

A Curriculum Guide to

Keeper of the Lost Cities Book 2: *Exile*

By Shannon Messenger

About the Book

Sophie Foster has a mysterious past. She was raised by humans but now lives in the world of elves. As she settles into her new life, Sophie develops more and more powers, including some that no one else has. When she finds a rare alicorn called Silveny, the two of them share thoughts and feelings telepathically, another new talent. Silveny becomes a significant symbol of hope for the elves. But the dangerous organization that once kidnapped Sophie may now be targeting Silveny. Sophie and her friends are willing to risk everything to keep Silveny safe, but will it be enough?

Prereading Questions

Why is trust important in relationships? What role does it play in government and public life? What does it mean to trust yourself and your abilities?

Setting

The following questions contained in this section particularly address the Common Core State Standards: (RL.4-7.1) (RL.4.3)

1. Sophie starts to take classes at Foxfire's elite towers. Describe the towers and specifically the Silver Tower. What does Master Leto do there and how does he treat Sophie? Give details about the Hall of Illumination and how it becomes important in the story.
2. The Lost Cities are not entirely peaceful. Give details about some of the weapons and methods of fighting mentioned. How can Inflicting function as a weapon? Explain what Sophie discovers about the opposite side of Inflicting, and Bronte's reaction to her discovery.
3. Describe how to get to Exile and what it's like there, giving specifics from the book. What purpose does Exile serve for the Lost Cities? What is Sophie's reaction to it? How does Exile fit in with the view you had developed of the Lost Cities? Did it surprise you that the Lost Cities would have such a place?

Plot & Structure

The following questions contained in this section particularly address the Common Core State Standards: RL.5-6.5

4. Sophie disobeys the adults in her life and breaks rules when she thinks it's important. Give examples of when she does this in big ways. What are the consequences of her decisions? How do her actions affect the plot and move the story forward? What would have happened if she hadn't broken the rules?
5. Brant calls finding Silveny "a turning point." What does he mean? What is the Timeline of Extinction and how does it relate to Brant's comment? Is Silveny's arrival a turning point? What does the alicorn symbolize to the elves, and what is her impact on their world?
6. What information does Sophie gather about the Black Swan organization? Analyze how the clues from Black Swan affect the plot. Who are the men in the dark capes who try to steal Silveny? What role do they play in the plot?
7. Which parts of this novel are suspenseful? How does the author create suspense? How does suspense keep readers involved in the story?

Characters

The following questions contained in this section particularly address the Common Core State Standards: RL.4-6.3

8. Describe Silveny and her personality. What's her relationship with Sophie like? What feelings do she and Sophie have in common? How does Silveny help Sophie?
9. Grady and Alden are the most important men in Sophie's life. Compare the two of them. How are they alike? How are they different? What do they disagree about? How does Sophie feel about each of them?
10. Describe Sandor and his work. What is Sophie's attitude toward him at first and how does their relationship change? Why does Sophie think, "Maybe having Sandor on her side wouldn't be such a bad thing." In what ways does having Sandor on her side help?
11. Keefe calls himself a "master mischief maker." What mischief does he make in the book? What other sides of his character do his words and actions reveal? How does his friendship with Sophie develop during the story? How does Silveny react to Keefe, and why?
12. After Sophie and Alden go to Exile, Fitz treats her differently than before. How does he act before and after? Why does he change? Compare how Fitz and Keefe treat Sophie after the trip to Exile.
13. How does Stina Heks act towards Sophie, and why? Describe Stina and her parents, and their role concerning Silveny. Consider how Stina acts at the service for Alden. What does it tell you about her?

Themes

The following questions contained in this section particularly address the Common Core State Standards: RL.4-7.2

14. The theme of trust is explored throughout this novel. Describe different situations in the book where trust is vitally important. What role does it play in the major relationships in Sophie's life, including those with Grady and Edaline, Alden, Silveny, and Keefe? When Sophie thinks, "It all comes down to trust," what kind of trust is she talking about?
15. The topic of guilt is also central. What does Tiergan mean when he tells Sophie, "Do not let any guilt cloud your mind"? What different things does Sophie feel guilty about? Describe the role guilt plays in Alden's life and in what happens to his mind. What role does guilt play in Grady's life? How do Sophie's actions and discoveries help relieve Alden's and Grady's feelings of guilt?
16. Safety and freedom conflict in the story. Those around Sophie want to protect her after her escape from the kidnapping. What steps are taken to keep her safe? Why does Sophie complain that she feels imprisoned by the safety measures? What are the problems with being too protected? Describe the attempts to keep Silveny safe and how it conflicts with her freedom.

Language

The following questions contained in this section particularly address the Common Core State Standards: RL.4-7.4

17. Find examples of figurative language such as similes and metaphors. Notice that some of them refer to machinery and technology such as "like a chainsaw," "a hair dryer whirring," "his motorboat snoring," "like a roller coaster," and "like a spoon caught in a garbage disposal." Why might the author refer to these topics? Where else in this book is technology important? Give specific examples.
18. Another source of figurative language is strong weather, including disasters: "a raging flood," "a cyclone of heat," "swallowed by an avalanche and launched through a blizzard," and "tornado of questions." What is the effect of these phrases? How do they color the reader's response? What other areas does the author draw from in creating imagery? Give specific examples.

Activities

Mapping the Marvels of Sophie's Worlds

Have students gather information from the book about places that Sophie lives and visits. Each student or pair of students can then create a map of those worlds, cities, and other places. The map should be colored and decorated, and could feature some of the strange animals in the Lost Cities. It should have place names labeled, and perhaps a key and a map scale, which the

students can base on their best estimate. Students who read fantasy novels may know of books with maps to use as models. An Internet image search of “maps with dragons” will provide models too.

A More Talented You

Have each student choose an elf talent such as Telepath, Mesmer, Polyglot, and so on, and write a description of what it would be like if they had that talent. Have them include how they could employ the talent for good in their lives. What specific ways could the talent be used? What dangers would be involved in using it? Have them share their descriptions with fellow students.

Guide written by Kathleen Odean, a former school librarian and Chair of the 2002 Newbery Award Committee. She gives professional development workshops on books for young people and is the author of Great Books for Girls and Great Books about Things Kids Love.

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