Extension Activities

- 1. Unstable Structure. Melina Marchetta experiments with structure in Jellicoe Road, having the story unfold as a mystery and keeping the reader guessing about connections between characters, as well as between the past and the present. Read another book by Melina Marchetta and write an essay comparing its themes to those of Jellicoe Road and contrasting their structures. Do you prefer the structure of Jellicoe Road, or do you favor something more conventional? Explain.
- **2. Get the Picture?** *Jellicoe Road* offers vivid descriptions: the reader actually sees the trees on Jellicoe Road and hears the splash when Webb falls. Sketch, paint, or otherwise illustrate part of the story. Is this project easy or hard to do, given the concrete descriptions that Melina Marchetta provides? Write a caption to accompany your illustration that offers insight into your inspiration. How does your final product illustrate an important theme or motif from the story?
- 3. The Weight of the World. The characters in this story confront tough situations: drugs, disappearances, accidents, abuse, and even suicide. Choose one of these weighty issues and research its effects on teens. In the format of your choice (a brochure, poster, website, blog, etc.), publish information on your selected topic that you think your peers should know. Then write a brief description of how the characters in Jellicoe Road confront the same issue. Do they make healthy choices? If so, how? If not, what should they have done differently?
- **4. Grief Counsel.** The characters in *Jellicoe Road* are also faced with grief. Research the stages of grief. In which stages do you see Taylor, Hannah, Jonah, and other characters? Write a letter or email to one of the novel's characters (which could be delivered at any point during the story), advising them about how they can continue in the wake of tragedy.
- **5. Mockingbird on the Road.** There are several instances in the novel when characters refer to another important coming-of-age story, To Kill a Mockingbird. Read and enjoy Harper Lee's book and then think about the similarities it shares with Jellicoe Road. What lessons do the young people in each story learn about growing up? Write a recommendation for fans of either book to get them interested in reading the other.



About the Author

Melina Marchetta received the Michael L. Printz Award for her third novel, Jellicoe Road. She is also the author of Saving Francesca and Looking for Alibrandi, both of which received numerous awards, and the upcoming Finnikin of the Rock. Looking for Alibrandi was released as a major Australian film. A former high school teacher, Melina Marchetta lives in Sydney, Australia. You can visit her online at www.melinamarchetta.com.au.



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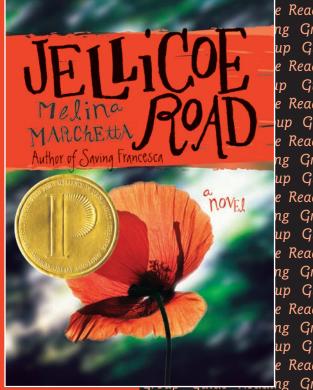
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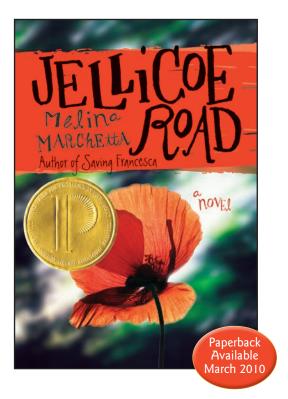


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Printz Award Winner

By Melina Marchetta

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Tr 978-0-06-143183-8 • \$17.99 (\$19.50) Lb 978-0-06-143184-5 • \$18.89 (\$20.89) Pb 978-0-06-143185-2 • \$8.99 (\$11.99)

About the Book

On Jellicoe Road, the trees make breezy canopies like a tunnel to Shangri-la. From the outset they bear witness to tragedy. There, twenty-two years ago, on the prettiest road you've ever seen, three children lost their families in a car crash. *Jellicoe Road* is their story and that of the generation that follows. In the present day, Taylor has also been marked by tragedy, abandoned by her mother when she was a girl. This is the story of her seventeenth year—the year she becomes a leader at the Jellicoe School and plots to win the territory wars that the students play with the Townies and the Cadets, the year she falls in love, and the year she learns why she belongs to Jellicoe.

Discussion Questions

- I. Reread the first page of *Jellicoe Road* and consider Hannah's and Taylor's various descriptions of Jellicoe. What role does setting play in the story?
- 2. What do the territory wars represent to the Jellicoe students, the Townies, and the Cadets? Why do the students give the Little Purple Book so much power? How have the wars changed over time?
- 3. Why does Hannah stay at Jellicoe instead of going out into the world, like Tate or Jude? Hannah's projects comfort Taylor because "people don't leave unfinished houses" (p. 18). Why doesn't Hannah finish her house? What does the house mean to her?
- 4. Why is Jude drawn to Narnie? How is Taylor similar to and different from the girl who stands across the road from the poppies, "her eyes pools of absolute sorrow" (p. 31)? How is Jonah similar to and different from the Brigadier?
- 5. What role do dreams and visions play in the novel? Can you explain Taylor's dream relationship with the boy who is her father? Is it necessary for there to be a logical explanation?
- 6. Why do you think Taylor is selected to be a House leader? What kind of a leader is she? How might she benefit from having to deal with other girls and their dependency (p. 127)?
- 7. Why do Taylor and Jonah seem to thrive in the structure provided at Jellicoe and in the Cadets, respectively?
- 8. How is Taylor being in love similar to and different from Tate being in love? Tate tells Webb that he is "everything" to her (p. 85). What does it mean to be everything to someone, or to have someone tell you that you're everything to him or her? Is it romantic or dangerous—or both?

- 9. Taylor holds Jonah and he links his hand with hers when they are on the train, allowing Taylor to "feel someone else's pain for the first time" (p. 183). What does it mean to a person who's hurting to become a caretaker for another? How is it similar to and different from being "everything" to someone? Can you draw a parallel to any other characters in the story?
- 10. Do you think that Taylor and Jonah will be happy together? Why or why not?
- 11. Do you support Tate's decision to leave Taylor at the 7-Eleven, abandoning her to Hannah, Jude, and Jellicoe? Why do you think Hannah follows Tate's wishes and keeps her distance from Taylor? Why doesn't Hannah say anything to Taylor when she leaves to play Jem to Tate's Mrs. Dubose?
- 12. Describe Hannah and Narnie. Are your descriptions the same? How does Hannah change over time? Do you think of her differently when you consider her as the author of the manuscript—the one who paints Narnie as weak?
- 13. What does Fitz mean when he says, "I didn't exist before I belonged" (p. 231)? How does Taylor find a sense of belonging?
- 14. Among the five, Tate and Webb sparkle and even Fitz is described as a "hero riding by on a stolen bike" (p. 187). Meanwhile, Jude and Narnie aren't as flashy, and yet they survive after the others burn out. Why? Is there a message with regard to the story's survivors? What does Taylor learn in thinking about the five?
- 15. Taylor initially "can't make head or tail" of Hannah's manuscript because she "hasn't structured it properly" (pp. 24–25). Melina Marchetta presents her novel in the same way. Why? What are the advantages of telling the story through a disjointed structure? Are there any disadvantages?

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