

THE WORLDS OF
MARGARET PETERSON
HADDIX

A GUIDE TO THE MISSING AND THE SHADOW CHILDREN SERIES



Discussion Guide for THE MISSING: BOOK ONE FOUND BY MARGARET PETERSON HADDIX



ABOUT THE BOOK

A plane arrives at an airport seemingly out of nowhere. It appears at a gate unannounced and unnoticed by airport personnel. Gate attendant Angela DuPre boards the plane and finds no flight attendants, no pilot—no adults at all. In the passenger seats, she finds thirty-six eerily quiet infants. Thirteen years later in Ohio, teenage adoptees Jonah and Chip receive ominous messages declaring that they are among “the missing” and that someone is coming to find them. Frightened but intrigued, the friends search for their real identities with the help of Katherine, Jonah’s younger sister. Their search leads them to uncover a vast conspiracy and a discovery that stretches beyond their imaginations, into a danger-filled adventure into the past filled with mystery, cliff-hanging suspense, and surprising twists and turns.

PREREADING ACTIVITIES

- In the beginning of the novel, Angela sees the insignia “Tachyon Travel” on the mysterious jet and later explains to Chip, Jonah, and Katherine the connection tachyons have to time travel. Since readers are unlikely to be familiar with this term, ask them to use reference books or electronic research sources to find out as much information as they can about tachyons and the theories behind them.
- Katherine talks about how someone with the ability to go back in time should use it as an opportunity to change history. She mentions events like the assassinations of presidents Lincoln and Kennedy, the sinking of the *Titanic*, and the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. There is also mention elsewhere in the novel of figures from history like Amelia Earhart and Adolf Hitler and events like the Holocaust and Spanish Inquisition. Ask readers how much they know about these events. If their knowledge is limited, ask them to use reference books or online resources to learn more and share what they find out with the rest of the group.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

- When do Jonah and Chip realize that the messages they have received are not a prank?
- How does Chip react when he learns he is adopted? Why do you think Chip’s parents kept his adoption a secret?
- How is Chip’s relationship with his parents different from Jonah’s relationship with his parents?
- How would you describe the relationship between Jonah and Katherine?
- Mr. Reardon tells Jonah’s parents that the FBI is not trying to hide any information to which they are entitled. Do you think he is being truthful?
- How do Jonah’s parents react to what Mr. Reardon tells them?
- When Jonah leaves the room, what does Katherine see in Mr. Reardon’s office that their parents do not? Why do you think only Katherine can see the man?
- When Katherine tells Jonah about the man she saw in the office, what does he realize about the man he spoke to in the bathroom? Do you think Katherine is right about the man being a ghost?
- What do Katherine and Chip learn from the people they contact on the list from Mr. Reardon’s file?

- What is the pattern Chip and Katherine discover among the names on the list of the missing?
- What is Angela DuPre's theory about the babies on the plane?
- What does Jonah realize about the tackler in the library? What warning does the tackler give to Jonah?
- What do you think the tackler means when he tells Angela, "We have wronged you in time. We owe you—." (p. 178)
- When Jonah returns to the library, what does he see that convinces him that Angela's time travel theories may not be crazy?
- What is the paradox of time travel that Jonah struggles with?
- Jonah asks, "Why would anyone come back from the future to now? What's happening now that matters?" How would you answer Jonah's questions?
- Katherine says a good reason to go back in time would be to prevent some terrible event from happening. If you could travel to the past, what terrible event would you prevent? What impact would changing that event have on the course of history?
- Why does Katherine believe the county-sponsored adoptees' conference might be a trap?
- What is Jonah reminded of as he watches Mr. Hodge lead the group on the hike? Why does he find the recollection chilling?
- What does JB say that makes Jonah think that he, Gary, and Mr. Hodge are from another time?
- What does it mean to be in a "time hollow"?
- What does the elucidator reveal?
- According to Curtis Rathbone, what is the mission of Interchronological Rescues?
- What does JB say went wrong with Interchronological Rescues?
- Why does JB want to send the children back to their rightful places in history?
- What opportunity do Gary and Mr. Hodge offer to the children?
- JB tells Jonah, "Your now is off-limits. Which will it be—the future or the past?" (p. 293) Which one would you choose?
- What is the "paradox of the doubles," and why does it make Jonah feel better about his situation?
- What does JB promise to the children?

POSTREADING ACTIVITIES

- The elucidator reveals the true names of the "missing children of history" who were passengers on the plane. The names cited include Virginia Dare, John Hudson, Henry Fountain, Alexis and Anastasia Romanov, Charles Lindbergh III, Edward V of England, and Richard of Shrewsbury. Since readers are likely to know little or nothing about these figures of history, ask them to work as pairs or small groups to research each person and share with the rest of the group what they learn.
- Ask readers to discuss who would be the one person from history they would want to meet if they had the opportunity.
- In a sneak peek of *Sent*, the sequel to *Found*, readers learn that Chip, Jonah, and Katherine are sent back to fifteenth century England. Ask readers to discuss what differences there will be between the world of the twenty-first century and the world of the fifteenth century.

Discussion Guide for THE MISSING: BOOK TWO SENT BY MARGARET PETERSON HADDIX



ABOUT THE BOOK

At the end of *Found*, the first book in The Missing series, Alex and Chip discover they are princes from the Middle Ages. In *Sent*, they arrive there just in time for their murders, with Jonah and Katherine tagging along to try to prevent their deaths. But messing with history is tricky business, especially when you're not all that clear on what is supposed to happen, and when the central event is, in fact, a historical mystery. Jonah and Katherine must find a way to let the princes die while saving their friends—who do not want to be saved.

PREREADING ACTIVITIES

- There are names and words cited in the story that will be unfamiliar to most readers. Ask readers to use reference books or electronic research sources to find out as much information as they can about the following: anachronism, chamberlain, coronation, dichotomy, Magna Carta, privy council, Richard III, Tower of London, Henry Tudor, Westminster Abbey.
- There is a prose retelling of Shakespeare's *Richard III* in Leon Garfield's *Shakespeare Stories II* (Houghton Mifflin, 1995). Check out a copy from your school or local public library and read aloud the story to your group before beginning the novel, so readers will have a sense of Shakespeare's portrait.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

- Where and when does the Elucidator send Alex, Chip, Jonah, and Katherine?
- Who are Alex and Chip supposed to be in this century?
- Why does Katherine suffer from two different kinds of “timesickness”?
- Who are the “tracers” they see in the chamber?
- What is the relationship of Richard, Duke of Gloucester to Edward and Richard?
- What does Jonah notice when Chip merges with the tracer boy?
- Why is Katherine unable to merge with the other tracer boy?
- What happens when Katherine blows out the candle? How is it possible for such a simple thing to have an impact on history?
- How are Alex and Chip able to survive the assassination attempt?
- How do the superstitions of people living in the fifteenth century work to the advantage of the time travelers?
- What difference does Jonah notice about the way people are depicted in movies set in old times and the way they are in real life?
- How does Alex know what he knows about Richard III? Is what he knows historically accurate?
- What does Chip whisper to Richard at the coronation ceremony? What is Richard's response to what he hears?
- What happens when the time travelers' invisibility wears off?
- How do the time travelers explain their twenty-first-century appearance to the monks?
- What angers Katherine about the status of women in 1483?

- What does JB mean when says “you’ve got to stop thinking of your experience of events as the only sequence”? (p. 196)
- What does JB tell the time travelers about the queen’s plan to save her sons?
- According to JB, why was saving Alex and Chip the best outcome?
- What is their response to JB’s announcement that Alex and Chip will have to remain in the fifteenth century for at least two years? Why do they have to stay that long?
- What does JB mean when he says that time needed Richard to be a villain?

POSTREADING ACTIVITIES

- Ask readers to work in pairs or groups to research what daily life was like in the fifteenth century, including food and drink, medicine, religious practice, education, or fashion. Useful resources include BritainExpress.com/History/Townlife.htm, MuseumofLondon.org.uk/English/Learning/Learningonline/features/viking/viking_4.htm, and RichardIII.net/15th_century.htm. Ask readers to consider how fifteenth-century life is depicted in the novel and if it is consistent with the findings of their research.
- Using electronic and print resources, ask readers to research the historical basis of this story. An interesting website to visit is RichardIII.net, home of the Richard III Society, which believes “that many features of the traditional accounts of the character and career of Richard III are neither supported by sufficient evidence nor reasonably tenable.” In the course of their research, ask readers to consider the following questions: What really happened? How can you find out more? How can we know what is true?
- What impact does Shakespeare have on our perceptions of this event? What about the many artistic depictions of the princes? Do art and literature affect how we understand history? What about this book? What do you think of the idea of a repentant Richard?
- What effect can minor changes in the past have on the present? Suppose the princes had lived and been crowned? How would that have changed the course of history afterward?

Discussion Guide for THE MISSING: BOOK THREE SABOTAGED BY MARGARET PETERSON HADDIX



ABOUT THE BOOK

In *Sabotaged*, the third book in The Missing series, Jonah and Katherine's new mission is to return Andrea—who is really Virginia Dare—to the lost colony of Roanoke in the sixteenth century. Once they help her restore the balance of history, they can all go home. But right away, things start to go wrong. They lose the Elucidator and aren't sure where in time they have landed. As they struggle to survive without food, water, supplies, or a way to contact anyone for rescue, they try to piece together the mystery of Roanoke. What happened to the missing colonists? Does it have anything to do with their current predicament? And how can they help Andrea restore history if they don't know what century they're in? The more Jonah and Katherine search for answers, the more questions they have—until they come across the most chilling possibility of all: Has their mission been sabotaged?

PREREADING ACTIVITIES

- Before beginning the book, ask readers to share what they know about the Roanoke Colony. Ask them to search online and print resources for general information about the Roanoke Colony and share their findings.
- Use an atlas to show readers where the Roanoke Colony was located.
- There are names and words cited in the story that will be unfamiliar to most readers. Ask readers to use reference books or electronic research sources to find out as much information as they can about the following: Algonquin and Mohawk tribes; the Croatoans; privateering; Sir Walter Raleigh; the Spanish Armada.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

- Where and when do the time travelers find themselves? Who is Andrea supposed to be?
- What does Andrea see in the projection that makes her scream?
- What does Andrea learn about her “real life”?
- According to JB, what is the purpose of the projections?
- How does Andrea lose the Elucidator? What could happen as a result of losing it?
- Why is Dare sent along as a traveling companion?
- What do the time travelers find in the clearing?
- Why did it take John White, the governor of Roanoke Colony, three years to return from England with supplies?
- Who are the first “tracers” the time travelers see?
- Why does Jonah suspect that Andrea lost the Elucidator on purpose?
- What does Andrea confess after Jonah accuses her of lying?
- What do Andrea and Jonah see after rescuing the man from the boat?
- Why does Jonah say he feels used?

- Who does Andrea recognize as the man she rescued?
- How does John White's arrival back at Roanoke in the story deviate from historical accounts?
- Why is Jonah surprised that JB does not yank Andrea out of the past?
- In addition to being governor, what is John White's other role in the colony?
- What does Andrea mean when she says the history wasn't wrong, just incomplete? (p. 257)
- Why does John White want to go to Croatoan Island? What do they find there?
- Who is Second Chance, and what is his purpose?
- Jonah realizes that Second Chance has been manipulating him and the other travelers all along. What are some ways in which he manipulates them?
- Jonah wonders: "If JB had to choose between saving kids and saving history, which would he pick?" (p. 4) Which do you think JB would pick?
- Why does JB call Second Chance a traitor?
- What does Virginia Dare do that is crucial to history?
- What does John White do for Antonio and Brendan after they rescue him?
- What happens when Second Chance releases the ripple?
- What do you think will be the consequences of Second's recklessness?

POSTREADING ACTIVITIES

- The Lost Colony of Roanoke, 1588, TheShadowlands.net/Roanoke.htm, lists the five most popular theories for what happened to the colonists. Ask readers to review the theories and decide which one they believe is the most plausible. Have each defend his or her choice to the group.
- This novel will leave readers with many questions about the history of the Roanoke Colony. The National Park Service offers excellent curriculum resources at NPS.gov/fora/ForTeachers/Roanoke-Revisited.htm.
- Readers can view a slideshow of John White's watercolor paintings at NPS.gov/fora/PhotosMultimedia/JohnWhiteWatercolors.htm. Essays discussing what the John White watercolors teach about the Carolina Algonquin people and culture can be found at NPS.gov/fora/ForTeachers/Roanoke-Revisited-Unit-4.htm.
- Readers can see John White's personal account of his voyages to Roanoke Island at Etext.Lib.Virginia.edu/etcbin/Jamestown-browsemod?id=J1019.
- Readers can view maps and images relating to the Roanoke Colony at Lost-Colony.com/Gallerymain.html.
- Readers can learn more about the Croatoans and other Native Americans of the coastal Carolina region at CoastalCarolinaIndians.com.

RECOMMENDED BOOKS AND WEBSITES ABOUT THE ROANOKE COLONY

Books

- Fritz, Jean. *The Lost Colony of Roanoke*. Illus. Hudson Talbott. Putnam, 2004.
- Miller, Lee. *Roanoke: The Mystery of the Lost Colony*. Scholastic, 2007.
- Yolen, Jane and Heidi E.Y. Stemple. *Roanoke: The Lost Colony—An Unsolved Mystery from History*. Illus. Roger Roth. Simon & Schuster, 2003.

Websites

- KidInfo: Your Guide to the History of the Roanoke Colony KidInfo.com/American_History/Colonization_Roanoke.html
- The Lost Colony Center for Science and Research Lost-Colony.com/home.html
- The Lost Colony's Education Pages TheLostColony.org/Education/Resources/Lesson_Plans.htm

Discussion Guide for THE MISSING: BOOK FOUR TORN BY MARGARET PETERSON HADDIX



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ABOUT THE BOOK

In this fourth entry in The Missing series, Jonah and Katherine barely have a chance to recover from the traumatic events in Roanoke in 1600 when they are hurtled through time again, moments before a mutiny aboard the *Discovery*, Henry Hudson's ship, in the icy waters of James Bay. As they struggle to survive the frozen seas and brutal conditions aboard the ship, Jonah and Katherine realize that something is terribly wrong. The history they remember is drastically different from what they are experiencing. Will this new version of history replace the past? Jonah and Katherine struggle to unravel the mysteries of 1611 and the mysteries about the Hudson Passage before the only future they have ever known is lost forever.

PREREADING ACTIVITIES

- Before beginning the book, ask readers to share what they know about Henry Hudson and other explorers of the New World. Ask them what they know about North America in 1611.
- Use an atlas to show readers where in North America the *Discovery* traveled during Henry Hudson's final expedition.
- There are place names and vocabulary words cited in the story that will be unfamiliar to most readers. Ask readers to use reference books or electronic research sources to find out as much information as they can about the following: coerce, crow's nest, doggerel, miscreant, mutiny, Northwest Passage, Orient, shallop, and variables.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Why did it take so long for Jonah to trust JB?
- Who is Second, and what is his connection to JB?
- What has Second done in his attempts to alter the past?
- What is significant about the drawing Jonah has of Andrea?
- What does Jonah consider to be one of the "best apps" of the Elucidator?
- What else can the Elucidator do?
- Why is time travel so complicated?
- Where and when are Jonah and Katherine? Who is Jonah supposed to be?
- What do the tracers represent? What do they indicate about the time Jonah and Katherine are in?
- What does Jonah notice about the sailor's face? What do you think accounts for his poor condition?
- Why does Jonah begin to question JB's reliability?
- What makes Jonah conclude that Henry and John Hudson do not have a good relationship?
- Why does Henry Hudson refuse to sail for the winter cabin?
- What is the plot that Prickett and Henry Hudson plan together? How does the plan deviate from historical fact?

- What does the message that Jonah discovers in the crow's nest warn about Prickett?
- How does Staffe remind Jonah of his father?
- What makes Jonah conclude that Second is involved with altering the history of the Henry Hudson expedition? What might be the consequences of changing history?
- Do you agree with Jonah's comment that Henry Hudson has the "biggest ego on the planet"? What are some examples of Henry Hudson's egotism?
- Why do the crew members turn their backs to Jonah when he is punished?
- How does Prickett remind Jonah of his friend Billy Rivoli?
- What makes Jonah conclude that Prickett is actually Second?
- Why does Second need Jonah and Katherine's help?
- What do Jonah and Katherine assume when they see the knife?
- Who is Dalton Sullivan?
- Why does JB say they need to suspend time travel for a while?

POSTREADING ACTIVITIES

- Henry Hudson was one of many explorers who, for centuries, sought the Northwest Passage as a possible trade route to Asia. Ask readers to work in pairs and use reference books or electronic research sources to learn about other explorers and expeditions seeking the Northwest Passage. When they have completed their research, ask them to share their findings.
- This story will leave readers with many questions about the historical facts of Henry Hudson's last expedition. An excellent source of information is located at lanChadwick.com/Hudson/Hudson_04.htm.
- Scurvy, a common disease among sailors on long sea voyages for many centuries, is mentioned several times in the novel. Ask readers to work in pairs and use reference books or electronic research sources to learn about the causes and effects of scurvy and treatments. When they have completed their research, ask them to share their findings.
- During the Age of Discovery, mutiny typically described an open rebellion against a ship's captain. Ask readers to work in small groups and use reference books or electronic research sources to prepare a PowerPoint presentation about a famous naval mutiny.
- In her Author's Note, Margaret Peterson Haddix states that there is no historical certainty about what became of Henry and John Hudson, only speculation and references in Native American legends. Ask readers to use reference books or electronic sources to research the various theories about what became of Henry and John Hudson and decide which one they consider most plausible.

RECOMMENDED BOOKS AND WEBSITES ABOUT HENRY HUDSON

Books

- Duple, Kathleen Benner. *Quest*. McElderry, 2008.
- Foran, Jill. *The Search for the Northwest Passage*. Weigl, 2004.
- Weaver, Janice. *Hudson*. Illus. David Craig. Tundra, 2010.
- Young, Jeff C. *Henry Hudson: Discoverer of the Hudson River*. Enslow, 2009.

Websites

- The Life and Voyages of Henry Hudson, English Explorer and Navigator lanChadwick.com/Hudson
- Social Studies for Kids: Henry Hudson SocialStudiesForKids.com/Subjects/HenryHudson.htm

Discussion Guide for THE MISSING: BOOK FIVE CAUGHT BY MARGARET PETERSON HADDIX



ABOUT THE BOOK

Jonah and Katherine come face-to-face with Albert Einstein in the fifth book of the *New York Times* bestselling series, *The Missing*. Jonah and Katherine are accustomed to traveling through time, but when they learn they next have to return Albert Einstein's daughter to history, they think it's a joke—they've only heard of his sons—but extra complications crop up when they get involved with helping Albert Einstein's secret daughter. Albert Einstein really did have a daughter, Lieserl, whose 1902 birth and subsequent disappearance was shrouded in mystery. Lieserl was presumed to have died of scarlet fever as an infant. But when Jonah and Katherine return to the early 1900s to try to fix history, one of Lieserl's parents seems to understand entirely too much about time travel and what Jonah and Katherine are doing. It's not Lieserl's father, either—it's her mother, Mileva. And Mileva has no intention of letting her daughter disappear.

PREREADING ACTIVITIES

The following activities contained in this section particularly address the Common Core State Standards: L.3-8.4, 6, 7, 8.

- Before beginning the book, ask readers to share what they know about Albert Einstein. Ask them what they think the world was like in 1903.
- Use an atlas to show readers where in Europe the story takes place.
- Some terms cited in the story will likely be unfamiliar to most readers. Ask readers to use reference books or electronic research sources to find out as much information as they can about the following: analytical, apoplectic, capillarity, cowering, crystalline, distraught, indignant, nostalgic, paradox, perplexed, picturesque, precaution, recede, surreptitious, tedious, threshold.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

The following questions contained in this section particularly address the Common Core State Standards: RL.3-8.1, 2.

- What are some things Jonah says and does that you find relatable?
- What happens when Jonah is in Mr. Stanley's science class?
- Why doesn't Jonah have any idea of when or where he really belongs?
- What is an Elucidator?
- Why is Angela supposed to watch over Jonah and Katherine?
- What does Jonah hear JB say about Albert Einstein?
- Do you agree with Jonah that, "There are some people who don't seem like they ever could have been young"? If you agree, who are people you know who fit that description?
- What does Jonah hear "Mitsa" say to Einstein?
- Who does Mileva think Jonah and Katherine are? What does she take from them?
- What do Jonah and Katherine want to get Einstein to stop thinking about?

- In what ways do you think the early twentieth century is different from the twenty-first?
- Why does Jonah feel nostalgic for 1483?
- What does Jonah realize about Einstein's family?
- What does Jonah want JB to help with?
- What does Mileva threaten?
- What does Mileva want Jonah to do?
- How does the Elucidator respond to Katherine's questions about Hadley and JB?
- What does Mileva do while Jonah and Katherine are frozen?
- What does Einstein's letter to President Roosevelt concern?
- What is ADTOOMTS?
- What does Mileva do with the Elucidator that could lead to a major paradox?
- What is revealed about the identity of JB?
- What are some examples of how the author maintains suspense in the story?

POSTREADING ACTIVITIES

The following activities contained in this section particularly address the Common Core State Standards: (W.7.3, 4, 5) (W.8.6, 7, 8)

- Discuss with students why Einstein has come to symbolize the idea of a genius.
- Have students use print and electronic resources to research what contributions Mileva Einstein made to the field of physics.
- In the story, there is mention of a letter Einstein wrote to President Roosevelt regarding the development of an atomic bomb. Have students use print and electronic resources to research what effect this letter had on the creation of the Manhattan Project and what Einstein's reaction was later when bombs were later developed and used against the Empire of Japan.
- Have students utilize print and electronic resources to write a research paper with appropriate documentation and citation of sources explaining what Einstein's greatest contributions were to the field of physics.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING ON ALBERT EINSTEIN

- Delano, Marfe Ferguson. *Genius: A Photobiography of Albert Einstein*. National Geographic, 2005.
- Krull, Kathleen. *Albert Einstein. (Giants of Science)*. Illus. Boris Kulikov. Viking, 2010.
- Meltzer, Milton. *Albert Einstein: A Biography*. Holiday House, 2008.

Discussion Guide for THE MISSING: BOOK SIX RISKED BY MARGARET PETERSON HADDIX



ABOUT THE BOOK

In this sixth entry in Haddix's series *The Missing*, Jonah and Katherine travel through time to 1918 Russia when the country is being violently ripped apart by revolution. They arrive just as Alexei, Anastasia, and the rest of Tsar Nicholas II's family are about to be executed, but will they arrive in time to save them?

PREREADING ACTIVITIES

The following activities contained in this section particularly address the Common Core State Standards: L.3-8.4, 6, 7, 8.

- Before beginning the book, ask readers to share what they know about World War I and the Russian Revolution. Ask them if they knew anything else that was going on in the world in 1918.
- Use an atlas to show readers where the story takes place.
- Some terms cited in the story will likely be unfamiliar to most readers. Ask readers to use reference books or electronic research sources to find out as much information as they can about the following: audacious, corset, devious, disheveled, hemophilia, imperious, incredulous, indignant, malleable, pompous, preordained, presidium, simulation, translucent.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

The following questions contained in this section particularly address the Common Core State Standards: RL.3-8.1, 2.

- Who is the "Russian kid" that Katherine suggests Jonah may actually be?
- How did Jonah find out that he was not an ordinary adoptee?
- What group of children are Jonah and Katherine a part of?
- What vow did Jonah make to himself after he returned from his last trip through time?
- Why is there reason to believe that Anastasia and Alexei may have escaped the fate of the rest of their family?
- Who shows up on the Skidmores' porch? What is the twenty-first-century identity of this person?
- What were the two lists of names that Chip, Jonah, and Katherine discovered? Where does Daniella McCarthy's name appear on those lists? What makes her unique from the other missing children from history?
- Why are Second, Gary, and Hodge Jonah's enemies?
- What kind of relationship do Chip and Katherine have? What kind of relationship does Jonah have with Andrea?
- Who is the boy in the black sweatshirt? What does Jonah remember about him?
- What is the special deal offered to Gavin Danes?
- What are some of the symptoms of timesickness?
- What does Jonah forget about invisibility?
- Why does Jonah hope that Gary and Hodge escaped from time prison?
- What does Chip do to Gavin that may put his life in jeopardy?

- How did Gary and Hodge trick Gavin?
- What does Jonah discover in Dr. Botkin's letter?
- What reassurance does Jonah make to Katherine about the Romanov family?
- Why does the invisibility command to the Elucidator fail to work? What does Jonah realize about Leonid?
- How is Jonah able to interrupt the execution?
- What prompts the appearance of Gary and Hodge?
- Why does the agency call an emergency session of top officials?
- What did Gary and Hodge do that damaged time so badly?
- Who is the bearded man, and what does he show to Katherine?
- Why does Katherine return to 1918?
- What does the bearded man explain to Daniella about the "real world"?
- According to JB, how do time agents see the past differently?
- What is it about thoughts of fate and destiny that leave Jonah so troubled?
- JB asks Jonah: "You don't think good can come out of bad? That bad people can't do bad things and have there be some good results, too?" How would you answer these questions? Can you think of any examples of good coming out of bad?
- What does Jonah realize about Gary and Hodge? What possibility does JB say they may have to face about them?
- Margaret Peterson Haddix concludes her Author's Note with the question: "But what does it say about human nature that so many people wanted to believe so desperately for so many years that one of the children lived?" How would you answer that question?

POSTREADING ACTIVITIES

The following activities contained in this section particularly address the Common Core State Standards: W.7.3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9

- There are names, places, and terms cited in the story that will be unfamiliar to most readers. Have students work in pairs or small groups to do research using print and electronic resources to find out as much information as they can and share with the rest of the class about the following: Bolshevik, *Carpathia*, Cuban Missile Crisis, DNA testing, Vladimir Lenin, Grigori Rasputin, Siberia, Spanish Flu, Tobolsk, White Army, Yekaterinburg.
- Have students use print and electronic resources to research and share their findings on people who have claimed to be Grand Duchess Anastasia and how she has been portrayed in popular culture.
- Assign students to write a research paper with appropriate documentation and citation of sources on one of the following topics: causes of the Russian Revolution, Czar Nicholas II, the Romanov Family Dynasty, Russia in World War I, the Russian Civil War.

RECOMMENDED BOOKS AND WEBSITES ON THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION & WORLD WAR I

Books

- Batten, Jack. *The War to End All Wars: The Story of World War I*. Tundra, 2009.
- Freedman, Russell. *The War to End All Wars: World War I*. Clarion, 2010.

Websites

- Russian Revolution (History Channel)
[History.com/Topics/Russian-Revolution](https://www.history.com/topics/russian-revolution)
- Russian Revolution—Internet History Sourcebooks
[Fordham.edu/Halsall/Mod/Modsbook39.asp](https://www.fordham.edu/Halsall/Mod/Modsbook39.asp)

Discussion Guide for The Shadow Children Series

Available in paperback



ABOUT THE BOOKS

Imagine living in the shadows, hiding your existence from almost everyone in the world. This is the plight of Jen, Trey, Nina, and all other third-born children. With their nation plagued by drought and food shortages, their government has made it illegal for families to have more than two children. Yet thousands of thirds exist without identification cards or rights of any kind. As these shadow children begin to discover and communicate with each other, their worldviews broaden. They begin to wonder why their government claims that they are the cause of all of their nation's ills, and they question the worth of their leaders themselves. Fearfully, unwittingly, or angrily, these secret children emerge from the shadows to fight for change.

The seven Shadow Children novels are told from the viewpoints of Luke, the beloved third son of a rural family; Matthias, the abandoned urban orphan raised by elderly moralist Samuel; and other third children. Their narratives offer readers differing perspectives on the compelling questions explored in the series. Should the government have the right to dictate the size of families or other aspects of how people choose to live their lives? In an age of televised news, how can one be certain what is really happening in the world and what is illusion—who is telling the truth and who isn't? Can individual actions truly affect the future of a nation? And, ultimately, what does it mean to live in freedom?

DISCUSSION TOPICS

- Why do you think some families decided to have third children despite their society's desperate circumstances and strict laws? Do you think that the benefits of having another child would outweigh the sacrifices that must be made? Why or why not?
- Each third child comes from a different background and type of hiding place. How are these children treated by the people who care for them and hide them? How do they feel about their circumstances? How do these feelings affect their actions?
- How does the government enforce its rules? Do you think its plan for dealing with the low food supply is a good one? Is it justified? Must governments limit individual freedoms to protect their citizens as a group? Is this the case in your own country?
- To come out of hiding, shadow children must assume false identities. How would you feel if you had to live under an assumed name, denying your relationship to your family? Which shadow child's feelings about this situation are most like your own and why?
- Are the shadow children in more danger when they are hidden or when they venture out into the larger, more complicated world? In what ways do you think this would be a difficult transition to make? Would you feel safer or less safe out in the world?
- Shadow children are often uncertain whether people are their friends or their enemies. Cite examples when third children question the loyalties of Mr. Talbot, Smits, Oscar, and even members of the Population Police Force. Is trust as difficult in your world?
- A critical challenge faced by each shadow child is the sense that one individual cannot make a difference. When do Luke, Nina, Trey, and Matthias express this sense? Are they correct? What is the relationship between this feeling and the leadership roles these children ultimately take on?

- How do different characters contribute to the fight for the freedom of the shadow children? How effective is Jen's rally? Does Luke help the cause when he joins the Grant family of Barons? Can Trey's fear be a type of courage? How do Mr. and Mrs. Talbot, Mr. Hendricks, and even Philip Twinings help the fight?
- It becomes increasingly clear that the government is misinforming its citizens. What lies are told on the public television channels? How is the information on the Baron channels different? What roles do television and the Internet play in the novels?
- Why do you think the government is, in a sense, framing the shadow children for the nation's problems? Whom do you think the starving population would be angry with if they did not have the shadow children to blame for their hunger?
- In what ways does hunger affect different characters and their actions? If your family were hungry, would you have joined the Population Police? Why or why not?
- When Aldous Krakenaur and the Population Police are defeated in the final book, are the third children truly safe? What does Luke do to expose Oscar? Why does Nina feel that only a third child could have stopped Oscar?
- What kind of government do you think—or hope—the shadow children will help to create? How does Luke imagine the future? Do you think it will be perfect? Do you think it will be better? Explain your answer.

QUOTATIONS TO DISCUSS

- *Among the Hidden* begins with Luke musing: "I will never be allowed outside again. Maybe never again as long as I live." What might you do if you were facing your final moments outside? How does this passage affect your understanding of the series?
- Jen tries to persuade Luke to join the rally, saying, "You've got to come, Luke, or you'll hate yourself the rest of your life. When you don't have to hide anymore, even years from now, there'll always be some small part of you whispering, 'I don't deserve this. I didn't fight for it. I'm not worth it.' But you are, Luke, you are." List three ways Jen's words are important. How is Jen, who dies, a key character throughout the series? Compare and contrast the characters of Jen and Samuel as moral thinkers and leaders.
- Near the end of *Among the Impostors*, Mr. Hendricks explains that, "The Population Police can lie too...It suits the government's purposes to say they are arresting third children rather than traitors." Why might this be better for the government's purposes? Are third children the real cause of the nation's troubles?
- *Among the Betrayed* opens with Nina's thought that "...like the bogeyman and the Big Bad Wolf and the Wicked Witch and the creep-show monster, the Population Police belonged in stories and nightmares, not real life." What makes these rebellious thoughts? What makes these brave thoughts?
- In Chapter 29 of *Among the Barons*, "Luke remembered a quote from one of his history books: 'The king is dead, long live the king.'" How do Luke's experiences help him understand these words spoken upon the death of France's Kings? Is the transfer of power in Luke's world really this clear? How might this quote be understood in terms of the way leadership changes hands in your country?
- In Chapter 21 of *Among the Brave*, Luke's brother, Mark, compliments Trey on being braver than him. As Trey responds, he realizes, "People are brave in different ways." Explain this quote in terms of the different types of bravery depicted in the series.
- In Chapter 19 of *Among the Enemy*, Matthias wonders why he could save a Population Police officer, then fight against him. "It had to do with Samuel telling him, over and over again, 'Killing is wrong.' Even...back in the cabin, Matthias hadn't wanted to be an accomplice to any more murder." How does the memory of Samuel affect Matthias's thoughts and actions? How do Samuel's words affect your understanding of the relationship between third children and their government?
- At the end of Chapter 8 in *Among the Free*, Luke asks a boy about his loyalties. "'Which side am I on?' [the boy] repeated. 'What do you think? Whatever side feeds me—that's the one for me.'" Luke later muses, "Shouldn't the enemies of my enemies be my friends?" Discuss loyalty in terms of these two quotations. Could you ever be driven to think like the hungry boy? Why or why not? How would you respond to Luke's circular question about the enemies of his enemies?

WRITING AND RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

Hiding

- The premise of the Shadow Children series is that third children must live in hiding, pretending not to exist. Imagine you are a third child. Write three to five journal entries describing your life, how you feel about it, and your dreams, if any, for the future.

- Margaret Peterson Haddix calls these novels the “Shadow Children” series. What other words, such as *hidden* or *forbidden*, describe third children? Look up “shadow” in the dictionary. Based on these exercises, write a short essay explaining why “shadow” is, or is not, the best word to use in the series title. If not, what series title would you suggest?
- Make a “top ten” list of reasons people join the Population Police. Then, in the character of one of those of people, write a speech explaining to the Population Police why you have come to join them. Read your speech aloud to classmates.
- In the final book, Luke balks at being interviewed on camera, stating that if he is free then he has the right to say nothing. Why does Luke say this? Role-play this scene, having one classmate act as the interviewer while others play liberated citizens. You may also want to role-play the scene in which citizens begin to testify against third children once again. Discuss ways in which these role-plays are similar and/or different.

Population

- The world’s six billionth child was born in 1999, and our population continues to grow. A growing population poses risks to the planet. Imagine you have just been told that you are child number six billion. Write a journal entry describing how you feel about this fact.
- The world’s three most populous countries are China, India, and the United States. Research how population growth has been handled in one of these countries. Compare and contrast the different population changes and policies with the research of other classmates or friends. Have the policies been successful? What positive and negative effects might these policies have in the future? (Hint: Excellent data is available on the Population Reference Bureau website: Prb.org.)

Food and Hunger

- Luke’s family lives on a farm, and he is very interested in gardening and hydroponics, the growing of plants in a nutrient-rich water rather than soil. Learn more about these disciplines by trying to grow some vegetables of your own or trying your hand at hydroponics.
- The people of the Shadow Children world sometimes act against their moral senses because they are starving. What does it mean to be hungry? Write a paragraph describing how your stomach, limbs, and mind feel when you have missed a meal. Compare this to an encyclopedia definition of starvation. Based on these observations and facts, write a defense of the starving people’s bad acts.
- How do we deal with hunger and famine in our modern world? Research the policies that different countries have for dealing with hunger both at home and abroad. Stage a debate, with each person advocating a different approach, and see if you can reach a consensus about which methods are the most effective.

Governments and Control

- Are these novels about a strong government preventing famine through limiting population? Or are they about a failing government attempting to keep control despite the famine by blaming third children for the entire population’s hunger? Write a paragraph explaining which of the above sentences best describes the crisis of the Shadow Children series and why.
- Research the population control efforts of the Chinese government, the vilification of the Jewish people by the Nazis in World War II, or the racial hierarchy established between the Hutu and Tutsi people in Rwanda. Present an informative poster based on your research to friends and classmates. Discuss the ways in which each of these governments resembles the actions of the Shadow Children government. Then, if desired, write a paragraph stating which real-life situation you think is most similar to the series and why.
- To promote the idea that third children are villains, the government feeds the population propaganda through television and posters. Find the dictionary definition of propaganda. Look for examples of propaganda in the novels. Then create your own propaganda poster defending or blaming third children for the troubles of their nation.
- Luke and his friends ultimately have the opportunity to help create a new government. With classmates or friends, brainstorm a list of rules, regulations, and freedoms for the new government you would create for the Shadow Children. Or you and your classmates can each draft a new constitution for the Shadow Children to present to your class. Vote on the best constitution.
- What does it mean to be free? Hold a Freedom Day at your school or classroom. Learn about celebrations of freedom across time and cultures. Write an essay, poem, or song lyrics; create a sculpture, drawing, or collage; or improvise a dance or a play showing what freedom means to you.

This guide was written by Edward T. Sullivan, a librarian and writer.

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