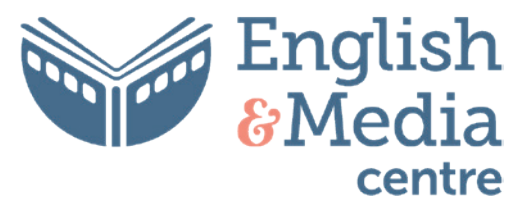


CILIP CARNEGIE SHORTLIST 2019

SHADOWING RESOURCES



The CILIP Carnegie
& Kate Greenaway
Children's Book
Awards



CILIP Carnegie Medal 2019 TALKING POINTS

Title: **A Skinful of Shadows**

Author: **Frances Hardinge**

Publisher: **Macmillan Children's Books**



GETTING STARTED

What does the book's jacket design tell you about what atmosphere – or even plot – you should expect from it?

MAKEPEACE

Is "Makepeace Lightfoot" a good name for our protagonist?

How well suited is Makepeace to her time? And is she the kind of character you usually find as the hero of a novel?

Makepeace is often underestimated by others – why might that be?

What does Makepeace learn about herself over the course of the story?

THE GHOSTS

Makepeace has inherited the capacity to be possessed by ghosts. Is this a gift or a curse? (And did your opinion of this change over the course of the book?)

Do you think Makepeace's being inhabited by Bear might be read as a metaphor – and if so, for what?

Gradually Makepeace learns to trust the Bear inside her – why / how does this change happen? (Is the book about trust in other ways, too?)

PERIOD SETTING

Can you tell how much research Hardinge has done into the period and setting of this novel? Does this research get in the way of the reading, or help to make the book feel richer and more vivid? (Can you think of any examples?)

Why do you think Hardinge makes a point of rooting her fantasy story in a real place at a real historical moment?

If you already knew a little about the Civil War, how did this alter or add to your understanding of it?

POWER STRUGGLES

We see both factions in the Civil War, but does the author take sides?

How important is the Civil War to the story – is it significant, or merely a backdrop that could easily have been replaced with some other time/place?

The story is set against the background of a national struggle for power. How else is the novel about who has power, or who should?

There's a big story (the Civil War) playing out in the background to Makepeace's individual story – how do they connect? And how explicit are the parallels between the two?

BIG QUESTIONS

In what ways does this book invite you to rethink your ideas about:

- Aristocracy?
- Loyalty?
- Inheritance?
- Destiny?
- Redemption?

FINALLY

Have you read Frances Hardinge before? If so, what do her books have in common, to you?

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

Discussing human rights in this story:

Right to life; to equality including women's rights; to peace and order; to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; to protest; to participate in the government of our country

- Do you agree that 'in time, the unthinkable becomes normal'?
- Who else could have stood up to the Fellmottes?
- Why is Makepeace so angry with the man who throws the lace handkerchief?



The Carnegie Shortlist 2019



EMC Resources: A Skinful of Shadows



The CILIP Carnegie
& Kate Greenaway
Children's Book
Awards

 **EMC**
Publications

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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 *A Skinful of Shadows*.

- 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 whole title?
- Discuss your ideas, questions and predictions about the novel, including what genre of story you might expect.

2. The front cover

- In a pair or small group, examine the book's front cover.

- ▶ What do you think the book will be about?
- ▶ Does it remind you of any other books? Does it make you want to pick the book up and start to read?
- ▶ Add to your ideas, questions and predictions about the novel.



3. Information about the setting

A Skinful of Shadows takes place in England, beginning in 1641. This was the year that King Charles was locked in a power struggle with the elected Parliament. The following year this led to Civil War.

- Read the information on page 4 about the English Civil War and then answer the questions below.
 - ▶ What types of characters might appear in a novel set during the Civil War? (A civil war is a war between people in the same country.)
 - ▶ Why might a writer choose to set a novel during a civil war?
 - ▶ Do you think it would be more interesting to read a novel set around the leaders of the conflict (so Charles I and Oliver Cromwell), or about ordinary people living through it? Explain your thinking.

1. King Charles was a Catholic. However, many people in England at the time were Protestant. There was a lot of conflict between Catholics and Protestants at this time.
2. Charles was short of money and kept raising taxes. This was one of the main causes of his conflict with Parliament. He closed Parliament for 11 years to try to stop MPs interfering with his rule.
3. As he considered himself to be King by 'Divine Right' (because God made it happen) he thought Parliament (and everyone else) should simply agree with anything he wanted to do.
4. Riots by ordinary people in London forced the King to flee to Hampton Court.
5. Parliament took control of local armies.
6. Wealthy landowners put their armies behind Charles. Oliver Cromwell, a Puritan, led the other side. The country was divided.
7. Civil War broke out in 1642. (A Civil War is a war between citizens from the same country.)
8. Charles I was executed for treason in 1649. Charles II escaped to France, and Oliver Cromwell was made Lord Protector.
9. The war finally ended in 1651.

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.

- You can use the points below to help you to keep a journal while reading, pausing to write down your reflections. You could also use these points as prompts for discussion with other readers.

Makepeace and her 'gift'

- Early on in the novel, we realise that there is something different about Makepeace. Reflect on some of the key events which gradually reveal both to Makepeace, and to you as the reader, what her 'gift' is. Think about whether you consider it to be more a gift, or a curse.

Makepeace and her mother

- What do you think about the relationship between Makepeace and her mother? Why do you think her mother sometimes seems to care for her deeply, and sometimes seems determined to treat her harshly? Think about the ways that Mother 'haunts' Makepeace through the book, and her changing understanding of why her mother behaved the way she did.

Taking sides

- In a Civil War, people are forced to take sides. However, people can also change sides! Choose two of the following characters and track which side they are on, and when this changes: Makepeace; James; Helen; Symond; Lady Morgan.

Power to the powerless

- As you read, reflect on the ways that the powerful make use of the powerless in the novel, for example, the way Makepeace is treated by both sides, the soldiers expected to sacrifice themselves, the ordinary people of Oxford forced to help the King, the treatment of the servants at Grizehayes, especially during the siege.

The bean in the cake

- When James wins the bean in the cake and gets to be Lord for the day, Makepeace tells him he is a fool. The idea of the 'bean in the cake' is mentioned several times, and by the end of the novel James has finally understood what Makepeace meant. Make notes each time this is mentioned and think about why this is an important idea in the book.

Second chances

- At various points, Makepeace has to make a decision about saving someone's ghost or saving someone who has become a carrier of ghosts for the Fellmottes. She calls this giving 'second chances to people who don't usually get them'. Think about which characters in the book you think deserve a second chance and whether you agree with her choices about who to save.

Refusing destiny

- One of the Elders says of Makepeace towards the end of the novel, 'What was she doing, refusing to accept her destiny? How could she want so many centuries of memories to be lost? It was like cutting down a millenia-old tree.' Think why it is so important to the Fellmottes to keep their ghosts. Do you have any sympathy for their position?

AFTER READING

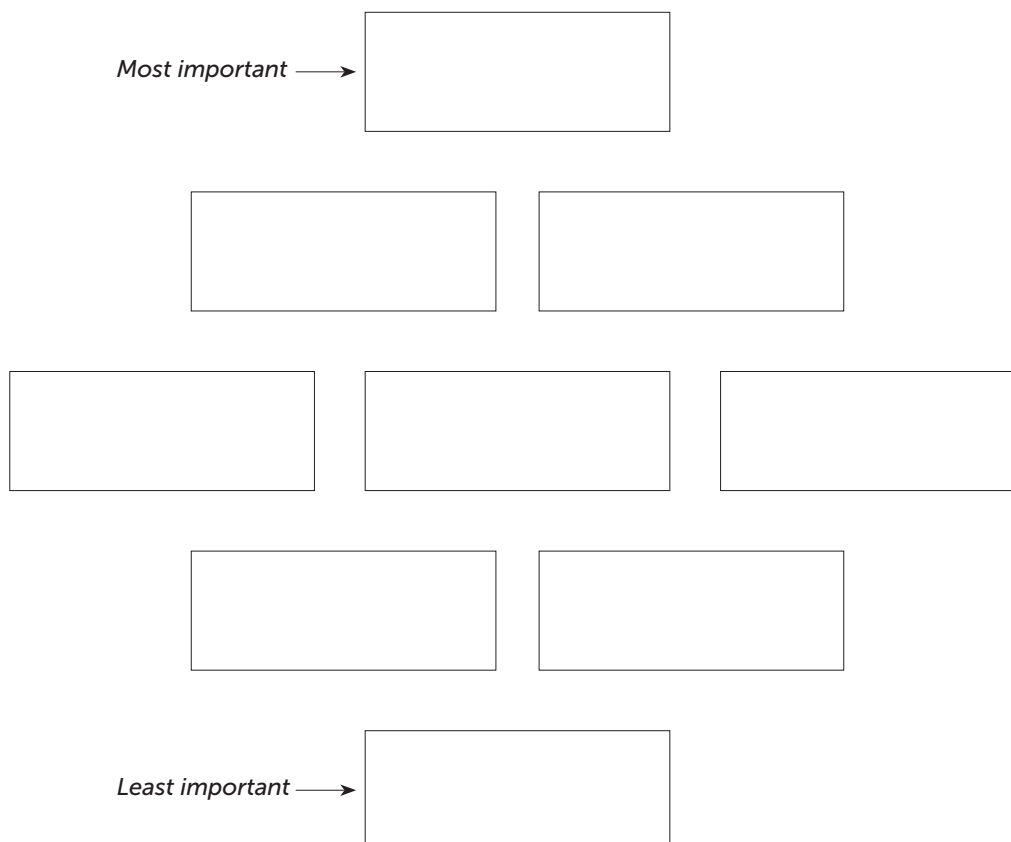
What is the novel about?

- Below are nine suggestions for what *A Skinful of Shadows* 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.

A Skinful of Shadows is about ...

Witchcraft and magic	The English Civil War	A ghost story
Corruption – how the rich and powerful always get away with things	Shaping your own destiny	Trust and betrayal
One girl's bravery and resilience	Second chances	People generally having more that unites them than divides them

Diamond 9 pattern



Makepeace in the middle

Makepeace is the central focus of the narrative.

- To help you remember and think about everything Makepeace was involved with, and to prepare you for more substantial writing about his character, you should produce a diagram of his relationships in the novel.
 - ▶ In a small group, draw Makepeace 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. There are a huge number of characters, so choose the ones you find most interesting. For example: Mother, Bear, James, Sir Thomas Fellmotte, Mistress Gotley, Symond, Helen, Dr Quick, Lady Morgan, Livewell.
 - ▶ Draw arrows between Makepeace 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 James and Symond. Write along them the nature of their relationship, including key moments described in the novel.
- Compare what you have identified with another group.

Lessons for Makepeace

- Drawing on the previous activity, write a journal entry in the voice of Makepeace reflecting on what she learned from her experiences. Before you write, identify some areas of focus, for example, what she learns about her gift, or what she learns about trusting people, and brainstorm ideas around each.

Discussion questions

Use one or more of these questions to discuss some of the ideas arising from the book.

Who wants to live forever?

- ▶ Discuss how you would feel about living forever, but as a ghost in someone else's body.

Gift or curse?

- ▶ Discuss whether you would or wouldn't like to have Makepeace's gift and why.

Pick a side

- ▶ Based on what you have read in the novel, discuss whether you would be a Royalist or a Parliamentarian and explain why.

Animal spirit

- ▶ Imagine you could pick an animal to carry inside you, the way Makepeace has Bear. Discuss what animal you might choose and why.

Sisterly love

- ▶ Discuss whether, if you were Makepeace, you would have made such efforts to save James after the way he behaved.

Reading the reviews

The extracts, below, 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. As with Terry Pratchett, behind Frances Hardinge's well-chosen words and compelling plots lurks a properly righteous anger at injustice and oppression and an urge to stand up for the weak against the strong. She also knows that the occasional joke in no way lessens the seriousness of a piece of art.

Melmoth on Amazon

B. This now joins the top ranks of being one of my favourite Hardinge novels. I absolutely loved it! The first half was interesting enough and I liked the setting. But the second half really took off for me as some unexpected things happened. And the ending was perfect.

Linda on GoodReads

C. I don't know what to say about this one. It had a fantastic start, but the last hundred pages was a chore to read. I actually sat this down for almost a week before I picked it back up to try to finish it.

The beginning feels like a weird, creepy horror story, which I loved, but then the novel takes an unexpected bad turn. The spirit possession plot is set aside and the focus is more about the war, family secrets, and staying in the King's good graces. There's also a betrayal angle. For a large chunk of the novel, it felt like I was reading a historical fiction novel, but I was expecting more of a horror novel with just some historical elements.

Jenny Baker on GoodReads

D. Frances Hardinge is my favourite author ever. I just love her style; the most gothic fantastical stories, made thrilling by an action-packed plot. I first read *A Skinful of Shadows* shortly after it was released. I have recently re-read it, and it was just as magical. It is unique, and imaginative. Set in the Stewart era, Frances Hardinge puts an ingenious twist on the civil war. The heroine, 'Makepeace' finds herself tangled up in another war – against ancient spirits of her distant descendants, trying to possess her. Faced with a grim choice, Makepeace is in trouble. Read it if you are 11 or older, it's so worth it!

Immy, aged 12 on <https://toppsta.com>

E. If there is one thing that connects all of this author's works it is this: the principled, strong-willed, dynamic and fierce heroines she creates. Makepeace might not know whose side should be victor in this war, but she never wavers from righting wrongs and she will fight tooth and ... claws to save the life of her brother and the lives of those she thinks deserve a second chance. This goes deep into the character in other ways too: does she deserve a second chance? She doesn't know but she knows she wants to *live*.

<https://www.thebooksmugglers.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?



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