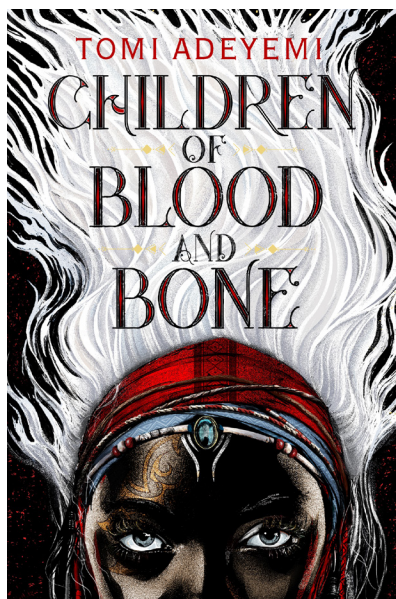


TEACHER'S GUIDE FOR CHILDREN OF BLOOD AND BONE

FOR
USE WITH
COMMON CORE
STATE
STANDARDS



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ABOUT THE BOOK

ZÉLIE ADEBOLA remembers when the soil of Orísha hummed with magic. Burners ignited flames, Tiders beckoned waves, and Zélie's Reaper mother summoned forth souls.

But everything changed the night magic disappeared. Under the orders of a ruthless king, maji were killed, leaving Zélie without a mother and her people without hope.

Now Zélie has one chance to bring back magic and strike against the monarchy. With the help of a rogue princess, Zélie must outwit and outrun the crown prince, who is hell-bent on eradicating magic for good.

Danger lurks in Orísha, where snow leopanares prowl and vengeful spirits wait in the waters. Yet the greatest danger may be Zélie herself as she struggles to control her powers—and her growing feelings for an enemy.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

TOMI ADEYEMI Tomi Adeyemi is the Nigerian-American author of *Children of Blood and Bone* based in San Diego, California. After graduating Harvard University with an honors degree in English literature, she received a fellowship that allowed her to study West African mythology, culture, and religion in Salvador, Brazil. When she's not working on her novels or watching BTS music videos, she can be found blogging about creative writing at tomiadeyemi.com.

This guide is intended to support your classroom instruction. The standards listed throughout the guide reflect the Common Core State Standards for grade eight but the activities and questions can be applied to grades eight through twelve. Please adapt the activities and questions as needed to meet the needs of your students.

You know your students better than anyone else!

PRE-READING QUESTIONS

- ❖ What mythologies are you familiar with and what do you know about them? What role do mythologies play in their cultures?
- ❖ What is a tyranny? Can tyrannies be justified? What are possible ways to change such a government?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Describe Zélie's background and personality. What are her strengths and weaknesses? How does she change over the course of the book, and what causes the changes? Discuss why she characterizes her past as a "lifetime of mistakes" (p. 375). Do you agree with her assessment of herself?
2. Talk about Tzain, specifically his personality and his relationship to Zélie, using evidence from the text. How does he contribute to their quest? What does Amari like about him? Discuss Tzain's statement, "I'm tired of paying for everyone's mistakes" (p. 395).
3. Compare what Amari is like at the beginning of the novel and what she is like at the end. What brings about the changes in her character? Discuss her relationships with her father, mother, and brother, and explain how those are part of her transformation.
4. Amari embraces Zélie's cause wholeheartedly but Inan wavers. What makes the siblings different in this regard? Talk about Inan's characteristics and how his father influences him. Analyze the symbolism of Inan carrying his father's pawn. Why is Zélie attracted to Inan? Discuss the important choices he makes, especially those near the story's end.
5. Summarize the history of Orïsha in regard to the maji and kosidán, including the Raid. What is King Saran's approach to ruling the kingdom and how is it different from his father's? Why is Saran so violent? Discuss his exchange with Zélie before he has her tortured.
6. The gods are a key aspect of the novel. Describe them and the characters' encounters with them. How do the gods affect the plot? Why are they so important to Zélie and her friends?
7. Point to times and relationships in the novel where trust is a significant issue, especially among the four main characters. When is trust justified among the characters? When is trust betrayed? Why is trust such a central issue under a tyranny like King Saran's?
8. Anger is also heightened under a tyranny. Who is angry in the novel, and why? Is the anger justified? How does anger fuel some of the important action in the plot?
9. What challenges do Zélie, Amari, and Tzain face in their quest to save their country? What physical obstacles do they have to overcome on the journey? What are their worst setbacks, and how do they deal with them?
10. Talk about the world building in the novel, which draws on West African history and culture but transforms them and adds magic. What kind of information and descriptions create the convincing, multifaceted fictional world? Find places where the author effectively weaves in information about the setting without slowing down the story.
11. Why do you think the author tells the story from three viewpoints with three different voices? How are the voices different from one another? How would it be different with a single narrator? Why use first-person voices? Discuss why Tzain doesn't narrate part of the story.
12. Analyze the prologue and epilogue, and think about why the author chose to include them. Discuss the first line of the prologue and that of the first chapter. Discuss the last line of the last chapter and the last line of the epilogue. Explain how the lines relate to the novel as a whole.
13. Discuss the Author's Note at the end of the book. What real-world parallels can you draw between the challenges in this book and the challenges minorities face today? Why do you think the author chose to portray these challenges through a fantasy lens?



EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

1. Have students choose one of the deities in the Maji Clans list to research, drawing from the novel, other print sources, and digital sources. The students should then research a similar deity in another mythology or religion, such as another fire deity. They should write a paper about the Yoruba deity that includes comparisons to the deity from the other culture.

CCSS.W.8.1 Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence

CCSS.W.8.7 Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.

2. What would a tourist think of Orisha? Have students create a travel brochure about the fictional country, emphasizing its positives aspects and great variety. It should describe specific places that a tourist might visit. The brochure should be illustrated and then displayed for others to see.

CCSS.RL.8.1 Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CCSS.W.8.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

3. *Children of Blood and Bone* is rich with references to West African culture. Have students work in pairs, choosing an aspect of the culture that interests them. Possibilities are traditional clothing, food, dance, music, language, art, architecture, or death customs. Students should research their topic using print and digital resources, and then create a multimedia presentation to share with the class.

CCSS.SL.8.5 Integrate multimedia and visual displays into presentations to clarify information, strengthen claims and evidence, and add interest.

CCSS.W.8.7 Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.

4. Tzain is the only one of the four main characters who doesn't tell his own story. Have students work in pairs to write a monologue in which Tzain expresses his thoughts in general or about a certain event in the story, with references to the deity to whom he feels closest. One or both students should deliver the speech to a small group.

CCSS.RL.8.3 Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.

CCSS.SL.8.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

CCSS.W.8.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

5. As a class, watch the short video in which Tomi Adeyemi addresses diversity in young adult books (see www.childrenofbloodandbone.com). Have students discuss the video and how it applies to their reading of *Children of Blood and Bone* as well as other novels. The discussion should also include the broader question of whether literature can affect people's beliefs, understanding of others, and actions.

CCSS.RL.8.1 Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CCSS.SL.8.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

Kathleen Odean was a school librarian for seventeen years and now gives workshops for educators on new young adult books. She chaired the 2002 Newbery Award Committee and served on earlier Newbery and Caldecott committees. She has an M.A. in Folklore from the University of California at Berkeley.

