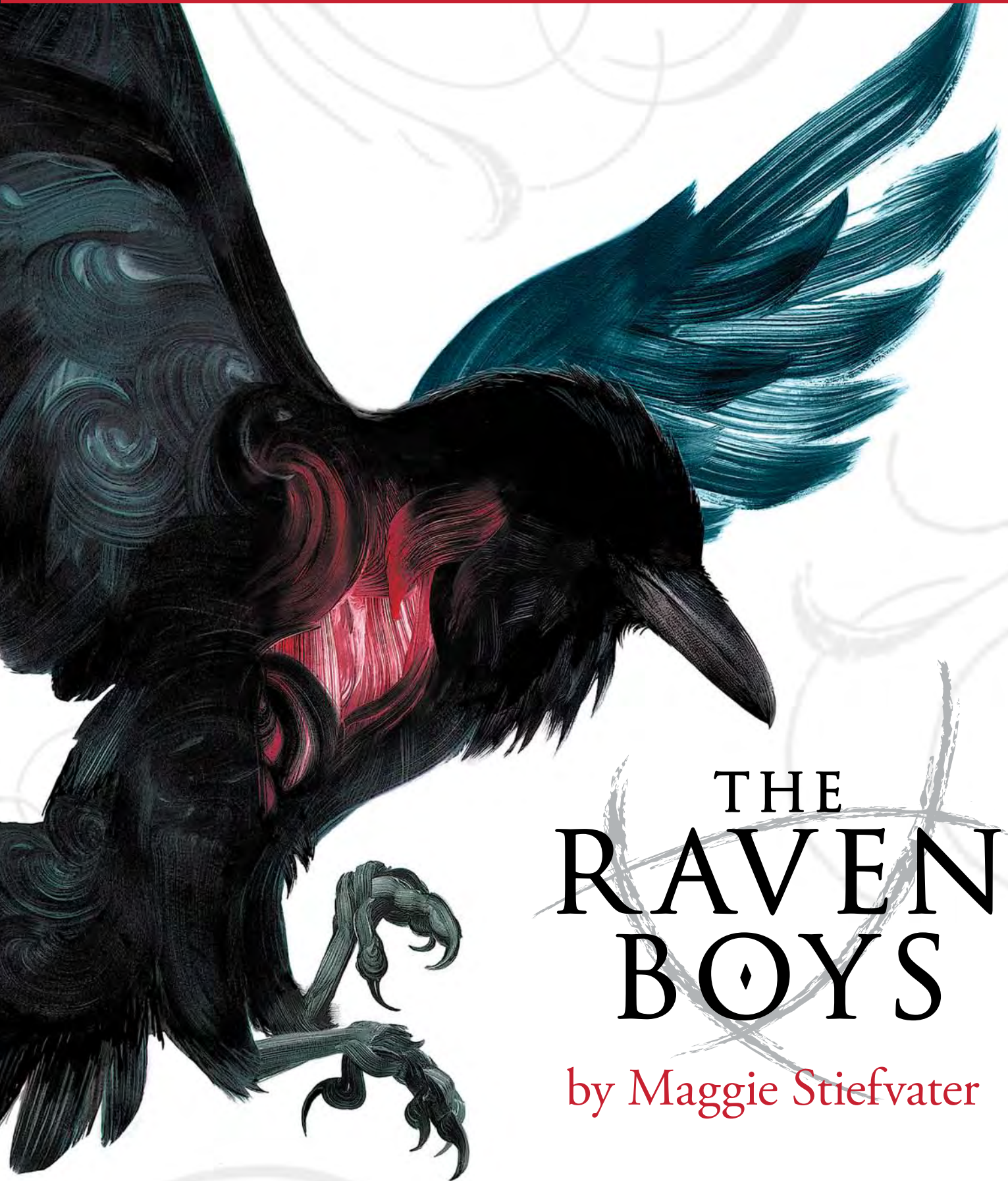


# DISCUSSION GUIDE



## THE RAVEN BOYS

by Maggie Stiefvater

# ABOUT THE BOOK

- ★ “One unexpected and wonderful surprise after another...a marvel of imagination.” —*Booklist*, starred review
- ★ “Simultaneously complex and simple, compulsively readable, marvelously wrought.” —*Kirkus Reviews*, starred review
- ★ “Haunting...a tour de force of characterization.”  
—*Publishers Weekly*, starred review



It is freezing in the churchyard, even before the dead arrive. Every year, Blue Sargent stands next to her clairvoyant mother as the soon-to-be-dead walk past. Blue herself never sees them—not until this year, when a boy emerges from the dark and speaks directly to her. His name is Gansey, and Blue soon discovers that he is a rich student at Aglionby, the local private school.

Blue usually stays away from Aglionby boys. Known as Raven Boys, they can only mean trouble. But she is drawn to Gansey, in a way she can't entirely explain. He has it all—family money, good looks, devoted friends—but he's looking for much more than that. He is on a quest to find Owen Glendower, the legendary sleeping Welsh king.

For as long as she can remember, Blue has been warned that if she ever kisses her true love, he will die. She never thought this would be a problem—until now, as her life becomes caught up in the strange and sinister world of the Raven Boys.



# DISCUSSION POINTS

1. Reread the quotes in the prologue from Edgar Allan Poe and Oscar Wilde. Do they mean something different to you now that you've read *The Raven Boys*? What character or characters does each quote remind you of? Why?
2. The characters' clothes were referred to on many different occasions throughout the story. Adam's Aglionby uniform isn't as pristine as Ronan's or Gansey's, and Blue often creates new outfits from bits of older ones. What does each character's clothes say about him or her? Do each character's outfits truly reflect the image that he or she is trying to portray?
3. Blue is the only person in her family who is not a psychic. How do you think she really feels about this? How does this shape her personality? Is there something that members of your family excel at that you cannot do? How does this make you feel?
4. Blue spends every St. Mark's Eve on the ley line, helping her mother record the names of the people who will die the following year. How do you think this affects Blue? What would you do if you were Blue and knew which people in your town would die in the next twelve months?
5. A ley line "is a perfectly straight, supernatural energy path that connected spiritual places." After knowing how powerful ley lines are, do you think that this is an accurate description? Why or why not? Do you think that something like ley lines exist in real life? If yes, explain what they are and where you believe you can find them.
6. List three pros and three cons of having psychics in your family.
7. Adam has trouble disconnecting from his upbringing and breaking free from his father's constant abuse. Even though he obviously doesn't want to live with his parents under the circumstances, he struggles with the decision to leave. Why is it so hard for Adam to leave? Do you think he should have left home and moved into Monmouth Manufacturing before he finally did? Why or why not?
8. Ronan and Declan can't stand each other, but every Sunday they put their feud aside to attend mass together—no matter what. Do you think you could put aside your unfavorable feelings for someone to keep up appearances and traditions?
9. Which character from *The Raven Boys* do you identify with the most? Why?
10. It seems like nothing is good enough for Gansey, and he's always striving for more. Why is he so hard on himself? Have you ever felt like you put too much pressure on yourself to succeed at something? If so, how did you feel? What, if anything, made you feel better?
11. Adam, Blue, and Gansey had very different experiences inside the hollowed out tree in Cabeswater. What did each one see? Do you think they saw their futures, nightmares, or dreams? Why do you think this?
12. Legend says that the person who wakes Glendower is granted a wish. Explain what you think the following characters would wish for if they woke Glendower: Blue, Gansey, Adam, Ronan, Noah, Whelk, Neeve, and Maura.
13. Adam mused that: "Glendower was more than a historical figure to Gansey. He was everything Gansey wished he could be: wise and brave, sure of his path, touched by the supernatural, respected by all, survived by his legacy." Do you think that Adam's assessment is true? Why or why not?

14. Why would Gansey—someone who has the means to buy anything he could ever want or need—need a wish from Glendower?
15. Whelk’s motivation to wake the ley line was ignited by the loss of his fortune and reputation. Do you think that he has any redeeming qualities, or is he completely consumed by greed?
16. Why was Czerny important to Whelk when he was both alive and dead? Why did Whelk think that Czerny made the perfect sacrifice? Was he right? Why or why not?
17. On more than one occasion, Noah’s friends describe him as “the smudgy one.” Do you think this is an accurate description? Why or why not? How does this make it more plausible that Noah’s friends never suspected that he was a spirit?
18. Gansey stated many times that he doesn’t believe in coincidences. Do you believe in coincidences? Why or why not? Tell about an event in your own life when something that could be described as a coincidence happened to you.
19. There are many similarities and differences between Whelk and Adam. Citing examples from the book, list three of each.
20. Why do you think that Gansey feels the need to take care of Ronan? What, if anything, does Gansey get out of this seemingly one-sided relationship?
21. Every character in *The Raven Boys* is on a quest for something. Explain what each of them is looking to find.
22. Blue cannot speak to the dead, but just by being near a psychic, she “makes things louder.” How is this energy a “gift?” How is this energy a nuisance for Blue? Do you think that Blue was drawn to Gansey, Ronan, Adam, and Noah because of this energy, or do you think that they all would have met anyway? Why?
23. Neeve used her psychic powers for fame and money. Do you think that she has a right to use her gift for this? Why or why not? It obviously did not work out very well for her by the end of *The Raven Boys*. Do you think that she deserved what happened to her? Why or why not?
24. The theme of “home” is prevalent throughout *The Raven Boys*. List one word that you think the following characters best associate with the word “home.” What does the word “home” mean to you?
25. Compare and contrast Gansey’s quest for Glendower to the legend of Sir Arthur and his search for the Holy Grail.
26. Would you like to have psychic abilities to communicate with the spirit world? Why or why not?
27. What do you think happened to Blue’s father? Do you think that the time Blue spent in Cabeswater made her want to meet him more? Why or why not?
28. Do you think that Henrietta became a magical place because a ley line is located there, or do you think that the ley line was placed there because Henrietta already possessed magic? Why? Cite specific examples from the book to support your answer.
29. For as long as she can remember, Blue has known that if she were to “kiss her true love, he would die.” Do you think it was fair of Blue’s family to tell her this prophecy? Why or why not? Would you want to know a prophecy about yourself that would drastically change your life? Why or why not?
30. Ravens—both physically and symbolically—are featured throughout *The Raven Boys*. List five examples of their presence. Why do you think the author chose this type of bird for both the title of the book and the incidences that you listed?

# COMPARISONS

You can have interesting discussions comparing the themes in the following books to those in *The Raven Boys*.

## **Armstrong, Kelley**

*The Awakening* (HarperCollins, 2009). A teen's paranormal powers send her on a dangerous journey to save her life and the lives of her friends.

## **Brennan, Sarah Rees**

*Unspoken: The Lynburn Legacy* (Random House, 2012). A teen reaches out to a boy she's been hearing in her head since childhood, and she must work against town secrets and various dangerous events to help save the people she loves the most.

## **Cabot, Meg**

*Abandon* (Point/Scholastic, 2011). Pierce is drawn to a dark stranger, in this enthralling paranormal romance based on the *Persephone* myth.

*Underworld* (Point/Scholastic, 2012). Pierce is being held in the Underworld, but is it for her own safety, or is she in greater danger?

## **Fitzpatrick, Becca**

*Hush, Hush* (Simon & Schuster, 2009). In this forbidden love story, a human is drawn to a fallen angel.

*Finale* (Simon & Schuster, 2012). Destiny and fate intertwine inside a tumultuous relationship.

## **Garcia, Kami**

*Beautiful Redemption* (Little, Brown, 2012). In this gothic supernatural romance, two love-struck teens must fight against their predetermined fate on an epic journey where they fight for their lives, and to stay together.

## **Harrington, Kim**

*Clarity* (Point/Scholastic, 2011). Clarity "Clare" Fern sees things no one else can see, a useful gift when solving a murder.

*Perception* (Point/Scholastic, 2012). Clare receives sinister messages from a secret admirer, and has to find the truth.

## **James, Syree**

*Forbidden* (HarperTeen, 2012). Claire and Alec find one another at an academy where neither of them fit in but the powers they possess and forces working against them make their relationship dangerous and forbidden.

## **Kagwa, Julie**

*The Iron Knight* (Harlequin Teen, 2011). A young prince goes on a dangerous journey to honor a vow and on the way finds true love.

## **Morris, Paula**

*Ruined* (Point/Scholastic, 2010). Rebecca uncovers startling truths about her own past when she befriends Lisette, a ghost in a New Orleans cemetery.

*Unbroken* (Point/Scholastic, 2011). Rebecca returns to New Orleans and meets a new ghost, and finds herself embroiled in another murder mystery.

## **Noël, Alyson**

*Fated (Soul Seekers)* (Griffin/St. Martin's Press, 2012). Daire is sent away to learn to control her mystical powers. When she meets Dace, the boy from her dreams, she must decide if he's the one guy she's meant to be with...or if he's working with her enemies.

## **Oliver, Lauren**

*Delirium* (HarperCollins, 2010). People are taught to fear and are cured of love in future America.

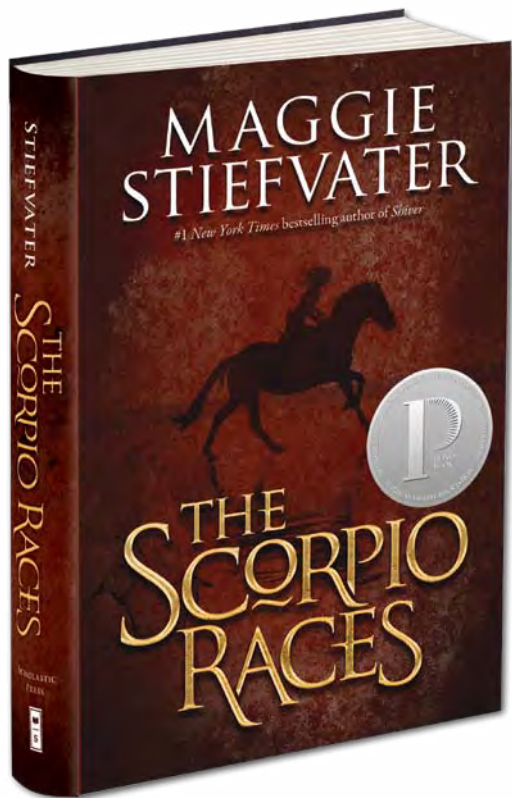
## **Taylor, Laini**

*Lips Touch: Three Times* (Arthur A. Levine Books/Scholastic, 2009). Three tales of supernatural love show how kisses can have grave consequences.

## **Wood, Yvonne**

*Dead Beautiful* (Hyperion, 2010). A teen falls in love with a boy at an academy and finds out that the academy holds its own secrets dealing with the paranormal.

# PRAISE FOR THE SCORPIO RACES



**A 2012 Michael L. Printz Honor Book**

*A Publishers Weekly Best Book of the Year*

*A School Library Journal Best Book of the Year*

*A New York Times Notable Children's Book*

*A Horn Book Fanfare Book*

*A Kirkus Reviews Best Teen Book of the Year*

“[Stiefvater] not only steps out of the young adult fantasy box with *The Scorpio Races* but crushes it with pounding hooves...If *The Scorpio Races* sounds like nothing you've ever read, that's because it is.”

—*The New York Times Book Review*

“With this beautifully executed drama, Stiefvater has established herself as one of the finest YA novelists writing today.”

—*Entertainment Weekly*

★ “Masterful. Like nothing else out there now.” —*Kirkus Reviews*, starred review

★ “A study of courage and loyalty tested....an utterly compelling read.” —*Publishers Weekly*, starred review

★ “An intoxicating ride.” —*Horn Book*, starred review

★ “A book with cross-appeal to lovers of fantasy, horse stories, romance, and action-adventure.”

—*Booklist*, starred review

★ “Action, conflict, excitement, and a heart-stopping climax...marvelous.” —*School Library Journal*, starred review

**Free downloadable discussion guide**

[mediaroom.scholastic.com/files/discussion-guide-scorpio-races-2012.pdf](http://mediaroom.scholastic.com/files/discussion-guide-scorpio-races-2012.pdf)



# PRAISE FOR THE SHIVER TRILOGY

## SHIVER

*A New York Times Bestseller*

*A Publishers Weekly Best Book of the Year*

★ “Stiefvater skillfully increases the tension throughout; her take on werewolves is interesting and original while her characters are refreshingly willing to use their brains to deal with the challenges they face.”

—*Publishers Weekly*, starred review

★ “Beautiful and moving.”

—*School Library Journal*, starred review

## LINGER

*A #1 New York Times Bestseller*

*A USA Today Bestseller*

“Skillfully captures the four teens’ longings for love, forgetting, remembering, righting wrongs and life itself...will leave readers panting for the next sequel.”—*Kirkus Reviews*

“Riveting...impossible to put down...beautifully written.”—*Voice of Youth Advocates*

## FOREVER

*A New York Times Bestseller*

*A USA Today Bestseller*

“An intelligent paranormal romance that surreptitiously folds in serious adolescent issues, including teens’ relationships with their parents, suicidal ideation, morphing bodies and young love.”—*Los Angeles Times*

“Stiefvater’s emotional prose is rich without being melodramatic, and she clearly shares her fans’ love of these characters.”—*Booklist*



# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Maggie Stiefvater** is the #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of *Shiver*, *Linger*, and *Forever*. Since publication, rights to thirty-six foreign editions of *Shiver* have been licensed. Maggie is also the author of *Lament: The Faerie Queen's Deception* and *Ballad: A Gathering of Faerie*, and *The Scorpio Races*—a 2012 Michael L. Printz Honor Book. *The Raven Boys*, the first installment of her new quartet, the Raven Cycle, debuts in September 2012. An avid reader, award-winning artist, and accomplished musician, Maggie lives in Virginia with her husband and their two children.

You can visit Maggie Stiefvater's website at [maggiestiefvater.com](http://maggiestiefvater.com), view her Facebook page at [facebook.com/MaggieStiefvaterAuthorPage](https://www.facebook.com/MaggieStiefvaterAuthorPage), and follow her on Twitter at [@mstiefvater](https://twitter.com/mstiefvater)

For more information, visit [mediaroom.scholastic.com/maggiestiefvater](http://mediaroom.scholastic.com/maggiestiefvater)



Photo © Robert Severi 2011

## The Raven Boys: Book One of the Raven Cycle

Hardcover: 978-0-545-42492-9 • \$18.99

eBook: 978-0-545-46979-1

Audiobook: 978-0-545-46593-9 • \$39.99

## The Scorpio Races

Hardcover: 978-0-545-22490-1 • \$17.99

Paperback: 978-0-545-22491-8 • \$9.99 (May 2013)

eBook: 978-0-545-38827-6

Audiobook: 978-0-545-35702-9 • \$39.99

## Shiver

Hardcover: 978-0-545-12326-6 • \$17.99

Paperback: 978-0-545-12327-3 • \$9.99

eBook: 978-0-545-22725-4

Audiobook: 978-0-545-16506-8 • \$39.95

## Linger

Hardcover: 978-0-545-12328-0 • \$17.99

Paperback: 978-0-545-12329-7 • \$9.99

eBook: 978-0-545-28316-8

Audiobook: 978-0-545-20707-2 • \$39.99

## Forever

Hardcover: 978-0-545-25908-8 • \$18.99

Paperback: 978-0-545-25909-5 • \$9.99

eBook: 978-0-545-38940-2

Audiobook: 978-0-545-31528-9 • \$39.99

Books may be ordered from any bookseller or your usual vendor. Teachers and librarians may order from Scholastic, 2931 East McCarty Street, P.O. Box 7502, Jefferson City, MO 65102, or call toll-free 1-800-724-6527.

Discussion guide written by Mary Kate Doman



[thisisteen.com/books](http://thisisteen.com/books)



Scholastic Press

SCHOLASTIC and associated logos are trademarks and/or registered trademarks of Scholastic Inc.