



Walker Books Discussion Guide



The Rift

Rachael Crow
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Outline:

When the Rift opens, death follows.

For generations, the Rangers of Black Water Island have guarded the Old Herd against horrors released by the Rift. Cal West, an apprentice Ranger with a rare scar and even rarer gifts, fights daily to prove he belongs within their ranks. After nine years away, Meg Archer returns to her childhood home only to find the Island is facing a new threat that not even the Rangers are prepared for. Meg and Cal can't ignore their attraction, but can they face their darkest fears to save the Island from disaster?

Author Information:

Rachael Crow began her working life as an English teacher after completing a degree in Classical Studies and Drama at the University of Canterbury. She dabbled in acting, directing and writing for amateur theatre productions and small independent film ventures. Her passion for dialogue and characterisation finally led to long-form writing with the Spark series. Rachael's enthusiasm for classical heroes, teen angst and popular culture informs much of her creative process. She enjoys small town life teaching, writing and mentoring at the top of the South Island of New Zealand where she lives with her husband and three daughters. Visit her online at www.rachaelcrow.com

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 by Rachael Crow



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Shield
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These notes are for:

- Secondary
- Ages 14+

Key Learning Areas:

- English

Example of:

- YA Fiction

Themes/Ideas:

- Supernatural
- Survival
- Bravery

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

Walker Books Australia
Locked Bag 22
Newtown, N.S.W., 2042

Ph +61 2 9517 9577
Fax +61 2 9517 9997

These notes were created by Steve Spargo.
For enquiries please contact:
educationwba@walkerbooks.com.au

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Discussion Questions and Activities:

1. The title of this book *The Rift*, could have more than one meaning. Discuss the literal and metaphorical interpretations of the title.
2. Identify the themes present in this novel. Discuss how each of these themes are represented.
3. Discuss the fantasy genre. What are some of its tropes or elements? How does *The Rift* fit in this genre? How does it subvert?
4. When Meg arrives with Cora at the docks, they are confronted by a large group of protesters who are both for and against the cull. Discuss what the arguments may be for both groups of protesters.
5. When Meg first arrives back at Black Water Island she discovers that Cal has never left the island and has been taken on as a Ranger. Discuss the conflicting feelings Meg has about Cal becoming a Ranger. Why do you think Meg has these feelings?
6. Cal has more powers than any of the other Rangers of his community, including Sargent, yet he still struggles to fit in. Why is that? Why do you think Cal cares what they think and tries to keep to himself?
7. The idea of home and the connection of place is heavily explored throughout the novel. Meg constantly refers to the pull of Black Water Island and she struggles with having been away for nine years. Why does Meg have these feelings of guilt? Discuss the idea of home and what you feel it entails. Is there a place you have been that you feel an intense connection to?
8. It is revealed that in order to strengthen the Actaeon's Bane collected from the Herd on Black Water Island, Nutris Pharmaceuticals has begun giving some of the deer chemicals. Discuss the ethical ramifications of this experiment. Do you have objections to animal testing of products? If so, why?
9. The Master Rangers have decided that their community needs a change in leadership and choose Cal because of his powers and abilities. Do you think this should be their sole basis for choosing a leader? Why/why not? Discuss the kinds of qualities you think a good leader should possess.
10. Jackson Spear reveals to Cal that the motivations behind his and Sargent's plan comes down to "sustainability, not only for Nutris but your the community." (page 305) Do you think this justifies their actions? Discuss your thoughts on sacrificing the few in order to secure a better future for the many.
11. What did you think of the end of the book? As a class, speculate on what you think may happen in the future, after the events at the Rift Stone.

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