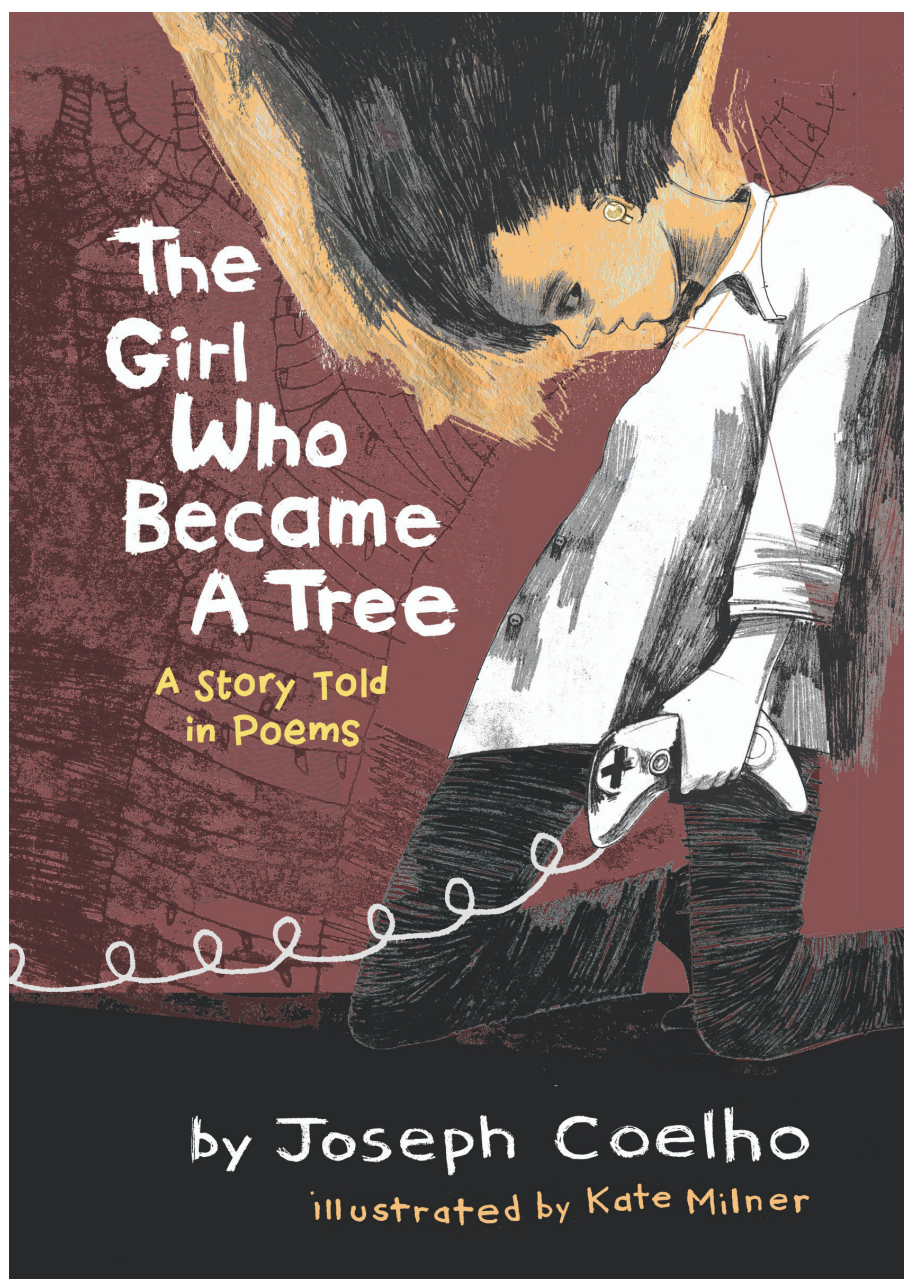


CILIP Carnegie Shortlist 2021

Shadowing Resources



The CILIP Carnegie
& Kate Greenaway
Children's Book
Awards





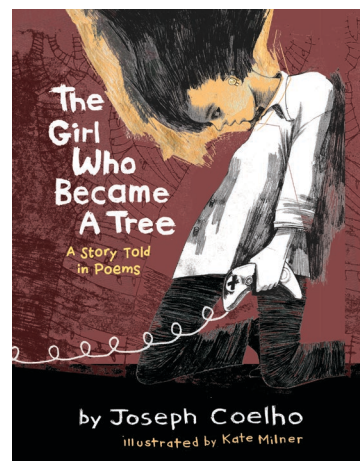
CILIP Carnegie Medal 2021 IDEAS PACK

Title: **The Girl Who Became a Tree**

Author: **Joseph Coelho**

Publisher: Otter-Barry Books

Age: 12+



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 Girl Who Became a Tree** and to encourage further exploration and thinking around the book.

- The book is based on a Greek myth about a nymph called Daphne who asked to be turned into a Laurel tree to get away from the attention of Apollo. What tree would you become and why and what or who would you choose to hide from?
- Create a tree person, how will emotions, dreams and the past be represented?
- Make an image or sculpture to represent one of the poems in the story. Think about which poem to choose and what your connection with it is.
- Think about other trees that occur in books and stories, can you create a wood of words making a tree for each of these?
- Daphne is using her local library and her phone to escape from the world for a little bit, what do you do when you need to escape for a while?
- Try to create a short poem about any emotion or anything that makes you happy.

The Girl Who Became a Tree

by Joseph Coelho

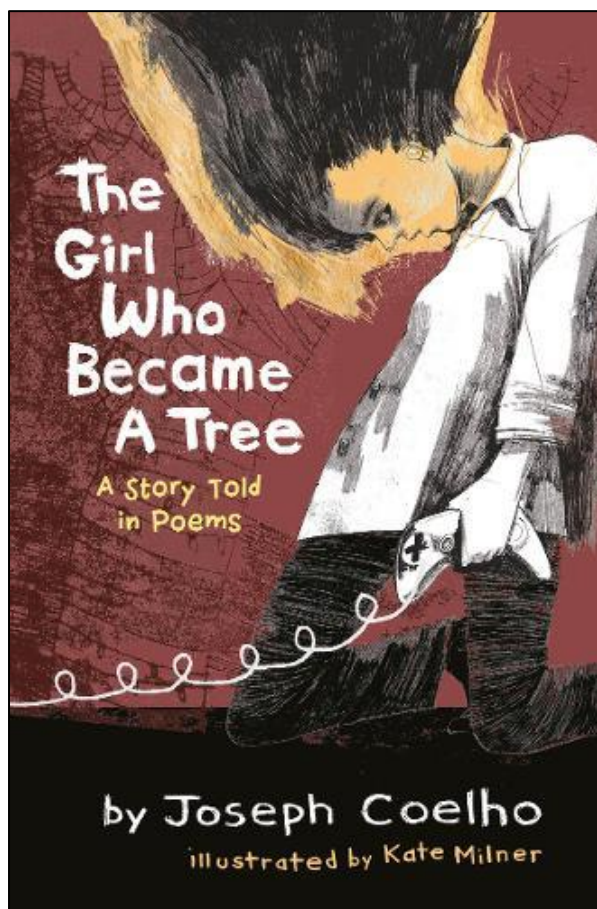
Before Reading

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 book's front cover.
 - What do you think the book will be about?
 - What is the likely audience for the book?
 - Does it remind you of any other books? Does it make you want to pick the book up and start to read?



Looking inside the book

- Working on your own, in a pair, or in a small group, flick through the pages of the book.
- What are your thoughts about how it is set out as poetry? Have you read any other 'verse novels'? If so, which were they and what did you think of them? If not, what are your thoughts about trying one?
- What are your thoughts about the images in the book? What do they suggest about the tone of the book (how it feels)? What do they suggest might happen in the book?

A taster

- Read the extracts from the novel, below.
- Add to your ideas, questions and predictions about the novel, including what genre of story you might expect.

Extract 1

I never **really** chat to him.
I never really chat to anyone any more.
Teacher says, "You **need** to speak up,"
says, "If you need to talk to **someone**, I'm here."
But I don't need **to** do anything,
I don't want to **talk to** anyone.
The librarian always tries to talk.

Extract 2

A path wound through this towering forest,
A well-trod, well-dragged path.
A path where the grass daren't reach,
A path littered in mounds of stuff.
The columns of computer consoles,
spires of marbles, jelly-sweet monoliths,
wrapped chocolate bars forming steeples.
A temple of the outstretched arms of dolls.

Extract 3

In the corner
between fantasy and fact,
skirting myth and magic.

There's a table,
different and distinct.
An old desk for writing and reading.

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 at various points. Where possible, have a discussion with other readers before putting your thoughts down on paper.
- You might like to pause when:
 - A new character is introduced
 - The book moves to a different setting
 - There is a twist in the plot
 - Something unexpected happens
 - You have questions about what is going on.

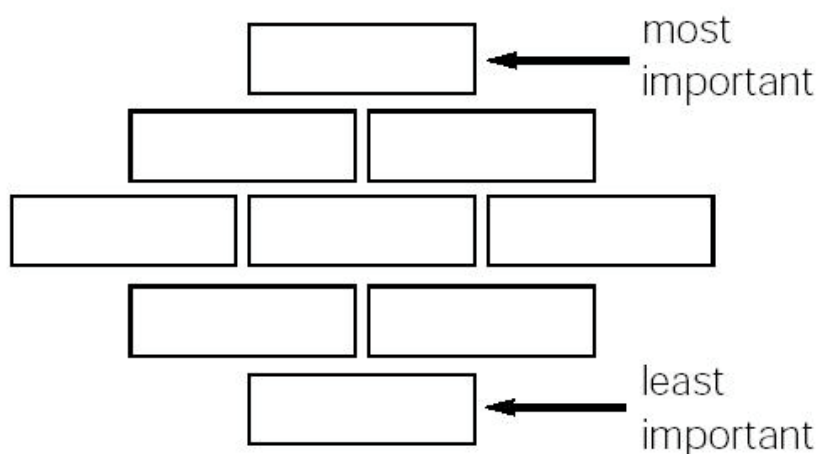
After Reading

What is the novel about?

- Below are nine suggestions for what *The Girl Who Became a Tree* 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>The Girl Who Became a Tree</i> is about ...		
a girl coping with grief	how real life can be like a fantastical story	a girl growing up
the dark places that your mind can take you to	the consequences of falling out with someone	a girl's love for her father
how emotions are rooted in nature, even when our lives are full of technology	living with regret	how fathers and daughters have a very special bond

Diamond 9 pattern



A novel in verse

Do you like verse novels? Have you read lots before? Or was this the first one? The following activities will help you think about *The Girl Who Became a Tree* as a verse novel.

Is it poetry?

You will have read poems before. But are the separate sections of this book poems, or something else?

- Write down your thoughts and, if possible, share them with someone else.

Favourite 'poem'

Did any poems leap out at you as you were reading?

- Flick through the pages and find a poem that you particularly like. Write down your reasons for liking it and, if possible, share these with someone else.

Different poetic forms

Joseph Coelho draws on lots of different poetic forms to write his book. In other words, he writes different kinds of poems. This might be to do with their shape, their length, the use of verses, the relationship of different lines, the use of font and capitalisation and so on.

- Flick through the book and find as many different poetic forms as you can. See if you can find at least five.
- If possible, discuss your findings with someone else. Do you have a name for any of the poetic forms? If not, do you think Coelho is using forms familiar to other poets, or inventing forms for himself?

Writing a poem

- Have a go at writing a poem in the style of one of the examples in the book. You can try to write something that links to Daphne's story, or make up a poem entirely from your own ideas.
- How easy or difficult was this to do? What does it make you think about how Joseph Coelho's must have done to write a whole verse novel?

Borrowing from the past

The Girl Who Became a Tree references some important literature from the past. You might already be familiar with it, or it might be completely new to you. The following activities will help you think about why Joseph Coelho chose to borrow from the past.

1. Borrowing from William Blake's poetry

William Blake published 'A Poison Tree' in 1794. It is one of the most-read poems from his well-known 'Songs of Experience' collection.

- Read the poem at least twice. Write down your thoughts about how the poem connects to *The Girl Who Became a Tree*. You might like to think about emotions expressed and hidden, particularly words and phrases, and so on. If possible, share your thoughts with someone else.
- Flick through the book and see if you can find any words and phrases that come directly from Blake's poem. To get you started, you might like to look at 'Monstrous' on page 130.
- In role as Joseph Coelho, write down a few ideas about why you decided to reference 'A Poison Tree' so much in your book.

A Poison Tree

I was angry with my friend;
I told my wrath, my wrath did end.
I was angry with my foe:
I told it not, my wrath did grow.

And I water'd it in fears,
Night & morning with my tears:
And I sunned it with smiles,
And with soft deceitful wiles.

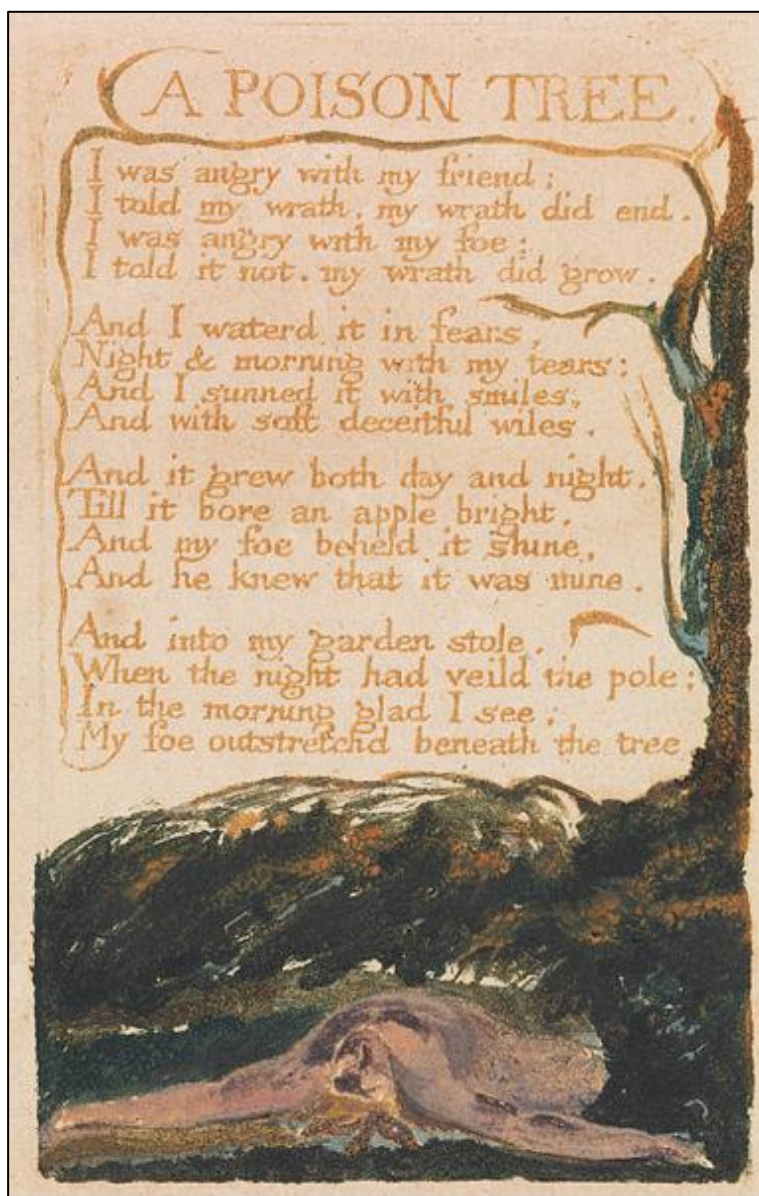
And it grew both day and night.
Till it bore an apple bright.
And my foe beheld it shine,
And he knew that it was mine.

And into my garden stole,
When the night had veil'd the pole;
In the morning glad I see;
My foe outstretched beneath the tree.

2. Borrowing from William Blake's illustration

William Blake was an illustrator as well as a poet. Here is the original illustration to 'A Poison Tree'.

- Write down your thoughts about how it is similar or different to the illustrations by Kate Milner in *The Girl Who Became a Tree*.
- Flick through the book and identify any illustrations that remind you in particular of Blake's illustration. What do they have in common?



2. Borrowing from Greek mythology

References to the story of Daphne, from Greek mythology, are scattered throughout the book. Some of the poems tell the story directly; other times the references link to the present-day story, both the 'realistic' elements in the library, and the fantastical elements, when Daphne has descended through the hole.

- Read this short explanation about the story of Daphne in Greek mythology. It is adapted from Wikipedia.

Daphne (Greek: meaning "laurel"), a minor figure in Greek mythology, is a naiad, a variety of female nymph associated with fountains, wells, springs, streams, brooks and other bodies of freshwater. She is said by ancient sources to have been a daughter of the river god Peneus and the nymph Creusa in Thessaly.

There are several versions of the myth in which Daphne appears, but the general narrative is that due to a curse made by the god Cupid, son of Venus, on the god Apollo, she became the unwilling object of the infatuation of Apollo, who chased her against her wishes. Just before being kissed by him, Daphne pleaded to her river god father for help. Her father transformed her into a laurel tree, thus foiling Apollo.

From then on Apollo developed a special reverence for laurel. At the Pythian Games which were held every four years in Delphi in honour of Apollo, a wreath of laurel was given as a prize. For this reason it later became customary to award prizes in the form of laurel wreaths to victorious generals, athletes, poets and musicians, to be worn on the head.

Below are some possible reasons why Joseph Coelho chose to draw on the Greek myth of Daphne and to call his own lead character Daphne.

- Choose one or two possible reasons that you are particularly interested in. Jot down your thoughts about them. If possible, share these with a partner.

Coelho wants to suggest that the issues facing girls growing up in the modern age are not so different from those facing girls throughout history, even those represented in myths.

Coelho wants readers to reflect on how his modern-day Daphne's life has parallels with that of the Daphne in Greek mythology.

The Greek myth story of Daphne is a useful metaphor for adolescents retreating into themselves and withdrawing from the world when they have problems. Coelho wants readers to reflect on this.

Coelho uses the Greek myth of Daphne to help readers to reflect on the relationship between people and nature.

Did something happen between Daphne and Euan that parallels what happened between Daphne and Apollo? Perhaps Coelho uses the Greek myth to help readers think about how modern-day Daphne might have been afraid of facing up to her feelings about boys.

Exploring relationships

Much of the novel centres around Daphne, However, there are several other characters who feature prominently.

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

Daphne's father	Euan	Apollo	Librarian
Daphne's mother	Hoc	Eros	Greek Daphne

- Draw a picture of Daphne in the middle of a large sheet of paper.
- Arrange the names of the other characters around the edge of the sheet.
- Draw lines from Daphne to the other characters. Write on the line the nature of the relationship.
- Now draw lines between other characters where relationships exist that do not involve Daphne. Write on the line the nature of the relationship.
- Finally, write a short piece on your own with the title: What the novel shows about human relationships.

Discussion questions

- Use one or more of these questions to consider some of the ideas arising from the book. If possible, share your ideas with other readers.
 - What was your experience of reading a novel made out of poems? In what ways was this different to reading a novel in continuous prose?
 - What are your thoughts about how the book mixes real life with fantasy? You might like to think about how this added or took away from your reading experience, how it made you think, how it left you puzzled, and so on.
 - What are your thoughts about the book's illustrations? How would you describe the style of illustration? How did the illustrations add to your experience of reading the book?
 - What are your thoughts about the appearance of computer games in the novel? What role did they play? Do you think the writer was trying to make you think in particular ways about the role computer games play in lots of people's lives?
 - Why do you think the writer chose to set the novel in a library? How did the library setting compare and contrast with the fantasy world that Daphne entered into?
 - Who do you think is the audience for this book? You might like to think about this in terms of age, or of gender? Perhaps you might have ideas about the type of reader who would like this book. What else would they like reading? What would their other interests be?

Editing the book

Imagine that the editor of the book has suggested that it needs an introduction to help readers understand what they are going to read. In particular, he thinks it would help readers to be given information in advance about:

- Why the novel is written as a series of poems
 - Why the novel mixes the present day with a story from the Greek myths
 - What is happening when Daphne goes through the hole in the library and turns into a tree.
- In role as the writer, Joseph Coelho, write an email to your editor, explaining why you agree or disagree with their suggestion. You should refer to each of the bullet points in your response.

Reading the reviews

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

- 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.

I absolutely loved this. It is one of the best things this year. It is essentially the legend of Daphne, turned into a tree to avoid Apollo's attentions, woven into a thoroughly modern tale. Written in different styles of poetry, this tells the tale of a daughter missing her father. She doesn't know how to be in the world and takes refuge in the library and her phone screen. It deals with loss, relationships, fear, confusion. Can she find her way back from the tangled mess of memories to life.

Les MacFarlane, www.goodreads.com

The author skilfully reworks the legend of Daphne into a bleak and emotional YA story of loss and loneliness full of powerful imagery. It is a thought-provoking book which merges fantasy and reality, inner and outer worlds, and urban and forest landscapes. It is an emotional and complex read, but those older readers who enter the forest with Daphne as she confronts the darkness inside will emerge with her into a more hopeful world.

Books for Keeps

A clever book written in poems. I have never read anything like this before and I wasn't sure at first but I was drawn in and loved the meaning behind the story. It had a *Where the Wild Things Are* feel to it.

Natalie Street, www.goodreads.com

Between the verse factor, the brilliantly fairytale-ish title and that cover art, I was pretty much sold on this before I'd even opened it! And reading it only cemented this!...The illustrations are stunning and absolutely made this book for me. It's an emotional, magical thing without them, but with them it's just something else. I could pore over them for hours. This is a collection of poetry filled with loss, loneliness, mythology and memories which combine with layered, atmospheric imagery to create a truly modern fairytale where nature and technology collide. Brilliant.

Rachael, Altrincham branch, Waterstones website

This was a confusing book. I found it very hard to understand what was happening to Daphne (the modern one) and how her story linked back to the Daphne from Greek mythology. The poetry format didn't help. It made the story jump around and I couldn't get a sense of flow. Not the right book for me.

Anonymous

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 takes 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?



English & Media Centre

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?



English & Media Centre

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?

