, this one is full of intricate historical details, a swoon-worthy, slow-burning romance, and a fully fleshed-out setting that will make readers believe they've actually visited Madrid and Vallecas or witnessed an amateur *torero* exhibition. While the main characters are Daniel and Anna, Sepetys weaves in the perspectives of the devout Puri and of Anna's older siblings in an organic way. Everyone's individual story is part of the heartbreaking whole, with Daniel acting as readers' clueless but well-intentioned guide into the deafening silence of life under Franco.

With this fourth book, Sepetys further solidifies her place at the top of YA fiction's master writers, and the preeminent historical writer for young adults. While the steamy fantasies and edgy contemporaries have their place in the space, teens, parents, and teachers should consider Sepetys' titles an automatic buy or borrow. She somehow manages to make 500+ pages fly by with a riveting story simultaneously filled with suspenseful dread and hopeful anticipation. As the pages turn, readers will fall as much for the charming and clever Spanish girl and the courageous and talented Texan boy as they do for each other. But calling the book a romance is to do it a disservice. It's a satisfying epic about so many kinds of love, from romantic to familiar, and an exploration of the important difference between patriotism and nationalism.

[www.commonssensemedia.org](http://www.commonssensemedia.org)

- C. The slow pacing and character-driven stories seem to be hallmarks of Ruta Sepetys's style... There are multiple points of view in this book - another literary technique I'm also not a fan of - which made this book hard to read.

I ended up liking this a bit more at the end than I did at the beginning, and obviously, since I made it to the end of this nearly-500-page tome, I ended up feeling invested enough to finish. It was an OK story, but it felt sanitized. History is dirty and awful. I didn't really feel like the fear, paranoia, and persecution of the dictatorship was adequately captured here. Even when bad things *do* happen, they come across as understated...I don't think this is a bad book, but it's definitely not what I want out of historical fiction.

*Nedia on [www.goodreads.com](http://www.goodreads.com)*

- D. Sepetys wisely resists making Ana's story into a fairy tale, though she does allow her some moments of magic. One night, Ana sloughs off her uniform and wears borrowed finery to an embassy party. She is so transformed that Daniel's mother doesn't recognize her. Afterward, Ana reflects that 'she wore a dress, a beautiful dress, a dress she could never own. She spoke to a handsome boy in a courtyard and was respected by his mother. For a few hours, she felt beautiful.' But Cinderella stories are too simple for Ana's complicated reality, and that's a good thing for the novel.

*Sarah Harrison Smith in [The New York Times](#)*

- E. The good:
- Interesting history, captivating setting and historical facts
  - Beautiful writing for the most part
  - Enough tension, darkness, and secrecy to engage readers
  - The bonus material at the end: I love it when an author explains the research process, and in this copy, Sepetys shares primary sources including her own drafts of this book. LOVE it.

The problems:

- I spent 2 months reading it
- The dialogue felt wrong, fake, inauthentic....can't put my finger on it
- The chapters were like 1.5 pages long. Perhaps this allowed me to put it down way too much, never keeping me engaged enough to continue on feverishly as I normally read
- Flat characters. No one surprised me; they each played their role exactly as planned
- The ending.

*Julie Suzanne on [www.goodeads.com](http://www.goodeads.com)*

- F. This is a love story and a lesson in the aftermath of the Spanish Civil War. It is excellently researched and has several historical blurbs from actual documents in the past. There are several different perspectives in the book that tell the story from all sides and each has a strong purpose in the overall plot. The chapters are short but each pack a punch in a few simple pages.

*Lauren on [Goodreads.com](http://Goodreads.com)*

## Cards for Literary Analysis

These cards have been designed for use with any short story or novel. You can select a particular card to work with or rely on your teacher to give you a particular area of focus. You could then work through the bullet points on your card or select a few that seem most interesting or relevant for a particular text.

### Setting

- In which different settings does this story/novel take place? What part does each setting play? Which setting is most significant and why?
- How important is setting to the story/novel as a whole? Does the setting have a particular impact on the story/novel, or could it be set almost anywhere?
- What difference would it make if this story/novel was set somewhere else? E.g. another country, a rural rather than urban setting, in space!
- How effective do you think the writer has been in creating a sense of place? Are there any particular examples of setting you think are particularly well written? If so, why?
- Is there anything particularly interesting or special about the way setting is used and presented? In what ways is it similar or different to stories/novels that explore similar themes and ideas, or that are written in the same genre?
- Find one or two bullet points from other cards that add to what you have discussed about setting. Explain the connections.
- Is there anything important that you've noticed that isn't raised on this card? What is it? Why do you think it's important?



### Characters

- Who is your favourite character, and why?
- Who do you think is the most important character, and why?
- Who are the other significant characters? What different roles do they have?
- What is special or unusual about the way one or more of the characters is presented?
- Which character would you most like to be friends with, and why? Which character might significant adults want you to be friends with, and why?
- Are characters paired or grouped in any particular ways? E.g. friends, rivals, etc. What ideas are raised by these pairs or groupings?
- Are the characters typical of ones found in this kind of story/novel? Are they distinctive and individual, or stereotypes? Explain your answer.
- Find one or two bullet points from other cards that add to what you have discussed about characters. Explain the connections.
- Is there anything important that you've noticed that isn't raised on this card? What is it? Why do you think it's important?



## Form and structure

- What do you think is interesting about the way this story/novel begins?
- What were the key moments in this story/novel? How did they shape the story/novel as a whole?
- If you had to describe the path of this story/novel, what would it be? E.g. journey from childhood to adulthood, from grief to happiness etc.
- What did you notice about the end of this story/novel? Was it what you were expecting? Did it tie up loose ends, or leave some things unresolved?
- Does this story/novel belong to a particular genre? If so, how does it fit in with other stories that you know in the same genre?
- Does the story/novel use just one form or does it include more than one E.g. letters, diary entries, poems, newspaper reports
- Find one or two bullet points from other cards that add to what you have discussed about form and structure. Explain the connections.
- Is there anything important that you've noticed that isn't raised on this card? What is it? Why do you think it's important?



## Themes and ideas

- What, to you, are the five most important themes and ideas in this story/novel? If you had to narrow your list down to one theme or idea, what would it be and why? In what ways is this theme presented? E.g. if the theme is love, what exactly does the story/novel have to say about love?
- Does this story/novel deal with big issues that affect the whole world, or small ones that affect individual lives? Give reasons for your answer.
- Does this story/novel contain any themes or ideas that have made you look at the world in new ways? If so, what are they, and how have they changed your views?
- Does this story/novel contain any themes and ideas that explore how people should act and behave? If so, what are they and do you agree with how they are presented?
- Are the themes and ideas presented in ways similar or different to other stories you have read, including stories of the same type, or in the same genre?
- Find one or two bullet points from other cards that add to what you have discussed about themes and ideas. Explain the connections.
- Is there anything important that you've noticed that isn't raised on this card? What is it? Why do you think it's important?



## Language

- Identify one or two of your favourite passages in the story/novel where language is used particularly well? Explain how it is used.
- How would you describe the language used in this story/novel overall? E.g. poetic, plain, chatty etc.
- Would you say the language in this story/novel is original or creative in any particular way? If so, how?
- Are there any patterns in the language used? If so, what are they, and what is their effect? Are there any other patterns, such as of imagery and symbolism?
- How is dialogue used in the story/novel? Do characters, for example, speak in particularly distinctive ways?
- Is the language similar to how it is used in similar kinds of stories/novels? If so, in what ways? If not, why not?
- Find one or two bullet points from other cards that add to what you have discussed about language. Explain the connections.
- Is there anything important that you've noticed that isn't raised on this card? What is it? Why do you think it's important?



## Narrative

- How does the writer try to capture and keep the reader's attention? How successful are they in doing this?
- Is the narrative told in order from beginning to end (a linear narrative), or does it move backwards and forwards in time? What is the effect of the order in which events are told?
- Can you think of any other ways the story/novel could be told? For example, by a different character, or in a different order? How would this affect your experience of reading?
- Would you say that this story/novel is told in a particular original or creative way? If so, how?
- Is this story/novel told in a way that is typical for its genre?
- Find one or two bullet points from other cards that add to what you have discussed about narrative. Explain the connections.
- Is there anything important that you've noticed that isn't raised on this card? What is it? Why do you think it's important?





## Point of view and voice

- Through whose eyes do we see the events of the story/novel? Do readers get just one point of view or several?
- What do you find interesting about the point or points of view presented?
- If the story/novel is told from different points of view, how does the writer do this?
- What would the story/novel be like if told from someone else's point of view? Whose point of view would you choose, and why?
- How would you describe the tone of voice used to tell the narrative? Does the narrative draw attention to itself by using a particular tone, or is the tone pushed to the background? What is the effect of the choice made by the writer?
- Find one or two bullet points from other cards that add to what you have discussed about point of view and voice. Explain the connections.
- Is there anything important that you've noticed that isn't raised on this card? What is it? Why do you think it's important?



## Audience and overall personal response

- Who do you think this story/novel was written for, and why? Are there any other groups of people who you think should read it?
- What was your experience of reading this story/novel?
- What would you recommend about this story/novel to other people?
- Which parts of this story/novel did you most enjoy? Were there any parts that you didn't enjoy?
- Do you think this story/novel could be improved in some way? If so, how?
- What other stories (or films, TV, plays etc.) does this story/novel remind you of? In what ways?
- Who do you think should read this book and why?
- Find one or two bullet points from other cards that add to what you have discussed about personal response and audience. Explain the connections.
- Is there anything important that you've noticed that isn't raised on this card? What is it? Why do you think it's important?

