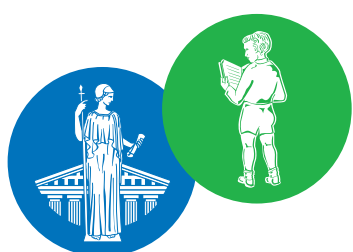
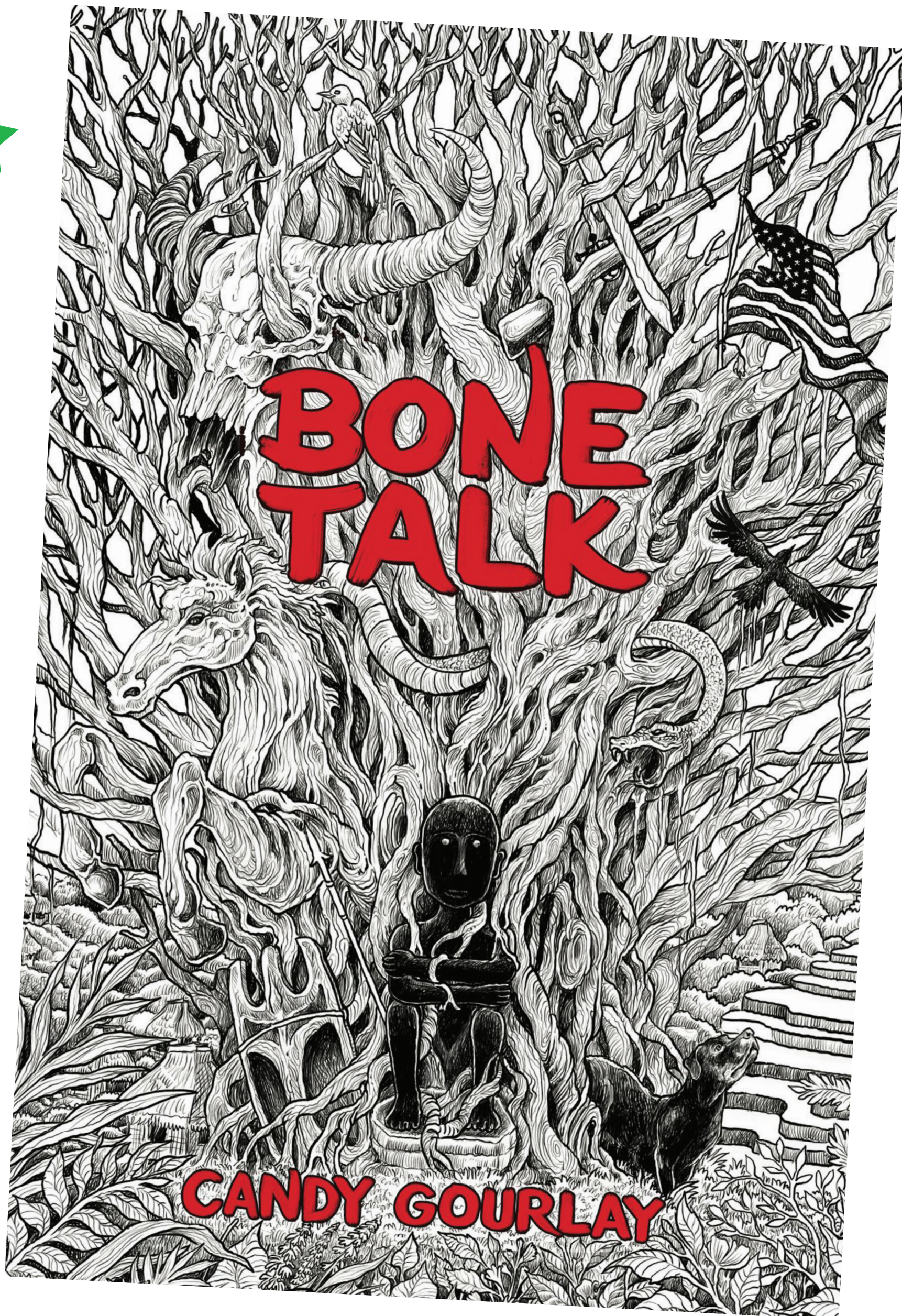
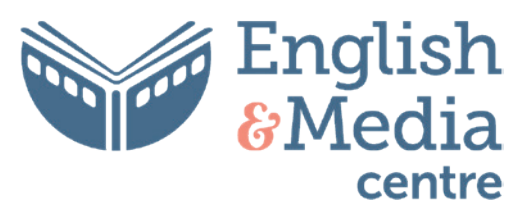
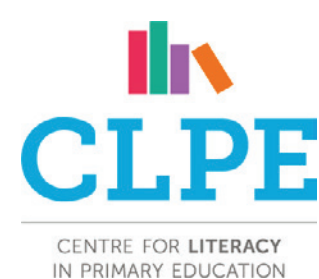


CILIP CARNEGIE SHORTLIST 2019

SHADOWING RESOURCES



The CILIP Carnegie
& Kate Greenaway
Children's Book
Awards



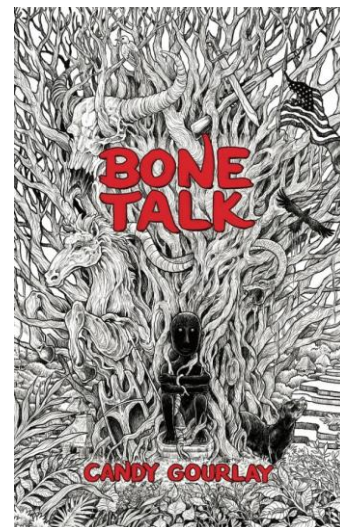
CILIP Carnegie Medal 2019

TALKING POINTS

Title: **Bone Talk**

Author: **Candy Gourlay**

Publisher: **David Fickling Books**



Setting the scene

Did you know in advance when and where the book was going to be set (i.e. just over a century ago, in the Philippines)? And if so, were you surprised by what you found there when you actually read it?

The setting of this novel is crucial. How vivid did you find the author's creation of this place? For example, did you feel as though you were reading about it from outside, or did she almost make you feel you were really there yourself?

There is a lot of evocation of the natural world where Samkad lives, often recreated very visually – could you picture it as you read?

We often talk about “world-building” in relation to writing, say, fantasy. But is that really so different from what a writer has to do in a realistic novel set in a real place and time?

Becoming a man

What's the significance of the Tree of Bones?

For Samkad, becoming a man turns out to involve more than just a simple ceremony. What are the experiences in this book that really change him?

What will he have to sacrifice?

Luki

Just as Samkad will soon become a man, his best friend Luki will become a woman. How are the expectations on her different from those on him? What power do the female characters in this novel hold?

Is Luki eager to fulfil those expectations, or to resist them? Do you have sympathy for her attitude? Though Samkad is the central character, it's often Luki who shapes the direction of the story – can you think of some examples of this happening?

Change

In the brief span of the novel, so many things change in Samkad's once-stable world – which do you think is the critical moment when the unravelling starts?

We often assume that when things change over time, this change must necessarily be “progress”. Is that the view we see in *Bone Talk*?

Reading about the unknown

Gourlay explains in an afterword to the book that she felt a lack of “unfiltered Filipino voices” telling their side of the story. Why is this important?

Most readers of this book will never have been to the place in which it’s set. Do you like books that introduce you to new places (and times) or do you prefer books set in your old familiar world? Why?

Assuming you didn’t know very much about the US invasion of the Philippines, and the people who were living there at the time – and most *Bone Talk* readers won’t – are you now curious to learn more?

How do you relate to the character of Samkad? How does the author makes him understandable to those of us with altogether different experiences? Which parts of his personality and his experience did you feel you could connect with yourself?

How much is your ability to accept certain aspects of the culture in which Samkad lives helped by the fact that the story is told from his perspective?

Big and small stories

The heart of the story is one boy, but how does Gourlay manage to examine really big themes – colonialism, prejudice, war, responsibility – in a small-scale individual story?

How much is this a book about the meeting of individuals, and how much is it about the meeting of whole cultures, whole worlds?

Accuracy and authenticity

In the afterword, Gourlay refers to the considerable amount of research she put into getting the book right – could you tell, when reading it?

What are the risks of research when you are examining a time when one side of the conflict left far more substantial records?

Does the representation of the people in *Bone Talk* feel accurate and sensitive, and does it manage to avoid stereotypes? And just because it might “feel” that way to you, is that actually enough? How can you *know*?

Do you think this book should win the 2019 Carnegie Medal? Why, or why not?

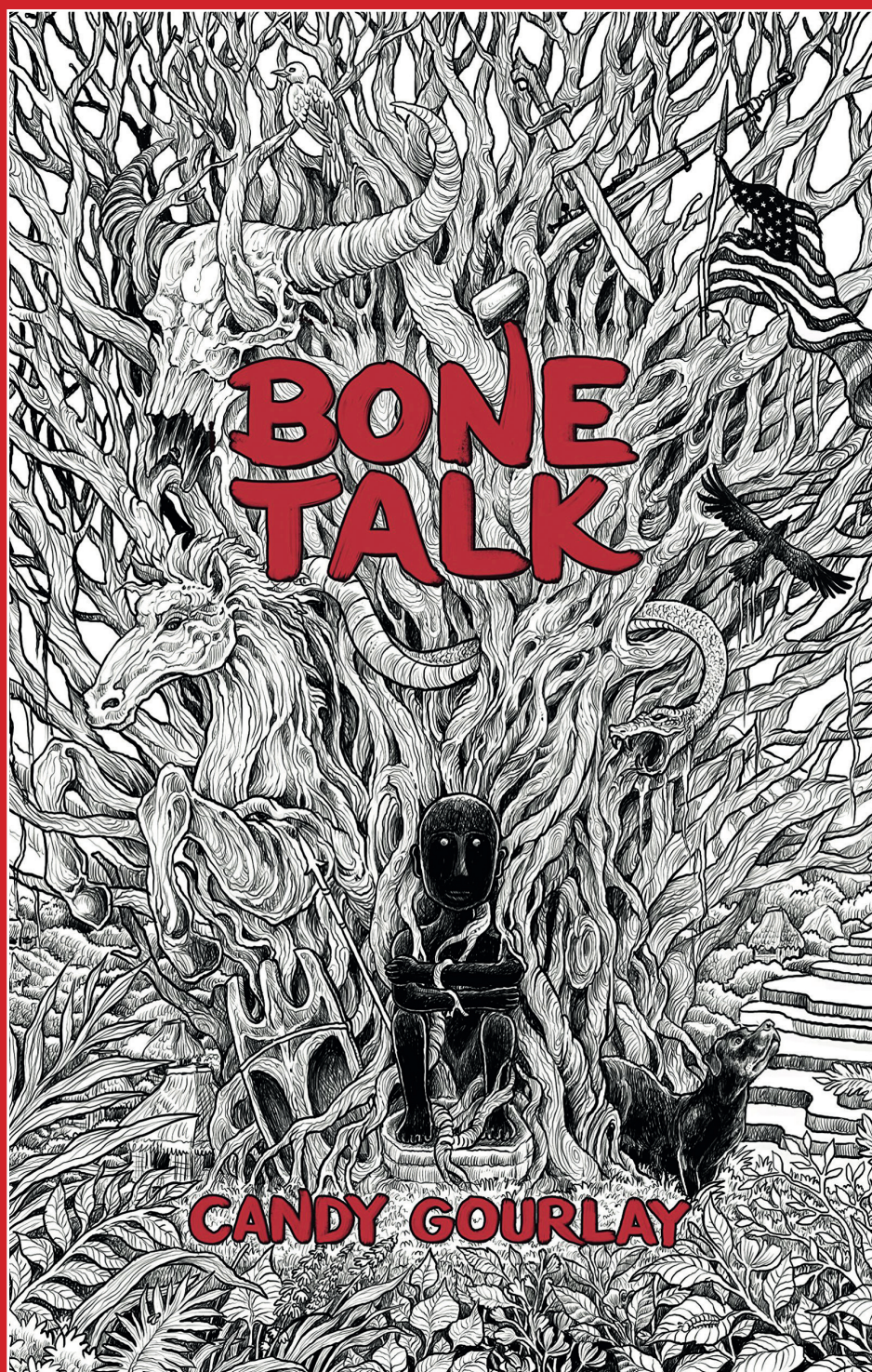
Discussing human rights in this story:

Right to equality including indigenous rights;
to life and to be safe; to be free from cruel and degrading treatment; to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; to practise culture.

- What role do the Americans play in Samkad’s life?
- Why do the villagers assume that the Americans are allies?
- If Samkad and Luki go with Mr William, do you think they will be safe and treated with respect?



The Carnegie Shortlist 2019



EMC Resources: Bone Talk



The CILIP Carnegie
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Children's Book
Awards



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Publications

Teachers' Note

This book contains some material that is not suitable for some younger students. Teachers should, therefore, make sure to read the book carefully before teaching it or recommending it to students.

Written and edited by Kate Oliver

English & Media Centre, 18 Compton Terrace, N1 2UN

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BEFORE READING

Making predictions

- Complete the three prediction tasks, below, in a pair or three.
- When you have completed the tasks, pool all your ideas about the novel as a whole group.
- Keep a note of your ideas so that you can refer back to them as you read.

1. The title

The title of the novel you are going to read is *Bone Talk*.

- Working with your partner or three, discuss what you think about the title. What meanings and connotations can you think of for each word separately, and then for the two words together?
- Discuss your ideas, questions and predictions about the novel, including what genre of story you might expect.

2. Before and after

The novel is split into three parts called: 'How to Be a Boy'; 'How to Know Nothing'; 'How to Be a Man'.

- Working with your partner or three, discuss your ideas about the section titles and why you think the story might be structured in this way.
- Add to your ideas, questions and predictions about the novel

3. What's in a name

The novel is set in Bontok, a mountainous area of the Philippines, in 1899.

- Look at the names of characters in the novel, below, which are listed in the order in which they appear in the book.
- Working with your partner or three, discuss what you notice about the names, for example, whether you could group them in any way, what relationships you might notice between the characters, anything you notice about the order in which they appear.
- Add to your ideas, questions and predictions about the novel.

Little Luki	Mother
Father	Kinyo
Samkad	Agkus
The ancients: Old Pito; Sallayud; Duga; Blind Maklan	Bitteg
Tambul	Chuka (a dog)
Lumawig (a God)	Mister William
The Mangili (the enemy tribe)	Corporal Quinlan
Chochon	Private Smith
Private Henry	The lowlander

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 each of the points below. Where possible, have a discussion with other readers before putting your thoughts down on paper.

What it means to be a man.

Right from the beginning of the novel, Samkad is desperate to be a man. At the start this means getting 'the Cut'. This is a ritual male circumcision which, for this tribe at this time, signals that a boy is ready to become a man.

- As you read more, notice how Samkad's ideas about what it means to be a man change.

Little Luki

- As you read the novel, think about the importance of Little Luki in the story. For example: as a fierce girl, she challenges the stereotypical expectations of her tribe's ideas about being a girl. This also makes Samkad think about what it means to be a man.

Luki and Samkad's friendship

- Think about the friendship between Luki and Samkad. For example: what does each of them get from the friendship? How does Luki help Samkad in his quest to become a man? Why do they argue all the time? Do you think romantic feelings might develop between them, or will they always just be friends?

Samkad's father

- What do you think about Samkad's relationship with his father? How does their relationship change and develop as the story progresses?

The setting

- This is a story which could only be set in this time and place – the setting is a very important part of the story. Candy Gourlay describes the setting in great detail: identify a couple of your favourite passages which help you to imagine what it would be like to walk through the setting. Think about what it would be like to live at this time and in this place. For example: what are the pros and cons of living in such an isolated environment, especially for young people?

The portrayal of the Bontok tribe

- Think about what you learn about the culture and traditions of the tribe. For example: what values do they hold to be very important? Which do you share? Which do you think modern society could learn from? Which would you find hard to live with?

The title

- Think about why Candy Gourlay chose the title *Bone Talk*. For example, what is the importance of the Bone Tree? What beliefs do the tribe have about death and why does this make the way dead bodies are treated very important? How does lead to some of the most dramatic moments in the novel?

AFTER READING

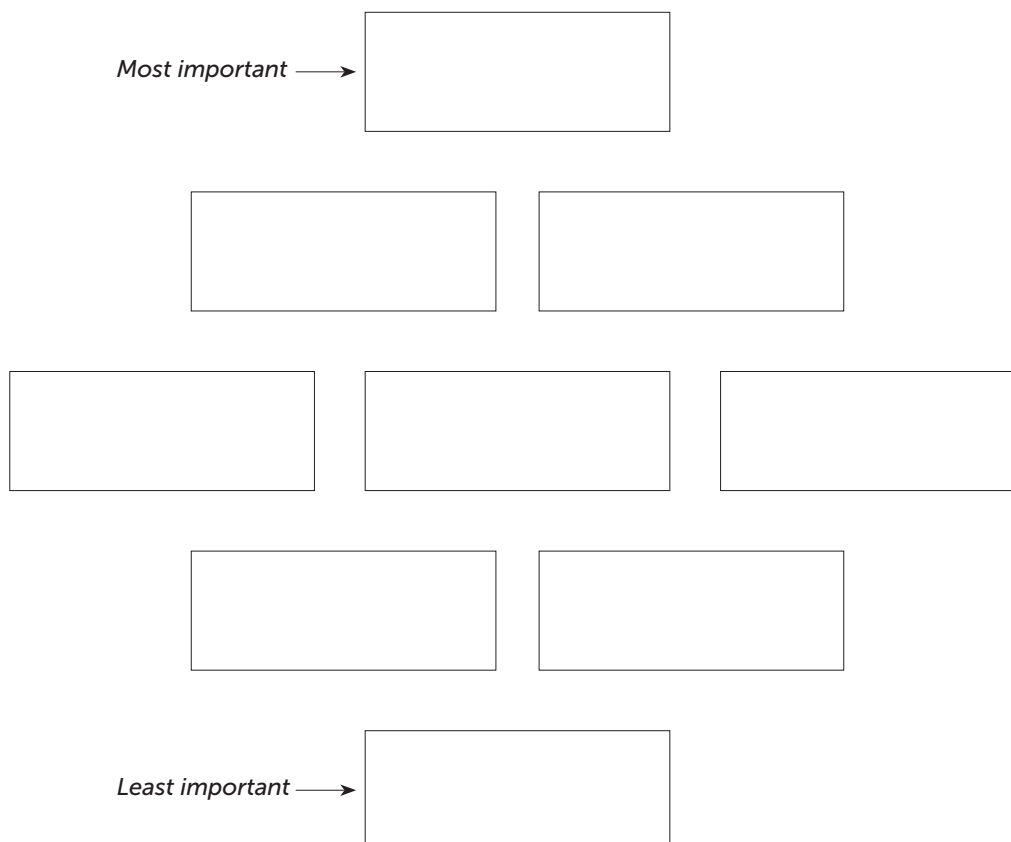
What is the novel about?

- Below are nine suggestions for what *Bone Talk* is about.
- Working in a pair, or small group, rearrange them into a 'Diamond 9' formation, as shown below.
- Compare your arrangement with another pair or group and discuss any differences.

Bone Talk is about ...

What it means to be a man	The clash between different cultures	Highlighting the Philipino point of view of the arrival of the Americans
Gender stereotypes of the past	Growing up	The culture and way of life of the Bontok tribe.
The importance of family	The importance of community spirit: everyone plays their part	The danger of lies

Diamond 9 pattern



Samkad in the middle

Samkad is the central focus of the narrative. To help you remember and think about everything Samkad was involved with, you should produce a diagram of his relationships in the novel.

- In a small group, draw Samkad in the middle of a large sheet of paper. Label the picture with words and phrases that describe him.
- Write the names of key characters in the novel, or draw them, around the edge of the sheet: Luki; Father; Bitteg; Tambul; Lumawig; Chuka; Kinyo; Mister William; Corporal Quinlan; the lowlander.
- Draw arrows between Samkad and the characters and write along them the nature of their relationship, including key moments described in the novel.
- Draw arrows between other characters where links exist. For example, between Kinyo and Father. Write along them the nature of their relationship, including key moments described in the novel.
- Compare what you have identified with another group.

Defending the novel

- Imagine that your school has decided to ban *Bone Talk* from its school library because a parent has complained about its portrayal of male circumcision.
- 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.

The epilogue

- Imagine that the editor of the book has suggested cutting the Epilogue because 'it doesn't add much to the story and takes away the drama of the ending.'
- In role as the writer, Candy Gourlay, write an email to your editor, explaining why you included the epilogue and whether you agree that it should be cut.

A note from the author

- Read the note from the author. As a class, discuss what this adds to your understanding or appreciation of the novel. As a class, discuss whether you have read any other novels which give a voice to people who may not be well-represented in books.

Reading the reviews

The extracts on page 7 are all from reviews of the book.

- Working with a partner, discuss 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.
- Share some of your reviews as a whole group.

A. Candy Gourlay is such an accomplished writer... Her research is impeccable and expertly blended into the story so that it never feels like a lesson. The characters she creates are always utterly credible...The blurb on the back of my review copy of *Bone Talk* says that the stories that stay with you are often the ones that take you somewhere completely outside your everyday life... but that make you believe utterly in the truth of what you are reading and I think this perfectly describes *Bone Talk*. It's a gripping adventure story and a fascinating piece of historical fiction but you never, ever forget that it's the story of Samkad, a boy you believe could be your friend.

The bookbag.co.uk

B. This book is more than just a book. It's about how humans affect each other from different cultures and religions. It defines the meaning of equality. I loved how I learnt lessons throughout the book.

Amirah, Allerton Grange School on <https://www.leedsbookawards.co.uk>

C. Gourlay juggles so much in this book; strong females trying to fight against the gendered norm, the history of a people living in the Cordeillera region, their cultures and customs as well as their encounters. I learned so much from her story; she opened my eyes to the Bontoc people and their region and has done so with great sensitivity, respect and love. I have a feeling that this was an equally great journey for her too.

Mathew on Goodreads.com

D. This book took me by surprise. I didn't expect to enjoy it as much as I did as I wouldn't choose historical fiction normally, but it was so highly recommended...It's interesting from a historical point of view (I really had no idea about this conflict) and from an anthropological point of view (how death and the body are dealt with) BUT this is a wonderful children's book, and also so relevant in these turbulent times here in the UK and around the world. It demonstrates how we are not so different from our enemies and not everyone from the same race/nationality/culture is going to behave in the same way. The empathy that Samkad had for his dead enemies is as touching as his turbulent friendship with Luki.

Yvonne Banham on Goodreads.co.uk

E. Personally I disliked the book because it didn't have the greatest ending. However in the book there are some really fascinating parts which can make you laugh and be upset. This book is a rollercoaster.

My favourite character was Samkad, purely because of his strength and bravery.

Hamza from Southfield Grange Campus on <https://www.leedsbookawards.co.uk>

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?



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