

Circle of Dreams: Timeweaver

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Synopsis

Zaine is a runeweaver with a very special destiny. Since the destruction of the Circle of Dreams he is the only one able to free the runeweavers who have spent hundreds of years trapped within the confines of rune books. It is imperative that Zaine free the runeweavers because the occupants of Willow Castle desperately need help to get rid of the storm hovering around the Circle of Dreams before it destroys them all. However, not everyone is convinced that the storm is the most imminent threat. Trianna, personal rune weaver to the ruler, insists that Maata, the winner of the contest needs to be crowned as the new Queen. She believes that if the winner of the contest is not crowned immediately, the magic of all weavers will begin to fade away. But the crown has been destroyed and fails to sing when it is placed on any of the contestant's heads. Trianna believes that a new crown must be made immediately, or all will be lost. Zaine is following her instructions when disaster strikes. Unbeknownst to Zaine when he utters the runes etched on the inside of the crown he calls the storm dragons and now everyone has only moments to escape from the castle.

The freed runeweavers are all too weak to be of much use to Zaine, except for Aldren, who has vital information for Zaine about the storm, its origins and how to destroy it. He tells Zaine that he must travel to Land's End and find Guyan, the only person other than a timeweaver who can control the dragons. Zaine's mission is to return the crown to its rightful owner Guyan and ask for her help to stop the storm dragons. Maata will travel with him and aid him with his dangerous assignment. The pair leave in the dead of night, not knowing that they are being followed by others from the castle who are still convinced that they need to create a new crown. Will Zaine reach Guyan in time or will his life reading saying that he will destroy the world prove to be accurate?

Text Type

Circle of Dreams, Timeweaver is a fast-paced adventure fantasy novel. It is the second in a series and it continues the story of Zaine, a young boy who has astonishing powers as a runeweaver. In this instalment Zaine discovers that he is also a timeweaver. This means that his powers far exceed those of an ordinary runeweaver. Although the novel is part of a series the story stands alone. All pertinent information from the first novel is provided early on in the book for readers unfamiliar with the series.

The story has broad appeal and features strong male and female protagonists in Zaine and Maata. It contains elements of the supernatural which the reader learns as Zaine and Maata overcome obstacles and race the storm dragons on their journey to Land's End to find Guyan. The story allows the reader to

escape into a fantasy world where characters have magical powers and anything is possible. The story leaves the reader wondering what further adventures Zaine will have now that he is discovering the true extent of his powers.

Themes include loyalty, magic, bravery, friendship, destiny and the triumph of good over evil.

Sharing the Novel

The novel has been divided up as follows: Chapter 1 (pp. 5-20), Chapters 2-6 (pp. 21-106) and Chapters 7-12 (pp. 107-193).

During the shared sessions encourage students to ask questions to clarify their understanding of words and ideas presented in the novel. Have them describe the setting of the story and identify elements that help categorise the novel as a fantasy. Encourage students to study the main characters and track their development throughout the story. Students should make predictions about the story and be able to identify important themes and conflicts.

Introducing the Novel

Have students study the front cover of the novel and read the blurb.

- What kind of novel is this? What do you expect from a novel of this genre?
- Who is the main character in the story? What do we learn about him from reading the blurb?
- What do we learn about the plot of the story from the blurb? How do you think Zaine will defeat the storm dragons? What do you think a timeweaver is?
- Make some predictions about the story.

Teacher reads Chapter 1 (pp. 5-20) aloud. Students follow along in their books.

Comprehension Chapter 1 (pp. 5-20)

- What are Zaine and Davyn doing with the rune books?
- What does being able to use runes make Zaine? Why do you think it was decided that Zaine should not fulfil his destiny of being a runeweaver?
- How old is Zaine? Why won't he age any more?
- What does Zaine think is the reason for his gift?
- What is Zaine's relationship to Davyn? Who is Zaine's mother? What powerful positions does she hold?
- Why is it so important for Zaine to free the runeweavers from their books?

- Who does Zaine release from his own runebook? What startling news does he give Zaine when he is freed?
- Who is Tercel? What does he want Zaine to do? Why do you think Zaine is so reluctant to do his bidding?
- What occurred inside the Circle of Dreams? What happened when Zaine destroyed the Circle? Why did he have to destroy it?
- Why are Maata and Zaine expected in the hall?

Discussion

- Who brought Zaine up? Why do you think Davyn led Zaine to believe that he was merely a herb master rather than his father? Why do you think Zaine's mother abandoned him as a baby? What do you think Zaine's destiny might be?
- Describe Zaine. What have we learnt about him so far? Why do you think that he is the only one who is able to free the runeweavers from the books?
- Why is everyone in the castle so worried about the storm? What do you think is going to happen if the storm reaches the castle? What do you think storm dragons are?
- Who do you think Gyan is?
- Predict what will happen next in the story.

Students read Chapters 2-6 (pp. 21-106) independently before the next shared session.

Comprehension Chapters 2-6 (pp. 21-106)

- What does Zaine's life-reading say?
- What is Tercel's relationship to Zaine? How does Tercel react when Zaine releases him from the runebook?
- Why does Zaine feel uneasy when he enters the great hall for the meeting?
- Who is Prince Varan? What made him enter the Circle of Dreams?
- Who is Prince Theodane?
- Why are the people in the great hall divided into groups?
- Why does Trianna call the meeting? Why is everyone so surprised about her agenda?
- Why does Trianna believe that the new monarch must be crowned immediately? Who won the contest? Who disputes this?
- What happens when Trianna places the crown on Maata's head? What is supposed to happen?
- What does Trianna offer as a reward to the first person to create a new crown? Why is Zaine so amazed at the amount of interest there is in the crown?
- Why does Tercel blame Zaine for the storm?
- What does Zaine find on the inside of the crown? What does he believe happened when the crown was destroyed? What does Zaine think might happen if he fixes the crown? Why doesn't he consult Davyn

- about his plan? What happens before Zaine is able to complete the rune circle? Why does everyone have to evacuate the castle?
- Describe what happens when the storm dragons enter the castle.
 - How does Zaine feel when he realises that the destruction caused by the storm is his fault? How do the survivors of the storm treat Zaine? Why do you think Maata feels differently to the others?
 - What information does Aldren give the others about the storm dragons? How does he react when Calard tells him they must make a new crown before their runes begin to fail?
 - Who does Trianna elect to take the first watch over the storm? Who approaches Zaine during his watch? What does he want Zaine to do? Why does he believe that Zaine is very powerful for one so young?
 - What does Aldren want Zaine to take with him to give to Guyan? Why does he decide that Maata should accompany him? Why does the pair have to avoid any place where people live?
 - What does Zaine see when he takes one last look at the castle before heading off on his journey?
 - How long will the journey to Land's End take? Why does Maata insist that they leave the road?
 - Why is Zaine so shocked when he comes upon the Taitem farm? Why doesn't he go and warn Pretor about the storm dragons?
 - Where do Zaine and Maata seek refuge for the night? Why do you think they tidy up before the leave even though they know the place will likely be destroyed?
 - How far away from Land's End are Zaine and Maata when the storm dragons nearly catch up with them? How does Zaine deceive them?
 - Why isn't the Summer Castle what Zaine is expecting? Why is the place called Land's End?
 - Why do Zaine and Maata decide to stay in the Summer Castle over night?
 - What does Zaine discover on the cobblestone?
 - What happens when Zaine traces the rune? How does Zaine feel as he makes his way over the cliff? What do Zaine and Maata find at the bottom of the cliff? Why is Zaine so unsure about using his powers to help them get across the path? What alternative solution does he find?
 - Why does Zaine believe that the floating steps are a test? Why is Zaine so impressed with Maata when she decides to follow the steps down? Why is Zaine surprised when he feels the steps that he and Maata walked down?
 - What final test do Zaine and Maata have to pass before they reach the floor of the valley?
 - Why is Zaine so intrigued when he sees the girl by the stream? Who does the young girl turn out to be? How long has she been in the valley?
 - How does Guyan react when Maata tries to give her the crown?
 - Describe Guyan's house. Who built Guyan's home for her?
 - What does Guyan call the Circle of Dreams? What is significant about this place? How is this Circle of Dreams different from the one at

Willow Castle? What is perched on top of each of the six stones surrounding the circle? What does Guyan tell Zaine and Maata about the storm dragons?

- Why doesn't Guyan believe that she is able to help Zaine and Maata?

Discussion

- What characteristics does Zaine possess that make him a hero? Use examples from the story to back up your ideas. What negative characteristics does he have?
- Describe Maata. Why is she a good travel companion for Zaine? What qualities does she possess that would make her a good Queen?
- Why is there so much conflict between Zaine and some of the others at the Castle? Is the animosity directed towards Zaine justified? Explain your answer.
- Do you believe in fate? Why/why not? Is it possible to change your own destiny? Explain your answer.
- If you could choose a magical power what would it be and why would you choose it?
- What do you think Zaine and Maata will do now that they know Guyan can't help them?

Students read Chapters 7-12 (pp. 107-193) independently before the next shared session.

Comprehension Chapters 7-12 (pp. 107-193)

- Why does Zaine want to know how the dragons got trapped in the Circle of Dreams?
- What happened when Guyan went and visited the King in the Summer Castle? Why didn't Guyan use her knowledge of runes to stop the King? How did Guyan meet Aldren? What was special about Aldren? What happened when Guyan created the new Circle of Dreams? Who is Jelena? Why did Guyan use her last rune circle to freeze Jelena in a time-loop? What does this mean for Jelena?
- Who follows Zaine and Maata to Land's End?
- Why is Guyan covered in runes? Why is Zaine so impressed when she shows him her runebook? Who are the only ones skilled enough to use all of the runes contained within the book?
- Why was Guyan banished? How does Guyan's mother feel about her banishment?
- How does Trianna react when she learns that Guyan is a young girl?
- Why does Aldren tell Guyan that he thinks Zaine might be the one that she is searching for?
- Why do the storm dragons hate runeweavers?
- Why does Trianna believe that they need to bind the storm dragons to another crown? How does Guyan react to her solution?
- Why does Guyan suggest that the group move into the castle when it becomes clear that the storm dragons have located them?

- Why is Zaine so surprised when he sees Guyan's star chart? What information does it contain? Why is Guyan shocked when she learns that Zaine's own mother wanted him banished?
- Who else arrives at Land's End before the storm dragons get there? Why is Trianna so adamant that they need to work together?
- What does Zaine mean when he says that his mother "brings out the worst in people"?
- Why does Zaine begin to have doubts about his abilities? What does Maata say to him that spurs him on? Why does Zaine decide that a spell trapping the storm dragons will not work?
- What happens when the storm dragon approaches Guyan? What does it do when it gets to Zaine? Why are the storm dragons angry with Zaine?
- How does the Circle of Dreams become damaged?
- Why doesn't Zaine want his mother to bind the dragons to the crown? How does he stop her? What effect does Zaine's spell have on the storm dragons?
- Why does Guyan want everyone to leave the valley?
- Why does Zaine believe that he must release Trianna from the time-loop? How can he remove the weave? Why is it so important that he get the spell right? What does Maata do to ensure that Trianna doesn't try and bind the dragons again?
- Why does Zaine believe that Trianna doesn't understand the situation with the crown and the storm dragons?
- Do you believe that Zaine is to blame for the destruction of Guyan's world? Explain your answer.
- Why does Guyan become so interested in Zaine when she learns that he has reversed a time-loop? What does she want him to do for her? Why is Zaine unsure that he can fulfil her request? Why does Guyan have so much faith in Zaine's ability's?
- How does Zaine feel as he tries to reverse the time-loop? Why does he wish that Davyn hadn't told him what could go wrong? How does Zaine know that he has succeeded?
- How do the storm dragons react when it becomes apparent that Zaine has released Jelena from the time-loop? What does Zaine ask them for return?
- What happens when Jelena realises that the starlink back to her own world is broken?
- Why is Zaine so sure that Trianna, Calard and Tercel haven't noticed Jelena? Why is he convinced that no spells will be cast on the crown any time soon?
- What does Zaine discover when he leans on one of the tall stones surrounding the Circle of Dreams? Why didn't Aldren's original circle work? How does Aldren know where the rune circle begins and ends? What solution does he come up with to save Jelena? Why does he need the storm dragon's help? Why don't the storm dragons want Guyan to go home?

- How do the storm dragons react when they think that Zaine is asking them to repair the circle? Why does Trianna think that Zaine is trying to bind the dragons for his own use? What does her single-mindedness suggest about her character?
- How does Zaine solve the problem of the dragon's not being able to carve runes on such a small stone? Why is it so important that everyone act quickly?
- Why doesn't Zaine's plan work initially? What idea does he come up with to allow Jelena to return to her own world? What happens to the storm dragons?
- Why does Zaine sit beside Guyan after Jelena returns to her own world?
- Why does Zaine think that the reality of the situation is finally sinking in to his mother? What suggestion does Maata come up with for how the next monarch should be chosen?
- What leads Zaine to believe that Tercel's opinion of him might be changing?
- Why doesn't Guyan want to leave her wooden castle? Who decides to stay with her?
- Where does Maata decide to stay until Willow Castle is made liveable?
- What promise does Zaine make to Guyan before he leaves?

Discussion

- Describe Guyan. Why does Zaine feel a kind of affinity with her?
- Describe Zaine's relationship with his mother. What kind of woman is Trianna? How does she feel about her son? How does Zaine feel about his mother's treatment of him?
- Why does Zaine decide to try and help Guyan by freeing Jelena from the time-loop? What does this suggest about his character? Why do you think Zaine is such a good runeweaver? What do you think the future holds for him? Why is it so important to have belief in yourself?
- Identify the climax of the novel. Why is this event important?
- Identify a major theme in the story. Discuss how the author develops this theme in the story.
- Choose a significant symbol in the novel. Explain what this symbol represents and why it is important.

Activities

Board Game – Design a board game for *Timeweaver*. For every positive event reward the player. For every negative event penalise the player. Illustrate your board with symbols, pictures and images from the story.

Static Image – Design an alternative book cover for *Timeweaver*. Write a paragraph explaining why your book cover is effective at encouraging people to read the book.

Static Image – Choose a main theme from the story and design a static image that conveys this idea. Include a quote from the text that helps to reinforce the theme.

Writing – Write an alternative ending for the story.

Writing – Write the first chapter for the next book in the series.

Character – Complete a character profile for Zaine. Include his name, age, family, personal qualities and characteristics, motivations, important actions and quotes that illustrate interesting aspects of his character.

Drama – Choose an important event from the story. Write a script that depicts the event. Remember to include a cast of characters and stage directions in your script. Practise your play and present it to the class.

Writing – Write your own life-reading and present it attractively.

Plot – Design a story board that illustrates 10 important events from the novel in the order that they occur. Under each picture write a brief summary of what is happening.

Plot – Choose an important event from the story and explain how this event affected the outcome of the story. If this event hadn't happened how might things have turned out differently?