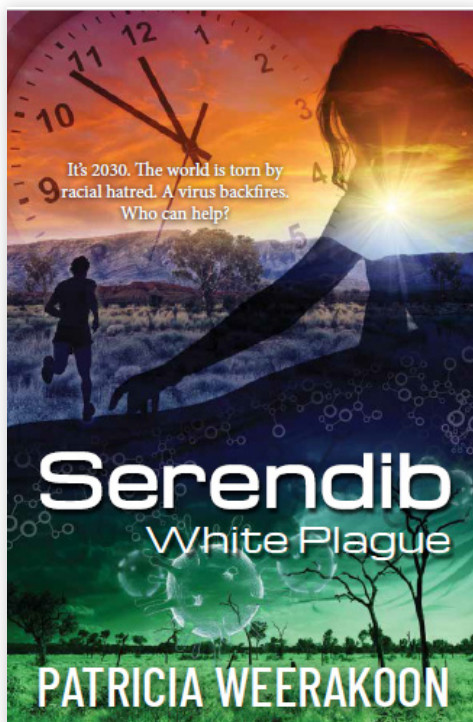




TEACHING NOTES



Serendib

By Patricia Weerakoon

ISBN: 9781761110986

Reading Level: 14+ years

It is 2030. The world is torn by racial and class disharmony teeters on the brink of disaster. A super-spreading virus is damaging the brains of everyone it infects. No, not everyone. It seems to be targeting people of one particular race. White people.

When Stephen and his parents become sick, Stephen is pulled forward in time to a completely different future. With the help of dark-skinned Ally, a telekinetic girl from the future Stephen can find out more about the plague hurting people— but it's 2131 and how will that benefit his time. Besides he must prove himself worthy first.

Themes

- Racism • Slavery • Persecution
- Friendship • Self-awareness • Benevolence • Consequences of greed

Key Curriculum Areas

English

Year 7 - ACELT1619, ACELT1620, ACELT1622

Year 8 - ACELT1628, ACELT1807

Year 9 - ACELT1633, ACELT1635

Year 10 - ACELT1639, ACELT1812

Science

Year 7 - ACSHE119, ACSHE223, ACSHE120, ACSHE121

Year 8 - ACSHE134, ACSHE226, ACSHE135, ACSHE136

HASS

Year 7 - ACHASSI152

Senior secondary curriculum Modern History Unit 1 The American Revolution (1763 – 1812) and Unit 2 Decolonisation.

Discussion Questions & Classroom Activities:

THEMES

Racism

1. How do you define 'racism'? Find three different expressions of racism in the book. How are these similar? And how are they different?
2. Ask students to write down instances/situations where they have experienced, observed or read about racism.
3. How have the instances of racism in the book affected their empathy and understanding of racism?
4. Discuss the roles of perpetrator, victim, bystander responsibility.

Slavery

1. How would you define the term 'slavery'?
2. Stephen travels to three places. Compare and contrast what he experiences in the three locations. Would you classify each as (i) Slavery? (ii) Persecution (ii) Something else? Discuss why or why not.
3. "There is no slavery in the world today" Have students discuss this statement
4. If age appropriate, have the students discuss modern day expressions of slavery. Eg: Forced labour, sex slavery, pornography production

Persecution

1. How would you define the term 'persecution'?
2. Stephen travels to three places. Compare and contrast what he experiences in the three locations. Would you classify each as (i) Slavery? (ii) Persecution (ii) Something else? Discuss why or why not.

Friendship

1. Plot the developing friendship between Stephen and Aletheia. What emotional stages do each go through? Assign word/phrases to describe how each feel at each stage of the developing friendship.
2. Do any of these resonate with how you have felt about developing friendships? If so, how?
3. Have students write down 200-word definition of friendship. How has reading this book influenced their understanding and expectations of friendship?

Self-awareness

1. How would you describe Stephens character at the beginning of the book? How would you describe his character at the end of the book?
2. What stages of 'character development' can you trace through the story?
3. What were the stimuli that assisted in each of these changes? Why?

Benevolence

1. List three words/phrases to describe the people (beati) of Serendib? How are these characteristics displayed by Saint Thomas? Aletheia? The 'Guardians'?
2. Have students explore modern day examples of self-sacrifice, altruism and benevolence.
3. Discuss what motivates people to these actions and what the consequences of these are.

Consequences of greed

1. "The Ellis family's role in this story follows a trajectory of greed – tragedy – repentance – redemption"
Would you agree with this statement? Why? Or why not?

About the Author

Patricia Weerakoon grew up on a tea plantation in Sri Lanka during the last days of the British colonial dominance. As the only daughter of conservative ethnic minority Tamil Christian parents, she was expected to agree to an arranged marriage and life as mother and wife. She however, married a boy from the ethnic majority Sinhalese and went on to study medicine. Since then she has worked as medical practitioner, academic and sexologist across three continents, Sri Lanka, Hawaii and now Australia. She retired in 2012 after a career as director of an internationally renowned graduate program in sexual health at the University of Sydney to pursue her passion for writing and public speaking.

Her fiction writing is a blend of Sci-Fi and romance with a backbone of social conscience. She brings to her writing her international experience in sexual health and passion for her birthland of Sri Lanka and homeland Australia.

Her nonfiction books are gold-standard guides for good sex for all ages.

Patricia has a recognised media presence and is a popular public speaker and social commentator in Australia.

Patricia lives in Sydney with her husband Vasantha, and her son Kamal a Presbyterian minister.

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Author Note

This is a story from the heart with a hope for the future.

My multiple-minority status has given me a good insight into issues of racial and social oppression. I grew up on a tea plantation in Sri Lanka during the last days of the British colonial dominance. I am of the Tamil ethnic minority in Sinhalese-majority Sri Lanka, and a Christian from a Buddhist-majority country. In Australia I have experienced the subtle racism of a coloured migrant in a predominantly white academic environment.

Currently, in retirement, I speak and write around sexuality and relationships. The themes of friendship and the use of social media for good are themes close to my heart.

