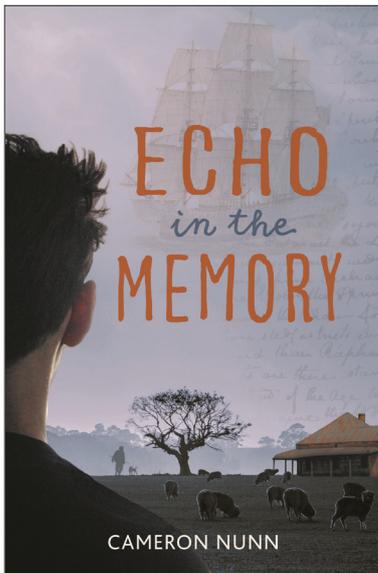


BOOK CLUB NOTES

ECHO *in the* MEMORY

CAMERON NUNN



FOR READERS AGED 13+
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What if memories never die? An evocative Australian YA novel about family, place, and how history has a way of weaving itself into our present.

What if memories never die? When fifteen-year-old Will is sent away to stay with his grandparents in rural New South Wales, he finds the isolated farm strangely familiar -- except the memories he's channelling are not his own. So whose are they? And what does his grandfather know? As two stories unfold, nearly two hundred years apart, two boys exiled to what feels like the end of the earth struggle to find their identities and voices in the face of abandonment and tragedy. A page-turning YA novel that explores the darker moments of our convict past and how they resonate today.

About the Author

Cameron Nunn is an English and History teacher in Western Sydney, where he lives with his wife Belinda. He has a PhD from Macquarie University in child convicts and was awarded the NSW Premier's History teacher's scholarship to research child convicts in the archives in London. *Echo in the Memory* is the result of that research. Cameron's first novel, *Shadows in the Mirror* is also available from Walker Books.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Echo in the Memory is told through two different voices, one in the past through first person narration, and one in the present told through third person. How did the different perspectives affect you as a reader? How did the writing style change? Did you find yourself connecting to one character more than another? Why or why not?

The novel begins with an epigraph from T.S. Eliot's *Four Quarters*. How does this quote relate to the events of *Echo in the Memory*, and why do you think Cameron Nunn borrowed from it for the title of the book?

How are right and wrong presented in the novel? Are some characters presented purely as 'good' or 'bad' or are there shades of grey in everyone? Did you find yourself forgiving some characters for their actions easier than others?

Although in completely different eras, both main characters are at a crossroads in their lives. What's similar or different about the issues they face in the novel and how each of the boys approaches solving them?

In the present timeline, what narrative and textual strategies does Cameron Nunn use to weave the fantastical element of Will's memories in with reality?

How does *Echo in the Memory* shine a light on the convict experience? Did you learn anything that surprised you?

The attitude and actions towards Aboriginal people in the past timeline can be confronting to read. Do you think it's important for us to know and understand how Aboriginal people were treated in the past? Why or why not?

Both timelines are primarily set in the same location: Bymedura. In what ways is the land important to each of the protagonists and why?

There are many moments of sadness and loss in the novel – including Will leaving behind his home in the past and the deaths of Will's mother and grandfather in the present. How do different characters in the novel work through their grief? Is there a right or wrong way to process it?

How does *Echo in the Memory* explore the topic of mental health? What impact does his family's struggles with mental health have on Will?

What did you think of the ending? Were you surprised that Will and his grandfather were connected to the memories of their relative? Why or why not?