
Teachers' Notes

TEMORA AND THE DREAMERS

Kate Gordon

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Reading level: 7 to 12

BOOK SUMMARY

Temora Tempest used to think she was just a regular girl, but after making a wish on her twelfth birthday, she learns the truth: She's one of the wordspinners from the fantastical Lunary World, tasked with bringing stories and dreams to the children of the other realm. But with the Wordsnatcher on the loose, the stories of the wordspinners are at risk. When the Literi take over Lyfthelm Tower with their strange rulers and decrees, Temora knows something is wrong. As her power grows, Temora cannot ignore the threat, especially as more and more children are turned Wordless. Now, it's up to Temora and her group of friends to stop him and protect the realm from the Wordsnatcher's horrible machine.



THEMES

Origins • Forgiveness & Change • Perfection •

Humanity • Autonomy • Freedom • Family

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**Kate Gordon is available for author talks and workshops.
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Temora's Teachers' Notes can be used in schools (independent learning, small groups, and whole classes); at home with caregivers; and as part of mental health support programs facilitated by counsellors, psychologists, children's charities, etc.



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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Kate Gordon grew up in a small town by the sea in Tasmania.

Her first book, *Three Things About Daisy Blue* was published in the Girlfriend series by Allen and Unwin in 2010. Her second book, *Thyla*, was published by Random House Australia in April 2011 and her third book, *Vulpi*, the sequel to *Thyla*, was published in April 2012. Kate was the recipient of 2011 and 2012 Arts Tasmania Assistance to Individuals grants.

Writing Clementine was published in June 2014 by Allen and Unwin. It received the 2016 IBBY Ena Noel Award and was published in the German language by Random House, Germany. In 2018, Kate was shortlisted in the Dorothy Hewett Awards for an Unpublished Manuscript, and was commended in the 2018 Vogel's Awards.

The Heartsong of Wonder Quinn was published by UQP, in 2020. Megan Daley called the book "Just exquisite". Magpies Magazine called it "Haunting and beautiful". It was a CBCA Honour Book in 2021. Its companion books, *The Ballad of Melodie Rose* and *The Calling of Jackdaw Hollow* were published in 2021 and 2023.

The *Juno Jones*, *Word Ninja* books are a junior fiction series about books, friendship, alien lizard men, killer mermaids and an adventurous girl who definitely does not like reading. They are out now from Yellow Brick Books.

Girl Running, *Boy Falling* was released with Rhiza Edge in 2018. It is a story about grief, family, mental health and friendship, set in a small town in Tasmania. It has been long-listed in the 2019 CBCA Awards.

In 2019, Kate had her first picture book, *Bird on a Wire*, published by Hardie Grant. Her second picture book, *Amira's Magpie*, was published in 2021.

Aster's Good, Right Things was published by Yellow Brick Books in November, 2020. The second novel in the Aster series, *Xavier in the Meantime* was published in 2021.

Aster's Good, Right Things was the winner of the CBCA Book of the Year for younger readers in 2021. It was shortlisted in the Tasmanian Literary Awards in 2022.

Whalesong was published by Yellow Brick Books in 2022, following Kate's residency at the Maritime Museum of Tasmania. *Indigo in the Storm*, the third book in the Aster series, was published in 2023, alongside Kate's first fantasy novel, *Temora and the Wordsnatcher*. Its sequel, *Temora and the Dreamers*, will be published in late 2023.

Kate continues to write novels and picture books from a cottage overlooking the river and the mountain, on the Eastern Shore of Tasmania. She has two daughters, a cat and a very silly labradoodle.

REASONS FOR STUDYING THIS BOOK

The *Temora* series uses imagination and literature to explore self-belief, self-acceptance, and self-love. This ties into the ideas of belonging to a community, developing friendships in the midst of trauma, and drawing on one's own courage to move forward. At its heart the *Temora* series centers around a young girl and her own struggles and insecurities while also following an exciting fantasy narrative. It can help children navigate their own struggles with self-worth and image by encouraging them to bond and lean on their friends and peers.

KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

Curriculum Areas and Key Learning Outcomes.

YEAR FOUR

English, Humanities and Social Science, Health and Physical Education

ACELA1488	ACELT1603	ACELY1687	ACELY1675
ACHASSI077	ACHASSI081	ACHASSK072	
ACPPS033	ACPPS037	ACPPS038	

YEAR FIVE

English, Humanities and Social Science, Health and Physical Education

ACELT1608	ACELT1609	ACELT1610	ACELA1525
ACHASSI094	ACHASSI099		
ACPPS051	ACPPS060	ACPPS057	

YEAR SIX

English, Humanities and Social Science, Health and Physical Education

ACELT1613	ACELY1709	ACELY1801
ACHASSI127		
ACPPS051	ACPPS057	ACPPS060

YEAR SEVEN

English

ACELT1619	ACELT1620	ACELT1622	ACELT1621
ACELT1803	ACELY1722	ACELT1625	

TEACHING POINTS AND ACTIVITIES

This book may be used in whole class, small group or independent learning activities in schools.

Please note, the following suggestions and activities are suited to a variety of year levels spanning Foundation to Year 6 primary aged children. Some activities may be applicable to early secondary school students, as well.

KNOWLEDGE AND LITERAL UNDERSTANDING

PRE-READING QUESTIONS

1. Show the cover to the class and ask the students what they think the book might be about.
2. Read the back cover blurb. Does this give them more of an idea of what the book could be about?

AFTER-READING QUESTIONS

1. Ask students how they feel about Temora in this latest instalment. How has she changed from the first book in the series to this one?
2. How has the world changed from the first book to the second book? Is it better or worse?
3. Does Temora have new relationships in this book? How have her friendships developed?
4. What are some important ways in which Temora has learned about herself or the world around her?
5. The villain of this book is different from the first in the series. Who is the new villain? Is there more than one? What are the reasons behind their villainy?
6. What are Temora's powers? How did she get them? Does anyone else have powers and are they like Temora's or different?
7. There are a lot of family themes and issues in the book. Choose one family relationship and try to describe it.
8. If you could draw an alternative cover of Temora and the Dreamers, what would it look like?
9. What do you think might happen in the next book in the series? Why? Did you pick up on any foreshadowing?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

ORIGINS

- There are several villains in the Temora books so far - Rider Marr, Temora's safekeeper 'The Shadowy Woman', Viktor Lapointe, and so on. What makes a villain? What is it about these characters that makes them villainous?
- Is there a point in these villain characters' backstories and origins that contribute to them being villains? How did they become villains? What motivated them?
- Write a list of the characteristics of a good villain. Why did you pick those characteristics?
- Thinking about the origins of these villains and the origins of characters like Temora, Emmeline, and Lavenza - what is the difference between the characters that became villains and the characters that became heroes? Was it a matter of choices, of personalities, or of character qualities?

FORGIVENESS & CHANGE

- The question of forgiveness arises in Temora's story. Pick a character from the book who has hurt another, whether on purpose or by accident. Do they deserve to be forgiven? Why or why not?
- Can people change? What are some things that show a person's ability to change? How important is it that people want to change?
- What are some reasons you might not forgive someone? For example, should Temora forgive her safekeeper? Why or why not?

PERFECTION

Cambridge Dictionary defines perfection as 'the state of being complete and perfect in every way' and Miriam-Webster describes it as 'flawlessness'.

- Reflecting on these definitions consider what does being perfect mean to you?
- Would it be hard to be perfect? What are some of the ways in which being perfect would be stressful or hard?
- Is it more important to be perfect or to be kind? Are there other qualities or traits that are more important than being perfect? In what ways are other character traits more beneficial?
- Do you ever feel the need to be perfect? What things can you do to help yourself ease that pressure like Temora needed to learn to do?

HUMANITY

- Look up 'humanity' in the dictionary and discuss the meaning with a classmate. What words are used to describe being human? What qualities make us human?
- Think about what words you'd use to describe animals. What qualities do animals have?
- What then are the differences between humans and animals? What separates humans from other

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creatures?

- Does being human give us any more obligations or responsibilities?

AUTONOMY

Think about the following statement that describes what autonomy is: As a person you have self-will, independence, and control over your own body and mind. You can choose what you want to say, you can make your own decisions, you are not forced to do anything, you can think for yourself. You have what we call autonomy.

- What would it mean to not have autonomy? What would that feel like?
- Think about the wordless in the book - do they have autonomy? Is this a good or bad thing?
- What about the dreamers? Do they have autonomy?
- Think about autonomy and how it might apply to your own life and interactions. Consider the term 'boundaries' and the phrase 'Just because someone else wants you to do something does not mean you have to do it.' Discuss as a class if it's okay to say 'no' to something, what boundaries mean to you, and how things like 'peer pressure' might affect you.
- Consider what responsibilities come with having your own autonomy and how that relates to consequences for your actions. The freedom to make your own choices comes with the responsibility of what those choices mean. How does this relate to characters like Rider Marr, Nyx, Temora, Lavenza and Temora's safekeeper? Choose one and explore their actions and consequences.

FREEDOM

- The Literati are an oppressive government. Think through their rules and governance and how it differs from our government. What are the differences? In what ways do they restrict freedoms?
- Think through the term 'freedom.' What does real freedom mean?
- Are there any ways in which we need to consider freedom versus law? How do our laws keep us safe? Why is the Literati oppressive but our government not?
- Many refugees migrate because of freedom and opportunities. What are some ways in which our government supports rights and freedoms that might not be present in an oppressive system?

FAMILY

- There are a few different types of family connections in this book. What are the differences between biological families, adoptive families and found families? How would you define each of these family types?
- How is Temora's relationship with her safekeeper not the same as a traditional adoptive mother? In what ways would their relationship have changed if Temora's adoptive mother was a real person and not a false narrative construction?
- Who is Temora's found family? How did she create her found family?
- Reflect on Temora finding out who her biological family is and how that helps her work through her

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own feelings. What are some of the reasons this might be helpful after what she's been through? Some elements to consider are Temora's trauma, her powers and her questions about her identity and place in the world.

- What might it mean for Lavenza to reconnect with her brother and sister after so many years missing them? Do you think Ava and Elwin were right to hide away, or not? Is Lavenza in the right to be upset? Or are both points of view valid? Explain your thoughts and conclusions.

ACTIVITIES

DRAWING & DESIGN

- Draw a picture of one of the characters in the book.
- Draw one of the creatures in the book.
- Draw a picture of 'The Tower' if it was going to reflect your personality.
- Design your own character or creature for the book and write down a list of their personality traits.

CREATING A WORLD

- If you could pick one book to 'fall into', what would it be? Why did you choose that book?
- If you could introduce one magical creature to Writungeard, from a book you love, what would it be and why?
- Using those reasons create your own world for someone to 'fall into' and your own creatures to inhabit it. What is your world like? Why would it be fun to fall into? What is interesting about your creatures? You can use one of the creations from the previous activity here if you'd like.
- Research a foreign or ancient language. Create a 'word spell' using that language for your world.
- If you would like to take it further, and you have the time, you can write your own story about your world.