

CILIP Carnegie Shortlist 2021

Shadowing Resources



The CILIP Carnegie
& Kate Greenaway
Children's Book
Awards



Title: **On Midnight Beach**

Author: **Marie-Louise Fitzpatrick**

Publisher: Faber

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 **On Midnight Beach** to encourage further exploration and thinking around the book.

- Create a three dimensional model of the setting, you might like to use cardboard, paper mache or salt dough for this
- Encourage group members to rewrite the legend in a different time period or context, what are the key parts of the story they would choose to tell?
- Look up words and phrases in Gaelic
- Can you find other versions of the myth
- Create **On the Call** a live news bulletin for a chapter in the book. This could be done as an improvisation, with each group member taking on the role of a news reporter. One group member begins and then go around the group expanding on the themes and events in the book
- Why not play **The Memory Game** place objects on a tray and take photos, share your screen and ask group members to memorise objects, take three away and ask the group to name the three which have been removed. You might use photos found on the internet, or clipart examples could include (a) towel (b) ice cream (c) seaweed (d) pebble (e) boat (f) dolphin are there other examples you can think of in the book?

On Midnight Beach

by Marie-Louise Fitzpatrick

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?



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

Don't look him in the eyes, Emer. Walk away. Run.

I kept clear of Dog Cullen. Till the summer we turned seventeen, the summer the dolphin came to Ross Bay. That summer I looked in Dog Cullen's eyes – one green, one blue – and I forgot to walk away.

Extract 2

'I've heard,' said Mrs Ryan, her voice lowering, 'I've heard there's kids swimming at night. With the dolphin. Down at the beach. Patsy Roche said he heard them at it when he was coming in on the boat late one night last week. Skinny-dipping they were, Patsy said.'

I froze.

'He heard them skinny-dipping?' Mam said. 'Those are some ears Patsy has.'

I had to stick my fingers in my mouth to stifle a laugh.

Extract 3

And the reprisals began, reprisals for the damage Conor and the other lads had done that night after the rescue. We woke up one morning to find every window box in the village stinking of vinegar and the flowers throwing themselves over the sides. That might have been the end of it, but Conor wouldn't call it quits.

Information about the setting

- Read this information about the setting of *On Midnight Beach* and then answer the questions that follow.

The novel is set in the (fictitious) village of Carrig Cove in County Donegal, Ireland in 1976. Some of the novel also takes place in the bigger (and posher) town of Ross, which has a long-standing rivalry with Carrig Cove. Both places are by the sea. Carrig Cove is more of a fishing village whereas Ross also has tourists.

In the 1970's Ireland was overwhelmingly Catholic. There was no divorce, sex outside marriage was frowned upon and contraception was illegal. 1976 was a record-breakingly hot summer, both in Ireland and in Britain.

- What types of characters might appear in a novel set in a small village at this time?
- Why might a writer choose to set a novel here?

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.
 - A prologue is a separate, introductory, chapter, often detailing events that happen before the start of the main story. Why might a writer choose to include a prologue?
 - What does the prologue of *On Midnight Beach* tell you about the main characters?
 - What's your first impression of the dolphin?
 - What do Kit, Conor and Dog's ways of treating Rory suggest about each of them?
 - What do you think Emer means when she says 'Maybe we shouldn't have named him... We claimed a wild thing and lost it in the same breath.' (p41)
 - What does the way Emer uses her camera on the boat suggest about her? (Chapter 6)
 - What similarities and differences are there in the attitudes of the adult and the teenagers when it comes to Rinn?
 - What do you think about Da's attitude to Emer?
 - What does Emer learn about her Mam, and her relationship with Da?
 - What does Gus's point of view add to the story?
 - How is Conor's idea of getting back at Ross different from Dog, Emer, Fee and Kit's plan?
 - Why does Gus change his mind?
 - What do you think of the arrangement Dog and Gus come to? (Chapter 36)
 - What was your response to what happened to Rory?
 - What is your response to what happens between Dog and Ferdia? How is it different from what came before? (Chapter 46)
 - What was your response to the ending? How does it link back to the Prologue?

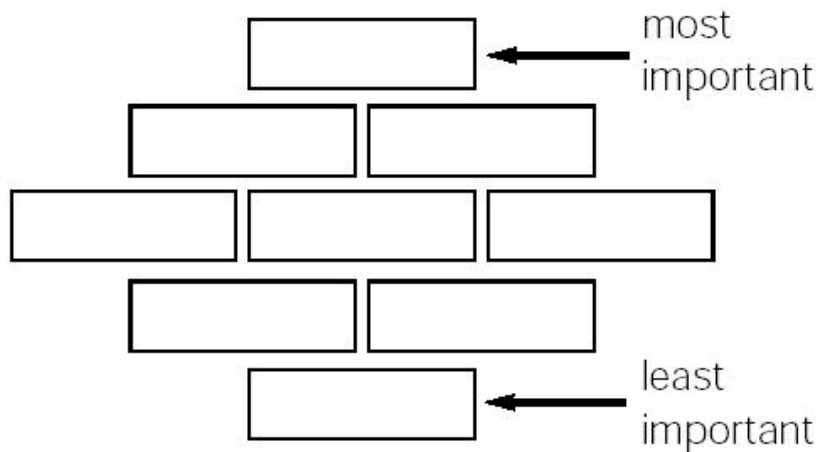
After Reading

What is the novel about?

- Below are nine suggestions for what *On Midnight Beach* 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>On Midnight Beach</i> is about ...		
loyalty	growing up in a small place	teenage rebellion
revenge	friendship	life happening while you're making other plans
first love	belonging	growing up in the 1970s

Diamond 9 pattern



Exploring relationships

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

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

Emer	Fee	Kit	Dog
Gus	Rory	Emer's mam	Emer's da
Ferdia	Rinn	Conor	Maeve
Ali	Dee (Dog's mother)	Dan	Mary Ryan

- 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 groups.
- Re-shuffle the names and come up with a different set of relationships. E.g. where they live.
- 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 On Midnight Beach 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 importance of loyalty

There is a long-standing rivalry between Ross and Carrig Cove. Many of the main characters in the story have divided loyalties, for example, Emer feels loyalty to her parents, but her love for Dog pulls her away from them.

- Think about any experiences you have of similar rivalries, for example between friendship groups, sports teams, schools, or rivalry between different areas? Does it ever get serious, or is it a good-natured rivalry?
- Which characters have divided loyalties that pull them in different directions?
- Why is loyalty an important aspect of the novel? For example, you could think about how divided loyalties create plot twists or tension, or make characters more complex and interesting.

Masculinity and femininity

The novel explores some stereotypes about masculinity and femininity in Ireland in the 1970s. Here are some of the ways the boys are expected to behave and the girls are expected to behave.

Boys/men	Girls/women
<p>Boys</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ loyal – to their friends and their village/town▪ tough, prepared to fight▪ interested in girls (probably a ‘bad influence’ on them) <p>Men:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ loyal to their village▪ making enough money to take care of their families▪ life centres around the pub	<p>Girls</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ well-behaved and obedient to their parents▪ interested in boys, but keeping away from them – no sex before marriage▪ dress modestly <p>Women</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ conforming to society▪ dressing in a conventional, modest way (‘knitted twinsets and knee length skirts)▪ taking care of the home and children▪ making sure girls stay away from boys▪ doing what their husbands say

- You could think particularly about the following characters: Emer, Fee, Ma, Dee (Dog’s mother), Maeve, Mary Ryan, Mrs Ryan, Dog, Kit, Rory, Conor, Gus, Ferdia, Dan, Da.
 - Which characters fit the stereotypes most closely?
 - Which characters go against what is expected of them?

Rinn

- Read the following statements about Rinn and consider which ones you agree with. Explain why.
 - A. Rinn symbolises freedom and escape.
 - B. Rinn symbolises how people are trapped in one place because they are dependent on others.
 - C. Rinn's battle scars remind us that no-one can really know a wild animal.
 - D. Rinn is clearly the best thing that's ever happened to Carrig Cove.
 - E. The writer often reminds us of Rinn's wildness and this adds a sense of danger and foreboding.
 - F. Rinn's unpredictable nature foreshadows the terrible events that will take place later.
 - G. The way each character reacts to Rinn shows us something important about them. For example, quiet and obedient Emer shows herself to be brave and willing to take risks, whereas Conor, the bully, shows himself to be a coward.
 - H. Rinn is the cause of all the trouble in Carrig Cove.

The setting

The writer, Marie-Louise Fitzpatrick, said this about why she set the novel in the 1970's:

... there were no personal computers, no smart phones, no Wi-Fi. Yay! Our present-day world of constant connection and instant access to information can be a real plot strangler. But more importantly, I know exactly how teenagers spoke, dressed and acted in Ireland in 1976. On Midnight Beach has a love story at its heart, my first attempt as a writer to write love scenes and evoke raging hormones with words. I was really nervous about whether I could do it convincingly, then I realised the easiest way would be to slip back into my own teenage skin and write from there. 1976 was the summer of my first boyfriend, my first French kiss.

Read the full interview at: <https://www.faber.co.uk/blog/author-of-on-midnight-beach-tells-us-why-she-set-her-ya-novel-in-the-1976-heatwave/>

- What do you think Fitzpatrick means about digital devices being a 'plot strangler'?
- How do the teenagers of 1976 seem different from, or similar to, modern teenagers?

Author's note

Read the author's note at the end of the novel about the 'story behind the story' – 'The Cattle Raid of Cooley' (the 'Tain Bo Cuailnge'). There are several different versions, but the basic outline of the story is given on the following page.

- Think about how the writer has used elements of the ancient legend. What has she changed to create her modern version? Why do you think she made those decisions?
- How would you adapt the story for a modern version? If you like, you could write your version.

The plot of The Cattle Raid of Cooley

Queen Medb and her husband, Ailill, rule Connacht. They have an argument about who is the richest by comparing their clothes, gold, horses and everything else they own. Everything is equal, until Ailill brings up the fact that he owns a famous great white bull and Medb has nothing to compare with that.

Seething with jealousy, Medb decides to get ahead by acquiring the even more famous brown bull of Cooley, in Ulster (ruled by Conor Mac Nessa). The bull is owned by a man called Daire, and at first he agrees to Medb's offer of 50 cows and a piece of land (and possible sexual favours). But when Daire overhears a man saying that if Medb had tried to take the bull by force she would have succeeded, Daire is furious and challenges Medb to try and take it from him.

Medb gathers her army to march on Ulster. A woman prophet warns Medb that the raid will come to no good, but she ignores the warning. Meanwhile the Ulster army is struck down by a strange sickness brought on by a magic spell. Only the young hero, a teenage demi-god by the name of Cu Chulainn (husband to Emer) escapes the curse.

At first Cu Chulainn is too busy meeting his lover to fight, and Medb's army get across the border. They track down the brown bull, but when they try to capture him, he stampedes through the camp, killing 50 warriors before escaping.

Cu Chulainn steps up to fight and, over several months, defeats all Medb's best warriors one by one in single-handed combat. All except Ferdia. Ferdia and Cu Chulainn were childhood friends and are reluctant to fight each other. Lying to Ferdia, Medb tells him the Cuchulainn thinks he is hiding because he's afraid. This angers Ferdia and he agrees to fight.

Cu Chulainn and Ferdia are so perfectly matched that the fight goes on for three days without a winner. Each evening at the end of the fighting, they send each other assistance – healing herbs or food and drink.

On the fourth day, they are fighting in a river. Ferdia manages to drive his sword into Cu Chulainn and he goes down. But someone floats a magic spear out to Cu Chulainn and he kills Ferdia with it. Ferdia dies in Cu Chulainn's arms and he weeps over the body, taking no joy in the victory. Although the Ulster army recover from the spell and drive out Medb and her army, they take the brown bull with them as they flee.

Back home in Connacht, the two bulls fight over territory. The brown bull kills the white, but then runs home to Ulster where he dies of his wounds. So in the end neither Medb nor Ailill own a bull but peace is made.

N.B The tale of Cu Chulainn and Emer is a separate, but linked tale. Handsome Cu Chulainn takes a lot of lovers, many of them other men's wives, so the men get together to try to find him a wife of his own to persuade him to settle down. Cu Chulainn meanwhile has his eye on the beautiful and accomplished Emer, who at first rejects the young warrior until he can prove himself in battle.

Defending the novel

Imagine that your school has decided to ban *On Midnight Beach* from its school library because it contains teenage sex, teenage pregnancy and scenes of violence.

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

Editing the book

Imagine that the editor of the book has suggested cutting Rory's near drowning. The editor says, 'there's just too much sadness and death in this novel for young adult readers and Rory's accident doesn't seem to add anything to the story.'

- In role as the writer, Marie-Louise Fitzpatrick, write an email to your editor, explaining why you included Rory's accident and whether you agree that it should be cut.

Reading the reviews

The four 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.

A. Fitzpatrick's characters are vibrant and well-rounded; they act and speak like teenagers, which is so refreshing in a YA landscape of youngsters who converse either like adults or entirely in abbreviations and slang. That's not to say Emer and Fee don't have their own era-appropriate slang, but it's not overdone and it's fully in keeping with the Irish setting. What's also so engaging about *On Midnight Beach* is the endearing and sweet relationship between Emer and Dog, which evolves naturally and realistically. It's kind of insta-love but it doesn't for a second feel that way.

Natalie Xenos on www.culturefly.co.uk

B. *On Midnight Beach* is so vivid, evocative and stifling in places, you can almost smell the overpowering scents of the Atlantic Ocean, fish scales, diesel, whipped vanilla ice cream, corned beef, heated tarmac, spilt cold lager and talcum powder to mask the excessive perspiration.

One of Ireland's most famous legends is deftly adapted and retold as a dramatic, romantic and tragic tale set in Ireland 44 years ago during a very different era. Fitzpatrick has created another memorable tale that will leave you reeling.

Síne Quinn, Books Ireland Magazine

C. Sometimes the writing becomes a bit flat, and the build-up to the finale is rather drawn out, but overall it's an atmospheric and absorbing read.

I would recommend this to girls over 14 (there is some strong language and sexual content). Perfect for those wanting a bit of escapism in these times.

Sue Collins – Library Assistant, Babcock School Library Service

D. The main character, Emer, is a compelling character. She's at times incredibly naive and at others deeply perceptive. It's really fascinating to read about her relationship with her parents and how she doesn't actually realise how constrained her life is until she falls in love with someone that her father would not deem as suitable. And she doesn't become the stereotypical rebellious type when she does begin to see how her life has been mapped out for her, she instead quietly finds ways to express who she is, but by the book's end she's gone on a pretty massive journey character-wise. I really enjoyed her character arc and felt so keenly for all the emotional turmoil she went through throughout the book.

www.alittlehazebookblog.wordpress.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 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?



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?

