

The Carnegies



The Carnegie Longlist 2026 Shadowing Resources



Ghostlines

Carnegie Medal for Writing

Author: Katya Balen

Age range: 9+

Description:

Compelling world-building brings the luminous community of Ayrie to life. Everyone on the small island knows one another and their stories but as a newcomer, Albie has yet to feel accepted. There's a classic adventure feel with ample intrigue as Tilda takes Albie on a journey to the old island. Every character feels real and rounded and Tilda and Albie have adventure and agency.

Themes:

- Nature
- Themes
- Friendship
- Community
- Outsider
- Adapting to change
- Emotion
- Home

Shadowing Ideas:

1. In Ghostlines, Tilda dreams of having her own sea kayak. She wants hers to be decorated as a dragon, Finn's looks like a shark and Flora's is decorated as a sea eagle. If you had your own sea kayak how would you want it to look? Design your ideal sea kayak then share it with your group.
2. The children on Ayrie play lots of games together. Hold a games party and play Uno, Who Am I with Post-It notes or Wink Murder as they do in Ghostlines, or bring along your own favourite card games. You could also bring cakes to share, just like the characters in the book.
3. Tilda and Albie name the old island 'Alda Isle' as it's a mashup of their names. They draw a map of it and invent names for different parts of it. In pairs or as a group, draw or design your own island. Mark the interesting places and name them. Can you invent a name for your island that uses parts of all your names? Who names real life places? Think of places in the world where the names have been changed or where different people have different names for the same place. Why is this? What is the significance of naming physical places?