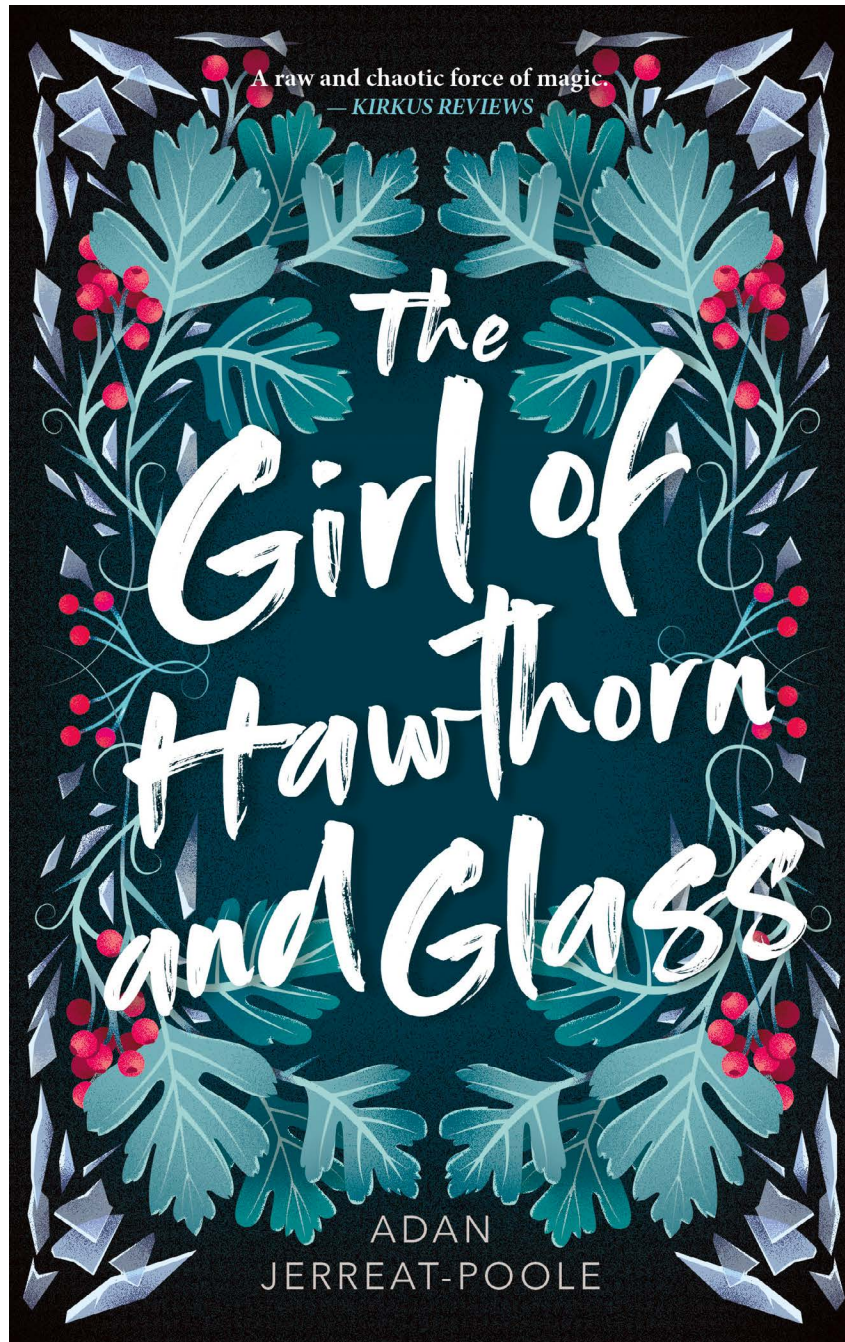


# TEACHER'S GUIDE



By Alison Isaac






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# I • SUMMARY

We first meet Eli while she's on assignment in the City of Ghosts — she's an assassin and it's her job to hunt ghosts. When she sees her mark, she follows him into the washroom and kills him with one of the seven living blades she carries around her waist under her glamour (disguise). But as she watches his bloody body on the floor, she realizes he wasn't a ghost, he was a human. Confused, she escapes and is transported back home to the City of Eyes via the Vortex.

Her “mother,” a witch named Circinae who made her, is waiting. Circinae tells Eli that Kite, a young witch whom Eli has befriended, was asking for her. Eli slips through her bedroom window and heads off to find Kite.

On her way, Eli has a flashback to when Kite and Eli first met. Eli had run away from Circinae and gotten lost. Kite called to Eli and allowed her to enter the secret Children's Lair. Now, Eli takes the secret path to find Kite. When they reunite, Eli tells Kite she's worried that she may be unmade because of what happened on the mission, but she doesn't specify that she may have killed a human. She says, “Circinae will kill me,” to which Kite responds, “It wouldn't be the first time, but we can stop her.” Eli pries, but Kite will only tell her it was something she came across in the Coven library, which leads to an argument. The two had once planned to run away together, but Kite never showed up, and that memory continues to poison their time together. As Eli turns to leave, Kite stops her to tell her she has been summoned to the Coven. Eli leaves on a sour note.

Eli goes to the Coven with Circinae, where she's given a new assignment. The mark's name is Virginia White. Eli also learns that Circinae has had other daughters, and Eli wonders what happened to them.

Eli is transported back to the City of Ghosts. When she lands, she's approached by someone with brown skin and purple spikes in their hair who asks if she's okay, which surprises her because she isn't supposed to be noticed by humans. The person introduces themselves as Tav and they offer to give Eli a ride on their motorcycle. After a short stop at a café, Tav takes Eli to a hill just past the city limits for a magical view. Eli notices her blades vibrating. After chatting, Eli realizes Tav can see what she really looks like, even though she still has her glamour on. Eli is shocked and takes off on Tav's motorcycle.

Eli ditches Tav's bike and cellphone on a side street after looking up Virginia White and calling an Uber to take her the rest of the way. The driver, an East-Asian man with a “French-villain-meets-hipster” moustache, takes her out to the suburbs to find her mark and offers to wait for her. His words suggest he knows she's on a mission. She tells him not to wait and makes a note to hunt him down later to find out what else he knows.

Eli finds her mark sleeping in bed. She pricks the bottom of her foot, expecting to see the smoke, iron, or scales that ghosts bleed. Instead, red seeps out and her mark wakes up screaming. The woman's name is Jennifer White. Her mother, Virginia, died the previous year. Eli realizes that the woman is human and lets her escape before running away herself. Eli's Uber driver pulls up and offers to help her. He introduces himself as Cam and takes her downtown.

Once free of Cam, Eli tries to transport herself back home to the City of Eyes, but the Vortex freezes. She is stuck in a block of black ice for an indeterminable amount of time. When she smells saltwater, she realizes Kite has come for her. As Kite moves toward her, Eli smells Circinae and the two witches fight over Eli. Eli is unsure what their motives are. Circinae tells Eli to “finish what you started,” and pushes Eli back into the human world.

Cam reappears and tells Eli he wants to show her something. He takes Eli to “headquarters,” a café called The Sun. There, she meets the group Cam works with, which to her surprise includes Tav. There is also a rogue witch, who introduces herself as the Hedge-Witch. The final member of the party is a ghost, which disgusts Eli.

They ask for Eli’s help. The Hedge-Witch explains that controls between worlds are tightening; Eli isn’t the only one who’s been denied entry. Witches are abandoning the Earth for some reason. Tav and Cam are to be sent on a mission to the other side, and they need Eli as a guide. The Hedge-Witch adds that she thinks Eli has a human mother whose DNA was used in her making. Eli reminds them that she can no longer travel between worlds, and the Hedge-Witch responds by saying she has her own methods of travel and can get Eli there. Once there, Eli must not only protect Cam and Tav, she must also get them to the Coven to complete their task. Eli agrees.

Eli, Cam, and Tav get to the City of Eyes, but they land in the wastelands. The three of them walk in a straight line for hours. The flirtatious energy between Eli and Tav intensifies. During a rest period, Eli notices that a magic stone that pushes Cam away welcomes Tav. She finally asks Tav who they are, and she learns that Tav has had a hard time, having been discriminated against for their skin colour and gender pronouns. Tav speaks of how difficult things have gotten for immigrants, queer folk, and people of colour. The ghost from their crew at The Sun had defended Tav against a group of stoned teenagers. Tav speaks of being able to see magic — unusual for a human — and wanting to fix their city.

The group meet a number of challenges in the wastelands, some of which are brought on by Eli’s nightmares, which become real. Eli tells the others that the only way out is to walk straight in any direction for one hundred thousand steps. While Cam and Eli argue about the validity of the plan, Tav steps forward into a dead patch and disappears. Eli and Cam follow Tav.

They pass through the barrier and come across a large junkyard, but they don’t see Tav. Cam finds a metal rod that he decides to keep for protection. Shortly afterward, a vicious windstorm hits, almost killing Cam.

Cam tells the story of how he met the Hedge-Witch: he had fallen in love with a witch boy who had come to Earth. Cam willingly became one of the human spies the Coven uses to keep track of renegade witches and assassins. One day, the boy disappeared and Cam never heard from him again. A few months after the boy left, the Coven tasked Cam with investigating a runaway witch who had come to the world and stayed. Cam found the Hedge-Witch but was won over by the healing magic of The Sun and the Hedge-Witch’s speeches about peace and harmony. Upon hearing Cam’s story, Eli tells him that the Coven sent her to Earth to kill a human, but she doesn’t know why.

A few hours after the storm, Eli and Cam reach the centre of the junkyard where strands of magic run together and touch, like the centre of a spiderweb. They climb it and see Tav in the distance. When they reunite, Eli gives Tav her obsidian blade for protection in case they get separated again. When Tav takes it, the blade actively cuts them, even though the blade wasn't made to harm "corporeals." Eli is left wondering what Tav is.

While resting and chatting, things heat up between Eli and Tav. Eli kisses them and a number of things happen at once: Cam wakes up, there's a fire, and Eli's heart stops beating.

When Eli awakes, she's with Clytemnestra and there's a key pendant hanging around her neck. She also notices that her blades are gone. Clytemnestra tells her that they got her heart working again with a little magic and blood, so she owes her, and then Clytemnestra disappears. Eli recognizes The Labyrinth, and is led to a room where she finds her blades, Cam, and Tav.

Clytemnestra tells them she wants a gift, and Tav gives her Cam's metal rod. Clytemnestra tells Eli that the junkyard was the portal. When Eli says she doesn't remember opening it, Clytemnestra says, "the magic one" did. Eli asks Tav how they did it and they say they don't know, they just panicked and grabbed the magic threads.

While chatting about Eli's close call, Tav tells her the goal of their mission: to steal the Heart of the Coven. They want to use the magic to make a positive difference in their world. Eli tells Tav she can take them to the Coven but can't promise anything else. She goes to see Clytemnestra and asks why she gave her the key. Clytemnestra says the Warlord thought it might be useful.

While joking around, Cam calls Tav "White," and Eli learns that that is Tav's surname. Shortly after, they run into Kite, pressed into a wall like a fossil. Seeing Kite again brings up the painful memory of when they were supposed to run away from the City of Eyes together, but Kite didn't show up. Eli is left with the realization that as the Heir of the Witch Lord, Kite would never leave their world.

Eli helps release Kite from the wall, but Kite tells her she was hiding, and then explains what happened when Eli was caught between two worlds in the Vortex: there were rumours that some Coven members felt it was dangerous to cross between worlds so frequently, and some had hoped the made-girls would fail at their missions. Kite had been sent by the Coven with a blade that would turn Eli back to her original state if it pierced her heart. When Kite entered the Vortex, she went to touch Eli to give her some of her essence, knowing the magic would bring Eli back to the City of Eyes safely. But when Kite approached her, Eli refused to take her hand. Circinae had somehow been tipped off about the plan and gone to the Vortex as well, although Kite isn't sure why she went. Eventually, Kite was thrown out of the Vortex. She later received a summons from the Coven and fled to where Eli found her, hidden.

When Kite finishes her story, Eli feels something on her chest and realizes that Kite has pricked her with the knife from the Coven. However, Eli isn't unmade because Kite didn't pierce Eli's heart. Kite tells her she didn't want to do it, it was a compulsion, but Eli isn't sure she can trust her.



While Tav is resting, Eli forces herself to stay awake. She feels drawn to Tav's body. One part of her says she should send them back to Earth, afraid they won't make it out of the Coven alive, but another part of her mind is telling her she should kill them — she's a tool of the Coven and must finish the mission she started. Cam intervenes, realizing that Tav is Eli's mark, and Tav wakes up. Eli feels overcome with shame and flees.

Eli goes home to confront Circinae and get answers about who she really is. Circinae tells her how she was made and that she has no other mother. Eli knows the Hedge-Witch lied to her to capture Eli's interest so that she'd help them. Circinae then leads Eli to the top of a tall, magical staircase where they can look out over the world. When Circinae asks Eli to look out at the City of Ghosts, Eli realizes that the Earth is bleeding essence — it's dying.

Circinae explains that the same thing happened to the Moon. The Coven got greedy and stole all of its magic. She also explains that the ghosts are traces of the dead Moon people — lost souls, spells, and sorrow. Now the witches are killing the Earth and planning to move to another galaxy. Circinae says she tried to keep Eli safe by proving that her kind is still useful.

Circinae tells Eli she was inducted into the third ring of the Coven and they've been watching through her eyes for weeks. She didn't know at first, and she couldn't stop them.

Eli renounces Circinae and, determined not to give up her friends, decides to sacrifice herself and then throws her blades out into the galaxy. She passes out from lack of blood, and when she wakes up, one of the wings of the Coven is staunching the flow of blood from her arm. Eli hears her name called, but responds, "Who's Eli?" to free herself from her past and her future.

Circinae pushes the girl with no name off the platform in the sky. When she lands, she sees a blue girl (Kite) who transports her through another magic door where she joins a man she identifies as having a drooping moustache (Cam) and a person with purple hair (Tav). The girl with no name realizes she's missing her blades and they go looking for them.

The search for the blades leads them into the forest, where they smell a tree burning. They see someone standing under a giant elm with her hands pressed against the trunk, forcing heat into it. Kite recognizes her as a member of the Coven. They confront the witch and, in a close call, are able to defeat her thanks to Tav's magic.

They find the girl's seven blades in a cavern. She spends time licking each one, drinking the memories she had lost. When she's done, Eli rejoins the group and gives Tav her obsidian blade for protection. This time it doesn't hurt them. Eli fills them in on what she learned about the Earth.

They have a confrontation with a faceless being that calls itself the Guardian, who orders them to turn back or die. Eli goes up against the Guardian and one of her blades is crushed. The Guardian is defeated with help from Cam and Tav. They find the Heart, but Eli realizes something is wrong: the magic wasn't designed to keep her out, it was meant to keep her in. Eli and her friends are encircled by a ring of white flame, and Kite announces that she brought them as a gift for the Witch Lord.

Eli remembers words from Kite and Circinae: “The Heart is hungry” and “We feed broken weapons to the Heart.” Eli decides to take a chance and she touches the heart. She sees some of her own bark burning and peeling off. When the pain subsides, Eli sees a series of visions that seem to come from the Heart. Her body starts to glow, and Tav hands Eli her obsidian blade. She cuts through the shared essences of the first ring and causes the witches to flee. When Eli returns the obsidian blade to Tav, she shares some of the Heart’s power with them. They create a door and escape.

Eli and her friends end up in the Children’s Lair with Clytemnestra, who takes them to the war party, where she identifies herself as the Warlord. She announces that the Labyrinth has been under attack for a long time, so it is time for the children to come out of hiding and begin their open attack on the Coven. Clytemnestra also announces that they have captured the Heart and that Eli and her companions have brought them an old weapon: Cam’s rod. Clytemnestra sends them all back to the human world.

Back in the City of Ghosts, Eli is staying at Cam and Tav’s apartment. At one point, she looks down and is reminded she’s missing two blades: one destroyed, the other with the person she can’t stop thinking about. While the three of them are in the kitchen, Tav notices that Eli flickers — she somewhat disappears for a second. Eli laughs it off.

Meanwhile at The Sun, the Hedge-Witch and her crew of humans wonder what happened to Eli, Tav, and Cam. The humans are worried — they need the Coven’s magic to change the world. Tav’s ghost friend isn’t there and the Hedge-Witch wonders if he will still work with her, without Tav. The Hedge-Witch knows that something has changed.

A girl walks into the room with two swords strapped to her back. She is a made-thing, like Eli, a project the Hedge-Witch recently finished. The Hedge-Witch sends her off to find Eli.



## II • PRE-READING ACTIVITIES

### On Genre

*The Girl of Hawthorn and Glass* is a fantasy novel. Before getting started, it's important to review literary genres to ensure all students are starting with the same context. Novels are, by definition, works of fiction. Fantasy novels may be inspired by mythology and may incorporate magical elements and invented worlds. Fantasy novels may also be referred to as speculative fiction, similar to science fiction, and dystopian novels. These terms are not mutually exclusive.

#### Tips for reading fantasy:

- Be patient through the initial confusion
- Figure out how the setting and characters work together
- Take note of the “rules” of this new world

### Key Terms and Definitions

The purpose of this section is to familiarize students with key literary and sociological ideas that may be useful in understanding and analyzing *The Girl of Hawthorn and Glass*. It may also be used to springboard a discussion about how to discuss certain topics in a way that is respectful and welcoming to all students.

In groups or individually, have students research and come up with definitions for the following:

- Social justice
- Equity
- Activism
- Literary lenses
- Literary criticism
- Literary theory
- Sociology
- Social constructs
- Feminism
- Gender
- Gender identity
- Gender performance
- Gender binary
- Transgender
- Sexual orientation and sexual identity
- Queer (as it relates to sexual and gender identity)
- Non-binary

- LGBTQ (identify two initialism variants and explain them)
- Discrimination
- Racism
- Anti-oppression theory
- Critical race theory
- Metamorphosis
- Ideology
- Norms
- Stereotypes
- Matriarchy
- Patriarchy
- Homophobia
- Transphobia
- Intersectionality
- Climate justice

When the allotted time is up, go over the terms as a class, ensuring all students have the same understanding. This may also be a good time to talk about/revisit class agreements and expectations (i.e., respectful language, etc.) going forward.

## Seeing Society: Sociology

Crash Course has a number of videos on sociology: [thecrashcourse.com/courses/sociology?page=2](https://thecrashcourse.com/courses/sociology?page=2). The first two videos in the series, “What Is Sociology?” and “Major Sociological Paradigms,” are especially relevant here.

Sociology is the study of people and society. The American Public University describes the following as the key principles of sociology ([apuedge.com/the-principles-of-sociology/](https://apuedge.com/the-principles-of-sociology/)):

1. Social interaction is the basis for the construction of societies.
2. How we interact with one another reflects what we believe and what we value as group members.
3. Societies are organized into distinct social units (e.g., family, government, education, and religion) that tell us what the rules are.
4. Our patterns of behaviour reveal unequal social relationships.
5. Social change is a necessary and essential part of our survival.
6. We must attempt to explain our social behaviour.
7. We must strive to provide evidence that supports our claims about social behaviour.
8. We can use our scientific work to improve the human social condition.

By examining social constructions of reality and the impact of social context on human behaviour, you can begin to develop a sociological perspective, or sociological imagination.

There are three main sociological perspectives (also known as paradigms). Knowing the three major theoretical perspectives in sociology (functionalism, conflict theory, and symbolic interactionism) and how to apply them can help you better understand social behaviour and its consequences. Looking at the world in *The Girl of Hawthorn and Glass* through a sociological lens will add layers to your understanding of the book. You'll find a summary of each below.

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## The Structural-Functionalist Perspective

Parts of a social system work together to maintain a balance.

- Functions are actions that have positive consequences
- Dysfunctions are actions that have negative consequences
- Manifest functions are intended
- Latent functions are unintended

**Related words/ideas:** balance, collaboration, harmony, function, roles

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## The Conflict Perspective

Society is held together by those who have power at that moment in time.

- Power allows some to dominate others
- Dominance leads to conflict
- Conflict and change are inevitable
- Conflict holds society together as new alliances are formed and others fail

**Related words/ideas:** tension, inequality, dominance, power

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## The Symbolic Interaction Perspective

Individuals construct the nature of their social world through social interaction.

- Social life is possible only because humans can communicate through symbols
- All human communications take place through the perception and interpretation of symbols
- How people define situations is important
- There is a general consensus on how situations are defined
- We do not respond directly to reality but to the symbolic meanings we attach to the real world

**Related words/ideas:** communication, symbols, meaning, interaction

## Paradigms in Sociology

There are a number of charts online that compare the three paradigms. Here is one example from Delta State University:

PARADIGMS IN SOCIOLOGY			
	FUNCTIONALIST	CONFLICT	INTERACTIONIST
<b>View of Society</b>	Stable, well integrated	Tension and struggle between groups	Affects everyday social interaction
<b>Level of Analysis</b>	Macrosociology	Macrosociology	Microsociology
<b>Key Concepts</b>	Manifest and latent Functions Dysfunctions	Inequality Capitalism Stratification	Symbols Nonverbal Communication Face-to-face interactions
<b>View of the Individual</b>	People are socialized to perform social functions	People are shaped by power, coercion, and authority	People manipulate symbols to create their social worlds
<b>View of Social Order</b>	Co-operative, maintained through consensus	Coercive, maintained through force	Maintained through shared understandings
<b>View of Social Change</b>	Predictable, reinforcing	Change may have positive consequences	Reflected in individual social position, communication among individuals
<b>Example</b>	Laws reinforce the social order	Laws reinforce the interests of those in power	People respect or violate laws based on past experiences
<b>Proponents</b>	Émile Durkheim Talcott Parsons Robert Merton	Karl Marx W.E.B. Du Bois Ida Wells-Barnett	George Herbert Mead Charles Horton Cooley Erving Goffman

For example, looking at the novel through the Conflict perspective would mean focusing on the theme of power in their society — who has it, who doesn't, the problems that arise because of the imbalance of power, etc. If you were to look at their society through the Symbolic Interaction perspective, you would focus on the symbols and the meaning given to different things in their world. In the After-Reading section of this resource, you will find instructions for an assignment in which readers are challenged to look at the fantasy world in the book through the eyes of a sociologist. Spend some time grounding students in the main tenets of sociology first.

# Judging a Book by Its Cover

The Ontario Curriculum document states:

Media Studies focuses on the art, meaning, and messaging of various forms of media texts. Media texts can be understood to include any work, object, or event that communicates meaning to an audience. Most media texts use words, graphics, sounds, and/or images, in print, oral, visual, or electronic form, to communicate information and ideas to their audience. Whereas traditional English language study may be seen to focus primarily on the understanding of the word, media studies focuses on the construction of meaning through the combination of several media “languages” — images, sounds, graphics, and words.

The Ontario Ministry of Education has outlined five key concepts of media literacy, which will be useful for students in examining the cover of the book, and in creating their own cover and related media for the After-Reading activities:

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## 1. All Media Are Constructions

**Ask:** How has this message been constructed? How close is it to reality?

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## 2. Media Contain Belief and Value Messages

**Ask:** What lifestyles, values, and points of view are represented in, or have been omitted from, this message?

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## 3. Each Person Interprets Messages Differently

**Ask:** What meaning do you get from the message? How might others interpret this message differently?

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## 4. Media Have Commercial, Ideological, or Political Interests

**Ask:** Who created this message and why? Who may benefit from the message?  
Who may be disadvantaged?

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## 5. Each Medium Has Its Own Language, Style, Form, Techniques, Conventions, and Aesthetics

**Ask:** What techniques have been used and why?

With students, discuss the broader meaning of the terms “media” and “text” and how this relates to the idea of media literacy. Have students take a closer look at the cover of *The Girl of Hawthorn and Glass*. As a group discussion or in a written response, ask them to consider the combination of elements on the cover and why they were used, while using the key concepts above as a framework. How does this cover compare to other books in the Young Adult Fantasy genre?

## Reading Is Thinking: Journaling

One of the words you were asked to define was “metamorphosis.” On the back cover, we learned that this is the first book of the Metamorphosis duology. We can infer that transformation is going to be a theme.

One of the beautiful things about art, books included, is that it can change us. For the duration of this novel, you are going to keep a journal to track the changes that take place in you; the shifts in your thinking and understanding of plot, characters, their world, and ours. Upon completion, you may be asked to turn in your journal — in part or in full.

Remember, journaling is NOT summarizing. You will be evaluated on the quality of your thoughts, such as the questions you pose and answer. Here are examples of some of the reading strategies you may want to use in your journal:

- Making predictions
- Making connections
- Asking and answering questions
- Making inferences
- Synthesizing information

There will also be reading comprehension and discussion questions that you may choose to incorporate.



# III • DURING-READING ACTIVITIES

## Initial Questions for Understanding

The following questions are meant to lead students into the story and help them establish the connection between characters, setting, and the rules of the fantasy world. They may be answered orally or in writing as part of students' journaling activity.

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### Who is telling this story?

- Who seems to be telling the story at the start?
  - What elements and pronouns help the reader figure out the point of view?
  - How full or partial is the narrator's point of view?
- 

### Who are the characters?

- Who is the protagonist?
  - Who are the other major or minor characters?
  - What are the characters like and how do we know?
- 

### Where are we/they?

- Where does the action take place?
- What does the narrator tell us about this place?
- What are the rules? How is this world similar to ours? How is it different?

## Exploring Characterization

When developing plot, fiction writers try to create characters that feel real while maintaining the right amount of tension to keep things interesting for the reader.

To do this, writers create major characters that have needs and/or desires and barriers or conflicts that get in their way. We also learn about characters through experiences that shape their perspectives and personalities.

With minor characters, we don't get as much depth. Because we aren't privy to their inner thoughts, authors include information about their inner thinking in their actions and dialogue. Understanding the narrator as first, second, or third person and limited/partial or full/omniscient helps us understand what information we may or may not get from the narrator about the characters. From there, we use evidence from the text to infer and draw conclusions.

The following chart is meant to help students better understand the characters and the decisions the author made in creating them.

# Exploring Characterization Handout

Complete the chart with information as you read, adding as many characters and examples as needed.

CHARACTER TYPE	EVIDENCE FROM TEXT (INCLUDING PAGE NUMBERS)
<p><b>Major Character(s):</b></p> <p>Pay attention to and make note of their needs and desires, what gets in their way, and the experiences that shape their perspectives.</p>	<p><b>Character 1:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Examples and Quotes from Text:</b></p>
	<p><b>Character 2:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Examples and Quotes from Text:</b></p>
<p><b>Minor Character(s):</b></p> <p>Pay attention to and make note of their dialogue, actions, and behaviours.</p>	<p><b>Character 1:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Examples and Quotes from Text:</b></p>
	<p><b>Character 2:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Examples and Quotes from Text:</b></p>
	<p><b>Character 3:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Examples and Quotes from Text:</b></p>

## Mapping a World

The world in the novel is similar to ours but different in a number of ways. Throughout the novel, the location changes several times. Have students create a graphic organizer (such as a chart) to help themselves keep track of the multiple locations and environments and the rules associated with them.

# Reading Comprehension and Discussion Questions

## FIRST HALF (p. 1–151)

1. Consider this quote from page 15, where it says Eli “watched her mother for a glimmer of betrayal — sometimes if you looked closely you could see the true intention in the movements of the people who were supposed to love you.” Based on this quote, what might you infer about the relationship Eli has with her mother, Circinae? Is there other textual evidence you could use to support your thinking? What might you infer about the type of character Eli is? Her mother?
2. When Kite didn’t meet her to run away as they had planned, Eli is left hurt and angry. When they see each other again, the last thing Eli says to her is: “Go back to your people and leave me alone.” How did you interpret this? How did it make you feel about Eli?
3. What is your understanding of Kite and Eli’s relationship?
4. How does Eli feel about humans in general? What makes you think that?
5. The narrator uses the pronoun “they” for Tav. Why?
6. On page 71, it says, “Eli didn’t know whom she wanted to win. Her mother was selfish and, like all witches, valued power and purpose over sentiment. But Kite, too, was growing into her destiny. Each had strong ties to the Coven. Each, in their own way, loved her.” Based on what you know about Eli’s relationships with her mother and Kite, do you agree or disagree?
7. On page 74, it says, “curious young women are dangerous — especially when heavily armed.” What do you think the author means? How might this statement apply to our world? Do you consider this statement to be a feminist one?
8. Eli seems to have a lot of “human” emotions. Does this align with the type of beings that exist in Eli’s society? Why might the author have written her this way?
9. Eli is made of glass and stone, among other things. Thinking symbolically, how is this reflected in her personality?
10. Consider the following excerpt from page 87: “*They think the ghost is a person*, Eli realized, the sickening feeling growing in her stomach. She had encountered ghost fanatics before — the ones that swore they had souls or consciousness. Some radical young witches even hypothesized that they were a newly evolved form.” Is Eli right or wrong to think this way? What parallels can you draw between her world and ours?
11. At one point, Eli curses herself “for thinking violence was her only currency, when information could be so much more valuable.” In your opinion, which is more valuable, or powerful? Are value and power the same thing?
12. On page 93, the Hedge-Witch says to the group, “The rest of you — stay safe and stay alert. The Sun is always open to you if you need shelter. We know that hate groups are becoming bolder and that the human cops are not on our side. But they will not win, and soon we will be strong enough to fight back.” While the Hedge-Witch is speaking, Eli notices that “across the room, Tav’s face had hardened. Their pupils glittered like black onyx, and Eli felt a chill deep in her bones.... It was the look of a person who was ready to fight.” What is your understanding of this scene? How does it affect your feelings about Tav and the group?

13. On page 105, Eli learns that the Hedge-Witch doesn't work for the Coven. Knowing this, why do you think the Hedge-Witch chose to trust Eli and welcome her on their mission?
14. In many cultures, names have meaning and they are given or adopted based on that meaning. Considering the names of the characters in the book — Eli, Circinae, Clytemnestra, Kite, Cam, Tav — would you say the same is true for their world? Why might the author have chosen these names for their characters? Is there anything else you noticed about the names?
15. In the wastelands, plants have feelings, power, and magic. How similar or different is this from the natural environment in our world?
16. On page 120, Tav tells Eli, "Your world isn't the only dangerous one, you know." What do they mean? Would you say the same based on our world? When the text says, "Their shadow fell over Eli's face like a door being shut," what do you infer about Tav and their experience?
17. On pages 127–29, through an intimate conversation between Eli and Tav, we learn more about them and their experiences. Why is this section significant to the story?
18. Tav describes their human city as being "broken." Would you describe yours in the same way? In general terms, what works and what's broken? Who, or what groups, might disagree with you? How might you fix the parts that are broken?
19. "You want to fix the city or break it," Eli asks Tav on page 131, to which they respond, "Sometimes they're the same thing." Activists and social justice groups have long called for the abolition of prisons and, more recently, the defunding of police. The Ontario Federation of Labour has a comprehensive page on the issue: [ofl.ca/defund-the-police-faq](http://ofl.ca/defund-the-police-faq). After reading about the issue (via the OFL page and/or others), take a position: Should police forces be defunded? What else might people say needs to be "broken" in order to be fixed?
20. What is your understanding of what's happening on page 134?
21. How do Eli's feelings about humans change after experiencing the wastelands with Cam and Tav?

## **SECOND HALF (p. 152–309)**

1. On page 153, when Cam says Eli was trained to kill people, she corrects him by saying, "Ghosts, not people," but she's an assassin. Why do you think it's important for her to make the distinction between killing ghosts and killing people? What do you think about this distinction?
2. Eli has been warned against feeling strong emotions, and when she kisses Tav, she's hit by lightning. Can strong emotions be dangerous in our world, too? How so?
3. What do you think of Tav's comment, "Maybe chaos is better than violent order," on page 168?
4. On page 175, Cam says, "Words have power here," to which Tav responds, "They have power everywhere." How do words have power in our world?
5. Consider Eli's words on page 184, "There aren't rules, just agreements. Sometimes those agreements are based on force — you can make a lion jump through a hoop if you scare and hurt him enough. You can do the same thing here. Other agreements are based on mutual respect, and those tend to be more powerful. But they take longer." How would you explain the difference between rules and agreements? What are some examples? Are there times when people should be forced into agreements or rules? If so, when?

6. While talking about survival, Kite says it's hard, even for those of them born into magic. Eli corrects her, saying on page 195, "Power. You were born into power." What does it mean to have been born into power, in their world and ours?
7. When Cam calls Kite "Eli's ex," were you surprised? Why or why not? What does your surprise (or lack of surprise) say about you and about the text?
8. What is "compulsion"? Do you believe Kite when she says she didn't mean to hurt Eli, or should she be held accountable for her behaviour? Does "compulsion" happen in our world? How is it the same, or different?
9. On page 209, Eli says, "Not everything that's dangerous deserves to die!" Do you agree or disagree? Why?
10. While stuck underground, Eli learns to make friends with fear. She takes the fear and makes it into a weapon. How does one make friends with fear? Who else in the novel has made friends with fear and turned it into a weapon?
11. On page 219, Eli says, "You belong somewhere, and you have people who care about you. Maybe you shouldn't be gambling that," after which "Eli felt a surge of anger tremor through her body." How does this passage add to our understanding of Eli?
12. On pages 227–28, Circinae says, "It wasn't supposed to be like this. Our world can't exist alone, but it can exist in harmony with other worlds — by sharing magic, by combining organic and inorganic materials, by adapting and evolving and changing. By dying. But the Coven learned how to live forever. They devour a world, drinking its essence, and then move on to another." What is this analogous to in our world?
13. Why is it important for Eli to renounce her name and lose her memory?
14. How would you explain the threads of magic that exist in Eli's world? What do they do? How do they work? What are some of their significant characteristics?
15. Why do you think the author made the library and the forest significant locations in the story?
16. What is a "deadname"? How does it play into this story?
17. What role does emotion play in this book?
18. How do Eli's relationships affect her?
19. If this writing were a representation of the author's views on the environment in our world, what would you say their views are?
20. Based on the characters we meet, we can infer that the City of Eyes, in which witches rule, is matriarchal. Do you see this as a feminist statement from the author, or not? Explain.
21. In one of the final scenes with Eli on page 305, it says, "She thought about the way trauma bleeds over edges, across bodies and stars and planets. She thought about the dying Earth and her dead mother and the two hearts that burned in her alien body. She thought about how much would have to change for the violence to end and wondered if three small bodies could really mend a broken world." What do you think of this passage? Can a few small bodies mend a broken world?



# Getting to Know Adan

## Author Biography

Spend some time researching the author, Adan Jerreat-Poole. Who are they? How might the author's identity and experience have informed their work? Collect pertinent information and write their biography (approximately 500 words).

## Author Interview

In an interview with the School of Disability Studies at Ryerson University, Jerreat-Poole says, "For me, the personal is always political." What do you think they mean? Knowing this, how has your understanding of Jerreat-Poole enriched your understanding of the novel? Now that you know they have an interest in disability studies, where do you see evidence of that in the novel? How about feminism?

Finally, come up with five open-ended questions to ask the author.

# IV • AFTER-READING ACTIVITIES

## Socratic Seminars

A Socratic seminar is a teaching strategy that facilitates student discussion about a text, to help further their understanding. As the name suggests, it was named after the philosopher Socrates. Here is some additional information and an explanation on how it works.

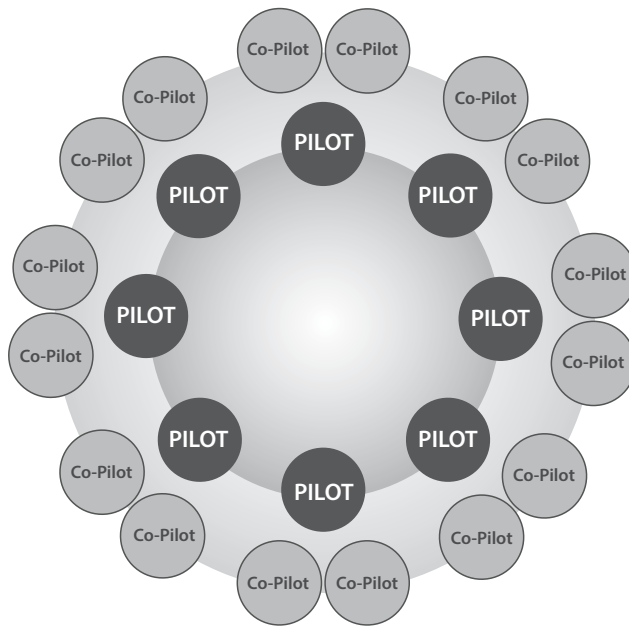
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### Socrates:

- *Philosopher* is a word which means “lover of wisdom,” or a person who seeks knowledge to make good/fair decisions.
  - Socrates was known for engaging people in deep, meaningful conversation at the *agora*, or city centre.
  - He was eventually accused of “impiety and corrupting the youth” and was executed in 399 BCE.
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### How It Works:

- Participants engage in thoughtful conversations while observers listen in (much like the discussions in the *agoras* of ancient Greece).
- Normally, there are two circles, one inner and one outer (see image below).
- Participants in the inner circle participate in the discussion through speaking, while the outer circle participants observe and jot down interesting points. They do not speak.
- Participants in the inner circle do not talk over anyone, and may only speak when it is appropriate to do so. This means coming up with communal agreements to know when that is, such as eye contact or raising a hand.
- After a while, the groups switch, and the outer circle becomes the inner circle and vice versa.
- The teacher does not participate in the conversation in any way outside of occasionally facilitating questions.
- It is not the teacher’s responsibility to encourage inner-circle participants to elaborate, or expand, on their ideas.



For more information, here is a YouTube video from Let's Teach on implementing the Socratic seminar: [youtu.be/SW-WQk-UnUg](https://youtu.be/SW-WQk-UnUg).

The Socratic seminar usually goes more smoothly the first time if the teacher provides some guidance in the form of guiding questions, themes, or other ideas. Some interesting themes for *The Girl of Hawthorn and Glass* that lend themselves to longer, more interesting questions are gender, power, climate justice, and social justice.

Debriefing right after the seminar to discuss and reflect on the way it was conducted and/or the quality of thoughts presented is usually helpful for students. Doing it more than once allows for students to incorporate feedback and improve their performance.

# Socratic Seminars Handout

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## Important Considerations Before the Socratic Seminar

Make sure you have done the reading and prepared your text before the seminar. Interact with the text in a way that feels appropriate. This may include underlining, annotating, or using sticky notes.

If the teacher has supplied questions or some other prompt, make sure you understand them. Record your thinking beforehand, if possible.

Prepare open-ended questions that have no single right answer and will encourage discussion. Yes or no questions kill conversation. Consider the following areas to come up with interesting questions and talking points:

- Author's choices in the text
- Characters' needs and/or desires
- Characters' perspectives/views
- World building and the world's rules
- Connections between their world and ours
- Questions about your interpretation and others'
- Questions about the meaning of specific passages
- Question something a classmate said

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## Expectations of Pilots/Inner Circle

- Be respectful of any/all answers, ideas, and thoughts
- Participate
- Do not speak over anyone or interrupt a peer
- Think critically and take the discussion seriously
- Don't simply "agree" with your classmate, add to the discourse. Build off of someone else's ideas (without simply repeating what was said)
- Be thoughtful

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## Expectations of Co-Pilots/Outer Circle

- Pay *close* attention to the conversation
- Make notes about the most interesting things that are shared
- You can also make notes about something you wish you could add to the discussion but can't
- You do not have to use exact quotes from peers

## Changes in Characters or Changes in Perception?

Let's return to the theme of transformation. At a glance, we can come up with a few examples of how characters change in the book. However, sometimes when a reader thinks a character has changed, it's really the reader's perception of the character that has changed. Sometimes an author inserts additional information as the story progresses to add to our understanding of a character, including who they are and what their motives are.

Pick a character and chart their transformation, or how your perception of them changed over the course of the novel by making notes in your reading journal. Pull concrete examples from the text to illustrate the changes.

Ask yourself one of the following questions to lead your work:

1. What new information has led to my change of perspective for a character?
2. What were the circumstances that caused the character to change?

## Self-Reflection

In what ways have you, or your thinking about a theme or issue, changed (even slightly) since having read this novel and done the Pre-Reading and During-Reading activities? What have you learned? What things are you still grappling with? What personal connections can you make with the theme of identity (the way you see yourself and the way others see you)? Write a short essay using these questions as a guide.

## Missing Themes

Transformation is an obvious theme, and there are others included in the list of terms to be defined as part of the Pre-Reading activities. What themes might we have missed? Identify three themes and make a case for them using examples from the text.

## Find a Review

Conduct an online search for reviews of the novel, selecting one. Do you agree or disagree with their comments? Why? Write a response to the original reviewer that is at least 500 words in length. Be sure to include evidence from the text to support your thinking.

## Write a Review

Reviews are part of the book publishing ecosystem. Reviews help potential readers decide whether or not a book is something they might be interested in and, if they're positive, may also help authors sell more books.

Reviews should be truthful. While they are subjective, they should also have a basis in the writing, not solely on personal preference. With all of this in mind, write a review of *The Girl of Hawthorn and Glass* in the tone and style of a newspaper or magazine book review.

## Cover Art

Prior to reading the novel, you examined the cover and inferred meaning based on the limited knowledge you had of the book. Now that you've read it, it's your turn to come up with your version of the front and back cover.

Using any digital tool available to you, create your own cover for *The Girl of Hawthorn and Glass*. Write your own summary and include excerpts from reviews found online or elsewhere. Be prepared to present your design (5–10 minutes) to your class and explain why you made the production choices you did.

## Bad Bunny and Gender Performance

In 2019, CNN published an article with the headline: “In Pink, Florals and Short Shorts, Bad Bunny Champions a New Masculinity” ([edition.cnn.com/style/article/bad-bunny-fashion-machismo/index.html](http://edition.cnn.com/style/article/bad-bunny-fashion-machismo/index.html)). Read the article and, if you aren't familiar with Bad Bunny, take some time to familiarize yourself with his work (recommended videos: “Caro” and “Yo Perreo Sola”).

Write a reflection that uses the following as guiding questions:

- What does “gender performance” mean?
- What are some possible tensions between an individual's gender performance and societal norms?
- How are gender norms socially constructed? How do individuals come to know the gender norms of their communities?
- In what ways do norms and expectations typically differ for men and women, regarding acceptable behaviour and expression of emotion? Regarding career choices? What factors influence the maintenance of or changes to such norms/expectations?
- How might an individual's personal preferences and choices affect their presentation of gender?
- Do you ever find yourself in conflict with the gender norms accepted in your family or community? If so, explain the circumstances and your response.
- Why might some people choose to challenge gender roles while other people accept them?
- What types of factors are linked to diverse gender performances?
- In what ways can gender norms and expectations limit what is possible for individuals?
- Besides Bad Bunny, what are some specific instances of people challenging gender expectations and norms over the past decade?



## Social Activism

PETA, Greenpeace, and Black Lives Matter are all social activist/social justice groups. These organizations describe themselves in the following ways:

### **PETA:**

“People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) is the largest animal rights organization in the world, with more than 6.5 million members and supporters.... PETA works through public education, cruelty investigations, research, animal rescue, legislation, special events, celebrity involvement, and protest campaigns.”

### **Black Lives Matter:**

“#BlackLivesMatter was founded in 2013 in response to the acquittal of Trayvon Martin’s murderer. Black Lives Matter Global Network Foundation, Inc. is a global organization in the U.S., U.K., and Canada, whose mission is to eradicate white supremacy and build local power to intervene in violence inflicted on Black communities by the state and vigilantes. By combating and countering acts of violence, creating space for Black imagination and innovation, and centering Black joy, we are winning immediate improvements in our lives.”

### **Greenpeace:**

“Greenpeace is an independent campaigning organisation, which uses peaceful, creative confrontation to expose global environmental problems and develop solutions for a green and peaceful future.”

Each of these organizations has received criticism for their activism, most notably when it involves active confrontation with law enforcement or other citizens. Words like “extreme” and “radical” have been used to describe them and their members.

Similarly, the members of the Hedge-Witch’s group are called “renegades” in the summary on the back cover, and the term “radical” is used to describe young witches who think ghosts may be newly evolved life forms. Eli sees Tav as being “ready for a fight” and she’s concerned with Tav’s insistence on activism, as well as their anger. Eli “wonders would happen to the men with beer bottles” when Tav returns.

## Social Activism Activity

There are many organizations like the ones mentioned above. Do some research and get to know one. Create an organizational overview and a brief history of their work. How should we understand social justice movements and groups? Are there limits to their activism? Do you consider their work to be ethical?

## Through a Sociologist's Eyes

In a formal essay, analyze the world in *The Girl of Hawthorn and Glass* from the perspective of a sociologist using one of the three main perspectives (functionalist, conflict, or symbolic interactionism).

You will be expected to:

- Briefly introduce the text (characters, setting, and plot)
- Explain which main sociological perspective was used to analyze the text/characters and how it affected your understanding
- Write with a distinct voice (of a sociologist) and demonstrate proper use of English writing conventions

## Media Project

Construct a media message (print or digital billboard/poster, commercial, book trailer) to promote the book *or* present a thematic takeaway. Present your project to the class, using the key concepts of media literacy as a framework for the presentation.

## Prequel

Develop a prequel to this book (a book that tells the backstories of some or all of the characters we met and any additional characters you choose). Write a synopsis that is 2–3 pages long and provide a character list with brief descriptions of each character.

# V • ONTARIO CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

## Pre-Reading Activities

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### English: Grades 10–12 Curriculum Expectations

#### ■ **READING AND LITERATURE STUDIES**

1. Reading for Meaning: read and demonstrate an understanding of a variety of literary, informational, and graphic texts, using a range of strategies to construct meaning
2. Understanding Form and Style: recognize a variety of text forms, text features, and stylistic elements and demonstrate understanding of how they help communicate meaning
3. Reading with Fluency: use knowledge of words and cueing systems to read fluently

**Applies to:** On Genre; Key Terms and Definitions

#### ■ **MEDIA LITERACY**

1. Understanding Media Forms, Conventions, and Techniques: identify some media forms and explain how the conventions and techniques associated with them are used to create meaning
2. Creating Media Texts: create a variety of media texts for different purposes and audiences, using appropriate forms, conventions, and techniques

**Applies to:** Judging a Book by Its Cover

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### Introduction to Anthropology, Psychology, and Sociology, Grade 11 HSP3U Curriculum Expectations

#### ■ **SOCIOLOGY**

1. Theories, Perspectives, and Methodologies: demonstrate an understanding of major theories, perspectives, and research methods in sociology
2. Explaining Social Behaviour: use a sociological perspective to explain how diverse factors influence and shape individual and group social behaviour

**Applies to:** Seeing Society: Sociology

## During-Reading Activities

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### English: Grades 10–12 Curriculum Expectations

#### ■ *READING AND LITERATURE STUDIES*

1. Reading for Meaning: read and demonstrate an understanding of a variety of literary, informational, and graphic texts, using a range of strategies to construct meaning

**Applies to:** Reading Is Thinking; Journaling; Initial Questions for Understanding; Exploring Characterization

## After-Reading Activities

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### Gender Studies University/College Preparation Grade 11 Curriculum Expectations

#### ■ *FOUNDATIONS*

1. The Social Construction of Gender: demonstrate an understanding of how attitudes, behaviours, roles, and norms relating to gender are socially constructed, and of the complexity of gender as a concept and as a lived experience
2. Power Relations, Sex, and Gender: analyze sexism and the dynamics of power relations with respect to sex and gender in a variety of contexts

**Applies to:** Bad Bunny and Gender Performance

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### English: Grades 10–12 Curriculum Expectations

#### ■ *MEDIA LITERACY*

1. Understanding Media Forms, Conventions, and Techniques: identify some media forms and explain how the conventions and techniques associated with them are used to create meaning
2. Creating Media Texts: create a variety of media texts for different purposes and audiences, using appropriate forms, conventions, and techniques

**Applies to:** Media Project

#### ■ *WRITING*

1. Developing and Organizing Content: generate, gather, and organize ideas and information to write for an intended purpose and audience
2. Using Knowledge of Form and Style: draft and revise their writing, using a variety of literary, informational, and graphic forms and stylistic elements appropriate for the purpose and audience

**Applies to:** Social Activism; Through a Sociologist's Eyes

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## **Introduction to Anthropology, Psychology, and Sociology: Grade 11 HSP3U Curriculum Expectations**

### ■ **SOCIOLOGY**

1. Theories, Perspectives, and Methodologies: demonstrate an understanding of major theories, perspectives, and research methods in sociology

**Applies to:** Through a Sociologist's Eyes

