



Educator Discussion Guide

AN ENCHANTMENT OF RAVENS
by Margaret Rogerson

Louisiana Teen Readers' Choice Nominee 2019-2020
Grade 9-12

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ABOUT THE BOOK

Isobel lives with her family in Whimsy, a village in-between The World Beyond and the lands ruled by the sinister Fair Folk. Locked in eternal summer, Whimsy is swept along by the Fair Folks need of human craft, a skill they cannot perform without turning to dust, and humans granting that need in exchange for enchantments and magic.

Isobel is a sought after, skilled portrait painter with the immortal Fair Folk as her deadly subjects. When she receives her first royal subject - Rook, the autumn prince - she makes a terrible mistake; she is taken away by the Autumn Prince to the lands ruled by the Fair Folk to stand trial for her crime. Throughout their journey, Rook and Isobel must depend on each other as they face dark and terrifying obstacles.

As their relationship strengthens, they grow closer to breaking a deadly law of the land: that humans and fair folk must never fall in love. Attempting to beat the odds, Isobel must face a fate of becoming one of the Fair Folk, or giving up her beloved painting skill. Can her craft be the key to changing everything? *An Enchantment of Ravens* is a story about learning to love while still staying true to oneself.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Margaret Rogerson has earned a bachelor's degree in cultural anthropology from Miami University. Margaret Rogerson has been a marketing assistant, graphic designer, and freelance artist before becoming an author. In 2017, she wrote her first book, the New York Times bestseller, *An Enchantment of Ravens*. In her spare time she enjoys watching documentaries, drawing, reading, and creeping through the woods in search of mushrooms. She currently lives near Cincinnati, Ohio.

Biographical information taken from the author's website at

<http://www.margaretrogerson.com/>

Accessed 26 September 2018.

BOOK AWARDS

Parents' Choice Silver Honor Winner

Indies Next Top Ten Children's Books of Fall 2017

PREREADING ACTIVITIES

Fairies

Fairies are seen in many different media forms: movies, books, television, etc. Have students give an example of a fairy in media with a drawing, a painting, a sculpture, or any other artistic medium. Have them describe how their fairy is perceived in the story.

Be Careful What You Wish For

Separate students into an even number of groups. Have one group come up with a wish, then have another group grant the wish but “corrupt” it. This will allow students to practice/understand one of the major plot devices of the book.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Do you think Isobel is a strong or weak character? Using examples from the book, explain why.
2. What kind of relationship exist between the citizens of whimsy and the fair folk? How would each group describe the other?
3. How are enchantments used in the story, and how does Isobel prevent her enchantments from working against her?
4. Describe the fair folks’ ideology of the concept of power throughout book. Do you think it is fair or cruel? Support your answer with evidence from the text.
5. Aster is a human turned into a fair folk. What were the consequences of her choices? Do you think she regrets the decision?
6. Do you think Gadfly is a hero or a villain? Support your answer with evidence from the book.
7. If you were a character in this book, would you give up your craft to become an immortal fairy? Explain your answer.
8. In the story the fairies imitate the humans. Give at least 3 examples of imitations. Why do you think the fairies care so much about appearance?
9. How does Isobel use the power of her craft in the story to gain an advantage over the fairies?
10. Why is Isobel’s being turned into a hare significant to the story? What does it say about the character of the fair folk?
11. How are human emotions viewed in the story? When is it seen as a strength and when is it seen as a weakness?
12. What is the Good Law in the story? Why do you think it must never be broken? Can you give any examples today in the real world that compare?
13. In what ways would changing the setting from Whimsy to the World Beyond change the story? Or would there be no change?
14. Why do you think the fairy lands were becoming corrupted? What was the state of the Alder King?
15. Isobel states “But isn’t absurdity the best part of being human? We aren’t ageless creatures who watch centuries pass from afar. Our worlds are small, our lives short, and we can only bleed a little before we fall.” Why is the quote important to the story?

CLASSROOM CONNECTIONS

Art:

- Isobel uses her portraits to paint her subjects in a new light. The Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery provides a guide for educators called “Reading Portraiture.” Through various activities, students are able to learn how to “read” a portrait in order to learn about an individual. Select one of the activities to do with students.

Lesson plan taken from the National Portrait Gallery at

<http://npg.si.edu/learn/classroom-resource/reading-portraiture-guide-educators>

Accessed 01 November 2018.

- In the book, fair folk use a glamour to present a perfect imitation. Have students explain how today’s society uses “glamour” to hide behind. They can either make a video or a collage.

English:

- Have students read the poem Erlkönig by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe which is inspired by the Alder King. After reading the poem and the story have the students write and act out a short story of how Alder King came to be.

https://germanstories.vcu.edu/goethe/erl_dual.html

- Have some students act as fair folk judges, and have the rest of the class be humans. The humans will “perform” their craft, and the fair folk will judge who is the worthiest to drink from the Green Well. Make each fair folk judge create a “worthy craft rubric.”

Science:

Fair folk need humans to make crafts for them similar to a symbiotic relationship. Have students research a symbiotic relationship in nature or society. Then have the students describe the relationship from the perspective of each organism using a social media format.

Social Studies:

- In the book barrow mounds are the combination of fairy magic and human remains. Throughout history, burial mounds have had many different purposes. Research how burial mounds are used throughout history. Mounds are also found in Louisiana. Have students visit or research a mound in Louisiana.
- A lot of the subjects in the book are taken from Greek and European mythologies. The title of the book is “An Enchantment of Ravens” because ravens are an important symbol in the book. Have students research how ravens were seen in mythologies and how it compares to the book.

Vocabulary:

Petrified
Exquisite
Provocation
Gaping
Trivial
Perilously
Elation

Slyly
Respite
Frisson
Shrewd
Patina
Allure

Mundane
Unerringly
Impetuously
Rapport

RELATED WEBSITES

History of Fairies

<https://www.historic-uk.com/CultureUK/The-Origins-of-Fairies/>

A short overview of the history of fairies.

An Interview with author Margaret Rogerson

<https://www.bookweb.org/news/indies-introduce-qa-margaret-rogerson-100955>

The Indies interview Margaret Rogerson about her inspiration for An Enchantment of Ravens.

Inspired by An Enchantment of Ravens

<https://rivetedlit.com/2017/09/28/11-amazing-enchantment-of-ravens-fan-crafts/>

Fans share everything from fan art, makeup, and costume designs inspired by the book.