



**TEACHER'S NOTES**

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*We Three Heroes*

by Lynette Noni

The following notes have been divided up into general resources, followed by novella-specific resources.

As the disclaimer in *We Three Heroes* states, teachers should note that some of the content might be distressing to students. These teacher notes may need to be modified to cater to individuals that could be at risk due to themes including bullying, self harm, LGBTQI+ suicide, grief and loss.

## ABOUT THE BOOK

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*“We all have to do our part if we’re to survive the coming storm.”*

Alexandra Jennings might be the hero of The Medoran Chronicles, but she would be lost without her three closest friends. They are her heroes, and like all heroes, they each have their own story.

Meet the real D.C. in ***Crowns and Curses*** and discover how she becomes the princess Alex once despised but now adores.

Follow Jordan on his healing journey in ***Scars and Silence*** as he struggles in the wake of being rescued from his living nightmare.

Walk beside Bear in ***Hearts and Headstones*** as he faces an unspeakable trauma while helping his world prepare for the coming war.

D.C., Jordan and Bear are the heroes of their own stories. It is time for their stories to be told.

A closer look into the lives of Alex’s three closest friends from Lynette Noni’s best-selling and critically acclaimed Medoran Chronicles, *We Three Heroes* explores the trials of growing up in a magical world that is not exempt from bullying, trauma, homophobia, grief and heartbreak. This powerful novella collection illustrates the true magic of finding a home away from home at Akarnae Academy—with friendship, romance, self-belief, resilience and hope, these gifted heroes can truly overcome their demons and help one another along the way.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Lynette Noni grew up on a farm in outback Australia until she moved to the beautiful Sunshine Coast and swapped her mud-stained boots for sand-splashed flip-flops.

She has always been an avid reader and most of her childhood was spent lost in daydreams of far-off places and magical worlds.

She was devastated when her Hogwarts letter didn't arrive, but she consoled herself by looking inside every wardrobe she could find, and she's still determined to find her way to Narnia one day.

While waiting for that to happen, she creates her own fantasy worlds and enjoys spending time with characters she meets along the way.



# CLASS DISCUSSION

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**Open a discussion with your class by using some, or all, of the following questions:**

1. The tones of the novellas are set by their titles. What does each title suggest will be in the story? What assumptions did you have prior to reading, and were these confirmed?"
2. Lynette Noni's books are considered to be character driven, meaning that the stories are progressed through the development of their characters. Discuss whether this is true, and whether the novellas added to or subtracted from the overall plot of the Medoran Chronicles.
3. Throughout the novellas, a number of side characters from the Medoran Chronicles share their backstories. Consider the new information about these supporting characters and decide which character you'd like to know more about. Was there a specific moment in the story that made you want to learn more about them, and why?
4. The friendship between Jordan, Bear, and D.C. is further explored in *We Three Heroes*. Discuss the ways in which the novellas allow readers an opportunity to learn more about their relationships, pasts and present.
5. Although written in 3rd person, the five books in the Medoran Chronicles are told from Alex's perspective. The stories in *We Three Heroes*, however, are each told by her three closest friends. This proved an interesting challenge for the author when creating and describing the world. Why do you think this was the case, and can you find some examples? Can you easily tell their 'voices' apart? Use evidence from the book to support your claims.
6. There is a current movement among fans of young adult fiction that insists that authors include obvious nods to diversity in their stories. Does the author include diversity in *We Three Heroes*? If so, how does she do this, and does it seem authentic? If not, how would you depict it?

# WRITING ACTIVITIES

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## Before and After Activity

Before reading *We Three Heroes*, write down the things you'd like to learn about DC, Jordan and Bear.

After reading *We Three Heroes*, answer the following questions:

1. Did it answer the questions you had before reading it?
2. What did you learn about the characters that you weren't expecting?
3. What would you have liked to have read about instead?

## Missing something?

*We Three Heroes* gives a very small amount of backstory for D.C., Jordan and Bear. Now that you've got some more information about Alex's friends, is there anything else you'd like to know about? Write your own understanding of the three heroes. Get creative and base it on the information you've been given in *We Three Heroes*!

## A different perspective

Readers now have a number of scenes between the four friends from multiple perspectives, such as Alex and D.C.'s first meeting, the return of Jordan and the battle of Graevale. Pick one of the scenes from anywhere in the *Medoran Chronicles*, and rewrite it from a different character's perspective.

# THEMES

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**Open a discussion with your class by using some, or all, of the following questions:**

1. Contemporary Fiction is described as a fictional story set in modern times, meaning that the characters are modern and relatable to readers. The Medoran Chronicles is considered to be a fantasy series, and although the novellas of *We Three Heroes* are set in the same world and with the same rules, due to the themes that are explored, some consider it to be more along the lines of Contemporary Fiction, not Fantasy. Discuss whether you believe this statement to be true or not. Provide evidence to support your statements.
2. The author sets the tone for the novellas in *We Three Heroes* with a letter to the reader. Read the letter and discuss what message the author is trying to send. Relate this message to the three novellas, and find examples to support your statements.
3. The titles for the novellas in *We Three Heroes* not only hint at the types of events the characters will experience, but also their themes. Discuss what each title is hinting at in terms of the themes. Do these titles accurately reflect themes found in the novellas? If not, how would you rename the titles?
4. A number of themes are referenced across the novellas. A theme in *Crowns and Curses*, such as loneliness, is later referenced in *Scars and Silence* when Jordan describes how he felt after his brother died. What other examples can you think of? For each example, decide if it could be considered a main theme in any of the novellas, and identify where it is a minor theme in the remaining novellas.

# CHARACTER TRAITS

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## General

Using Canva.com, or another infographic software, create a character profile infographic for each of the three heroes. Include the following information for each character, and anything else you can think of (you may need to get creative if you can't find the information the novellas):

- Strengths and weaknesses
- Family tree
- Favourite colour(s)
- Significant events in their lives

## D.C.

1. For a lot of Akarnae, D.C. comes across as an unlikeable character, with some less than pleasant traits. Having now read *Crowns and Curses*, discuss whether her behaviour towards Alex, Jordan, and Bear, was justified or not.
2. Create a list of character traits for D.C. and one for Delucia. Compare the two lists and note their similarities. Discuss how and why Delucia evolved into Alex's best friend. Refer to the table of Character Traits to help you.

## Jordan

1. Throughout the *Medoran Chronicles*, it can be argued that Jordan's purpose, as a character, is to be the comedic relief. Knowing what you now know about Jordan, do you think the author purposefully designed his backstory to give him character traits and qualities that are juxtaposed with readers' first impressions of Jordan? Why?
2. Jordan experiences a significant amount of character development over the course of *Scars and Silence*. Map his development by choosing characteristics from the provided list, adding any that you think are missing, and placing them in order of Jordan's development.

## Bear

1. Respond to the following statement about Bear, using evidence to support your claims: Bear is the rock of the group. He is always there and willing to help. His purpose is to provide support for Alex and his other friends.
2. Bear has a number of character traits that are explored in *Hearts and Headstones*. Using the provided Character Traits list, and adding any that you think are missing, identify what these traits are and the points in the story they are visible.

# CHARACTER TRAITS LIST

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Generous	Dishonest	Confident
Honest	Disloyal	Persuasive
Loyal	Unkind	Ambitious
Loving	Rude	Resourceful
Kind	Disrespectful	Decisive
Sincere	Impatient	Authoritative
Self-controlled	Greedy	Enthusiastic
Peaceful	Abrasive	Bold
Faithful	Pessimistic	Playful
Patient	Cruel	Active
Determined	Merciless	Silly
Persistent	Narcissistic	Affectionate
Adventurous	Obnoxious	Funny
Fair	Malicious	Talkative
Cooperative	Petty	Smart
Tolerant	Quarrelsome	Shy
Optimistic	Selfish	Impatient
Spiritual	Unforgiving	Stubborn

## SETTING

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1. *We Three Heroes* is set in the fantasy world of the Medoran Chronicles, however the themes found within the novellas are the type readers would encounter in Contemporary/Realistic Fiction. Discuss how the setting of the novellas keeps the stories within the fantasy world. What evidence can you find that proves that these stories should still be considered fantasy?
2. If you were to rewrite *We Three Heroes* to truly be Contemporary Fiction, but still keeping a similar storyline, what would you need to change about the setting, and why?

## SYMBOLS

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1. In *We Three Heroes*, there are a number of symbols, three of which can be found in the titles of the novellas. Discuss how crowns, scars, and headstones are symbolic both within their respective novellas and across all three.
2. Do you think there are any other symbols in *We Three Heroes*? What are they and why do you consider them to be symbolic?



# CROWNS AND CURSES: CLASS DISCUSSION

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1. Delucia often refers to the “princess” side of her. When she has the opportunity to meet people without her title, such as the first times she met Maxton and enrolled at Akarnae, she jumps at the opportunity. Discuss how growing up in the spotlight and with a large amount of responsibility might affect a person’s ability to have a “normal life.”
2. Delucia initially perceives Jordan and Bear to be bullies. Why would her past experiences with Maxton cause her to view the two boys this way? How does this affect her ability to befriend students during her years at Akarnae?
3. In *Crowns and Curses*, D.C. is referred to as Delucia. Discuss why the author has chosen to do this, and how her name is part of her character development. Is there a point where she stops being Delucia and truly becomes D.C.? Explain.
4. Delucia’s arrival at Akarnae is far from perfect. Discuss how her illness set her up for a difficult first day. Refer back to her experiences growing up to help you. You may have had a similar experience, how did you feel and how did you cope with it?

## THEMES

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There are three main themes explored in *Crowns and Curses*: Bullying, loneliness, and hope. The following questions are designed to get you thinking about these themes:

1. Delucia experiences bullying at the hands of Maxton. How does his bullying affect her childhood, and the person she becomes at Akarnae?
2. Bullying is often associated with one person having power over another. Explore how this statement is true for Delucia and Maxton’s relationship. Find the point in which there are three main themes explored in *Crowns and Curses*: Bullying, loneliness, and hope. The following questions are designed to get you thinking about these themes: of characters who experience different levels of loneliness in *Crowns and Curses*. Find examples and explore how each character reacts to loneliness.
3. Delucia often refers to walls around her heart, and never letting anyone else in. Discuss how this impacts her ability to form connections with people.
4. Despite experiencing loneliness, Delucia still has moments of hope. Explore these moments throughout *Crowns and Curses*. What do these moments say about Delucia’s character?

Are there any other themes in *Crowns and Curses* that you think are worth exploring? What are they and why?

## SCARS AND SILENCE: CLASS DISCUSSION

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1. Jordan's healing is significantly influenced by the Stealth and Subterfuge teacher, Hunter. Discuss how Hunter's intervention helps Jordan to heal from both his most recent experience, and from the death of his brother.
2. A popular term used when discussing young adult fiction is the term 'insta-love,' meaning that two characters meet and fall in love quickly, and without much development. Discuss whether Jordan and D.C.'s relationship should be considered insta-love, or if Scars and Silence went a long way in developing their characters and their relationship.
3. The novellas provide a different perspective on Alex; readers now view her through the lense of her friends. An example of this is Jordan regularly referring to her character development throughout Scars and Silence. Find examples that show Jordan's view of Alex's character development and explore why he might be viewing her that way, and how he might feel about it. Why do you think the author took the opportunity to view Alex through different eyes?
4. Jordan is constantly surprised by how supportive his friends and teachers are in his healing. Discuss why the offers of support came as a surprise to Jordan. Think about how his past experiences might have caused him to naturally turn towards silence rather than seeking help.

## THEMES

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There are a number of themes explored in Scars and Silence, three of which include grief, suicide and silence. The following questions are designed to get you thinking about these themes:

1. Jordan is dealing with two different types of grief in Scars and Silence. The grief from his actions during his time under Aven's control, and the grief from when his brother died. Jordan is supported through his grief by not only a mentor, but also by his friends. Discuss the turning points for Jordan's healing in Scars and Silences, and create a timeline outlining these significant events.
2. Silence is represented in three different ways: Jordan and D.C.'s silence during their night-time vigils, Jordan's silence about his recent experiences, and Luka's silence about the expectations and pressure placed upon him by his parents. Compare the three examples of silence and draw conclusions about their differences. Discuss whether or not there are other types of silence portrayed within the novellas.

## THEMES (Continued)

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3. Consider the following statement and either prove or disprove it, using evidence from *Scars and Silence* to support your claims: In exposing the different types of silence and the effects silence can have on relationships, the author has created a strong argument for speaking out.
4. Suicide is briefly touched upon in *Scars and Silence*, however the focus is more upon the aftermath. Explore how Jordan's life might have been different if Luka had not taken his own life, or if Jordan had reacted differently to the tragedy.

Are there any other themes in *Scars and Silence* you think are worth exploring? What are they and why?

# HEARTS AND HEADSTONES: CLASS DISCUSSION

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1. There are a number of different family representations in the Medoran Chronicles, including Alex's work-a-holic family, D.C.'s royal family burdened by responsibilities, Jordan's pressuring parents, Bear's welcoming family, Kaiden and Jeera's aunt acting as their legal guardian, and Declan's loss of his parents, causing him to live with his grumpy grandfather. Discuss why the author might have given the characters different family backgrounds, and the impact each of those situations has had on the characters' developments.
2. The author provides an interesting plot twist when Jordan's father, Marcus Sparker, appears in the Shadow Walker's hallway and speaks to Bear. Discuss the author's reasons for this encounter and how it might influence the remainder of the story.
3. Bear's brothers, Johnny and Blake, never attended Akarane and therefore, do not have gifts. Despite this, they have secured well-respected jobs and are considered particularly intelligent. Discuss why the author might have portrayed this when and what the message behind this might be.
4. The battle of Graevale is depicted in both Graevale and Hearts and Headstones. During the battle, Alex and Bear share the same thought: at least Alex won't have to live with remembering this horror on her own—the four friends will be able to share that burden together. What message do you think the author is trying to convey?

## THEMES

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There are three main themes explored in Hearts and Headstones: family, loss and love. The following questions are designed to get you thinking about these themes:

1. Respond to the following statement regarding family in the Medoran Chronicles, using evidence from the novellas and the books to support your claims: Family is not always blood related, but is what we make it.
2. The Ronnigan family is one of the few families to feature regularly in the Medoran Chronicles. Discuss the ways in which Bear's family is integral to the development of the story and some of its characters, particularly Alex and Jordan.
3. Loss is explored in Hearts and Headstones through the loss of Bear's father, William Ronnigan. This loss hits many of the characters hard. Discuss how the author explores the loss of William, a father figure to many characters, and if it was purposeful in developing the story.

## THEMES (Continued)

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4. Love is explored throughout *Hearts and Headstones* on many different levels, including in friendships, relationships and within families. Discuss how love is represented throughout the novella, using examples as evidence.

Are there any other themes in *Hearts and Headstones* that you think are worth exploring? What are they and why?

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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PEEL Paragraph resources:

- Prezi by Jeremy Hart
- Virtual Library
- Best Custom Writing

Joseph Campbell's Monomyth resources:

- Joseph Campbell Foundation
- Science Fiction Writers Workshop
- What makes a hero? TED Ed

Infographic software:

- Canva
- Infogram
- Piktochart
- Venngage
- Adobe Spark

# FURTHER READING

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- *Whisper* (Whisper) by Lynette Noni
- *The Wishing Spell* (Land of Stories #1) by Chris Colfer
- *The Trials of Morrigan Crow* (Nevermoor #1) by Jessica Townsend
- *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (Harry Potter #1) by J.K. Rowling
- *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* (The Chronicles of Narnia #1) by C.S. Lewis
- *Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief* (The Percy Jackson Series #1) by Rick Riordan
- *The Iron Trial* (Magisterium #1) by Holly Black and Cassandra Clare

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

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