The Tribe Book 2: The Disappearance of Ember Crow

Ambelin Kwaymullina
ISBN: 9781921720093
ARRP: $19.95
NZRRP: $21.99
November 2013

Outline:

“However this ends, you’re probably going to find out some things about me, and they’re not nice things. But, Ash, even after you know, do you think you could remember the good? And whatever you end up discovering – try to think of me kindly. If you can.”

Ember Crow is missing. To find her friend, Ashala Wolf must control her increasingly erratic and dangerous Sleepwalking ability and leave the Firstwood. But Ashala doesn’t realise that Ember is harbouring terrible secrets and is trying to shield the Tribe and all Illegals from a devastating new threat – her own past.

Author/Illustrator Information:

Ambelin Kwaymullina loves reading sci-fi and fantasy books, and has wanted to write a novel since she was six years old. She comes from the Palyku people of the Pilbara region of Western Australia. When not writing or reading she works in cultural heritage, illustrates picture books and hangs out with her dogs. She has previously written a number of children’s books, both alone and with other members of her family. Her first novel, The Tribe Book 1: The Interrogation of Ashala Wolf, was short-listed in both the Science Fiction and Young Adult Fiction categories of the 2012 Aurealis Awards.

How to use these notes:

This story works on many levels. The suggested activities are therefore for a wide age and ability range. Please select accordingly.

Also in The Tribe series:

The Interrogation of Ashala Wolf
9781921720086
AUS$19.95/NZ$21.99
Classroom ideas available

The Tribe Book 3: The Foretelling of Georgie Spider
Coming 2014

The Tribe Book 4: The Execution of Neville Rose
Coming 2015

Recommended reading level:
- Secondary years 9+
- Ages 14+

Key Learning Areas:
- English

Example of:
- Novel
- Fantasy/science-fiction genre

Themes/ Ideas:
- Memories
- Reality
- Trust
- Friendship
- Forgiveness
- Responsibility

National Curriculum Focus:*

English content descriptions:

Year 9
ACELA1553
ACELA1559
ACELA1561
ACELT1633
ACELT1671
ACELT1634
ACELT1637
ACELY1739
ACELY1742

Year 10
ACELA1564
ACELA1565
ACELA1570
ACELT1639
ACELT1812
ACELT1642
ACELT1749
ACELY1749
ACELY1752

*Notes may be downloaded and printed for regular classroom use only.
Discussion Questions

• “I was one among the thirteen that were the Pack, and everything was as it should be.” (Page 7). The novel opens with Ashala living with a wolf pack. What do you think has happened to Ashala since the end of book one that would lead to her leaving the Tribe to live with the wolves?

• In The Interrogation of Ashala Wolf and The Disappearance of Ember Crow, large parts of the story are told in flashback through Ember’s ability to capture memories in objects (usually a stone). How does this storytelling technique affect the pace of the novels? How would the novels be different if the stories were told chronologically?

• Ambelin Kwaymullina comes from the Palyku people of the Pilbara region of Western Australia. How has she woven the spiritual beliefs and cultural heritage of her people into the story?

• “You’re not alone,” I whispered. “You’ve got us.” (Page 24) How important is having a good group of friends as a support network? How would Ashala and Ember be affected without the support network of the Tribe?

• “And whatever you end up discovering – try to think of me kindly. If you can.” (Page 28) What are the dangers of keeping secrets from loved-ones? Why did Ember feel she couldn’t tell Ashala the truth about herself from the beginning?

• “… I can’t tell a friend from an enemy when I’m Sleepwalking anymore. I could have snapped you in half, and I don’t want to hurt you.” (Page 41) Ashala is afraid to fall asleep in the beginning of The Disappearance of Ember Crow. How does the fear of hurting loved ones with her Sleepwalking ability affect Ashala? How does prolonged periods of no sleep affect her ability as a leader?

• “Sleepwalking is your ability. It is not your power.” (Page 45) What is grandfather referring to here? What is the difference between ability and power? What are the pitfalls of getting the two confused?

• At the end of The Interrogation of Ashala Wolf, Ashala kills Evan, an enforcer. How does this affect her in The Disappearance of Ember Crow? How does she reconcile this within herself?

• Jeremy Duoro and others present at the battle at Detention Centre 3 in the end of the first book are haunted by the supposed deaths of the children that were actually protected by the Saurs. Is it ethical of the Tribe to let people go on believing the children were killed to further their cause? Is it ever ethical to lie or deceive? Also think about the lie that Prime Willis and Ashala tell at the end of “The Battle” (Page 411).

• How does the revelation that Ember Crow is an AINGL affect your perception of the character from the beginning of the series to now?

• Ember and her brothers and sisters are programmed to feel extreme pain if they kill a person. If they can’t “resolve” a death they shut down/die. How could this system be exploited by immoral AINGLs? What could be another method of preventing AINGLs from killing people?

• Jules’s ability allows him to shapeshift and take on the appearance of another person. How would the existence of shapeshifters affect the way you trust people around you?
• As the leader of the Tribe, Ashala feels responsible for the members and will put herself in danger in order to protect those around her, even if it results in her death. Do you think these two facets of Ashala’s personality (desire to lead the Tribe/willingness to put herself in danger to protect Tribe members) conflict? How could Ashala lead the Tribe if she is injured or killed protecting someone? Conversely, how could she lead the Tribe effectively if she were not willing to die for its members?

• If you were to join the Tribe, what would your ability be and what animal would you have a connection with? Why?

• Ashala tells Leo “… I think there are a lot of perfect moments in this world.” (Page 266) What do you think Ashala is referring to?

• What does Ember mean when she says this? “… ideas can be violent. That they can shape violence, and justify it and perpetuate it.” (Page 303)

• This book has several characters who struggle with the feeling that they don’t deserve to be forgiven for a bad act. Discuss how self-doubt and the power of forgiveness affect Ashala and Ember throughout the novel.

• What is the last line of the novel? Why does Ashala think that?