

A Choose to Read Ohio Toolkit

Use this toolkit to plan book discussions, library programs, or classroom activities.

Meet Ohio author Rae Carson and learn about her debut novel.

Select from a range of discussion questions and extension activities to deepen the experience of reading *The Girl of Fire and Thorns*.

Discover websites and companion books to explore topics and themes in depth.

The Girl of Fire and Thorns

By Rae Carson



About the Book

Once a century, one person is chosen for greatness.

Elisa is the chosen one.

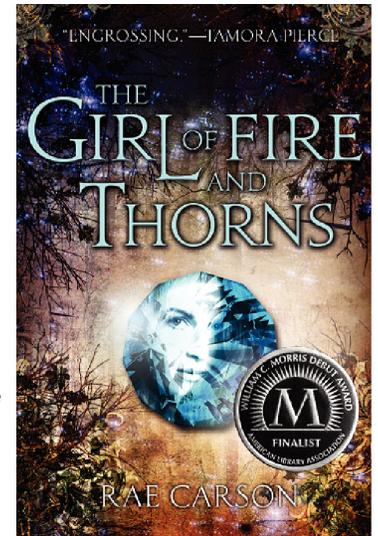
But she is also the younger of two princesses. The one who has never done anything remarkable, and can't see how she ever will.

Now, on her sixteenth birthday, she has become the secret wife of a handsome and worldly king—a king whose country is in turmoil. A king who needs her to be the chosen one, not a failure of a princess.

And he's not the only one who seeks her. Savage enemies, seething with dark magic, are hunting her. A daring, determined revolutionary thinks she could be his people's savior, and he looks at her in a way that no man has ever looked at her before. Soon it is not just her life, but her very heart that is at stake.

Elisa could be everything to those who need her most. If the prophecy is fulfilled. If she finds the power deep within herself. If she doesn't die young.

Most of the chosen do.



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Book Details

The Girl of Fire and Thorns by Rae Carson.
HarperCollins, 2011, ISBN 9780062221834 . Ages 12-up. 730L Lexile.
<http://www.harpercollinschildrens.com/books/Girl-Fire-Thorns-Rae-Carson/>

Available as an ebook and digital audiobook through the Ohio Digital Library:
<http://ohdbks.lib.overdrive.com>

The Girl of Fire and Thorns is the first novel in the *Girl of Fire and Thorns* trilogy. In *The Crown of Embers*, Elisa must follow a trail of long-forgotten—and forbidden—clues, from the deep, hidden catacombs of her own city to the treacherous seas. Finally, in *The Bitter Kingdom*, Elisa travels into the unknown realm of the enemy to win back her true love, save her country, and uncover the final secrets of her destiny.
<http://www.harpercollins.com/books/9780062026514>
<http://www.harpercollins.com/books/9780062026545>



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About the Author

Rae Carson is the author of the New York Times–bestselling *The Girl of Fire and Thorns* series. Her books tend to contain lots of adventure, magic, and smart girls who make (mostly) smart choices. Originally from California, Rae Carson lived for years in central Ohio and now lives in Arizona with her husband.

Author Resources

Rae Carson's Official Website

<http://www.raecarson.com/>

Author Page on HarperCollins Website

<http://www.harpercollins.com/authors/37637>

Follow Rae Carson on Twitter

<https://twitter.com/raecarson>

Connect with Rae Carson on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/raecarsonbooks>

Entertainment Weekly Interview with Rae Carson about *The Girl of Fire and Thorns*

<http://www.ew.com/article/2012/09/13/fire-and-thorns-author-rae-carson>

For publicity and speaking engagement inquiries:

Contact Stephanie Macy, School & Library Marketing,
HarperCollins Children's Books:

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Go Further

*Ideas for extending the experience of reading **The Girl of Fire and Thorns**.*

**"It's a small
comfort that I
will likely fulfill
my act of
service
someday, even
without
realizing it."
-Elisa**

Elisa learned military philosophy and strategy from *The Belleza Guerra*. In some ways, the *Belleza Guerra* may seem similar to Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*, an ancient real-life text centered on military philosophy and strategy. A free English translation of *The Art of War* is available at http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/The_Art_of_War_%28Sun%29. Compare *The Art of War* with the *Belleza Guerra* as presented in *The Girl of Fire and Thorns*. Do you think they're similar? Why or why not? Do you think the author was thinking about *The Art of War* when writing about *The Belleza Guerra*?

(RL.9-10.9; RH.9-10.6)

Politics plays a major role in the plot of *The Girl of Fire and Thorns*. Elisa's marriage is arranged for political reasons, Basajuan is encouraged to fight by a promise of independence, and the Quorum is divided by various political motivations. Research global-level politics using online resources available to students through INFOhio (<http://www.infohio.org/>) and to all Ohio residents through Ohio Web Library (<http://www.ohioweblibrary.org/>). What are some examples of historical political events that are similar to events in *The Girl of Fire and Thorns*? How would Elisa have handled these historical situations? What would you have done?

(Social Studies: High School – Modern World History: Historical Thinking and Skills; Social Studies: High School – World Geography: Globalization)

Talk About It

Topics to share when discussing **The Girl of Fire and Thorns** with teens.

*Educators: Every CTRO book may be used to support Ohio's New Learning Standards (Common Core) English Language Arts reading, writing, and speaking and listening standards. Examples are listed below; other standards also apply. **The Girl of Fire and Thorns** may also support Social Studies standards (American Government: Civic Involvement and Public Policy; Contemporary World Issues: Civil and Human Rights).*

Librarians, parents, and others: These discussion questions are also for library programs, family activities, and other projects. Learning Standards define what students should know and be able to do at each grade. They are included for teachers who want to use this book in school. For more information, see the Ohio Dept. of Education website, <http://education.ohio.gov>. Click on "Ohio's New Learning Standards" in the Teacher Resources section.

The Girl of Fire and Thorns is written as a first person narrative. Discuss why you believe Carson chose to write from this perspective. Is this perspective effective and fitting for the story? Select and rewrite scenes from **The Girl of Fire and Thorns** using other perspectives or points of view such as objective point of view, third person point of view, first person point of view, omniscient or limited omniscient points of view. For more information on types of points of view visit:

<http://www.learner.org/interactives/literature/read/pov2.html>. (RL.9-12.3; RL.9-12.5; W.9-12.3)

Elisa says, "All my life, I've been reminded that I am destined for service" (p. 7). How did growing up with such reminders shape her personality? How do you think Elisa would have been a different character without the Godstone and her call to service? Imagine and describe an alternate life for her. (RL.9-12.1; SL.9-12.1)

What tools does Elisa use to make decisions? Does she grow in her decision-making skills during the story? If so, what causes this growth? If not, is this problematic? Cite specific examples from the story. (SL.9-10.3)

Who are the bravest characters? The most cowardly? What are the differences in the ways they act? (SL.9-12.1)

How does being a royal princess affect the way Elisa lives? How does it affect the way she understands people? (RL.9-10.2)

Think about the religious elements of Elisa's world—the Scriptura Sancta, the meaning of the Godstone, the rituals of the worship service described on pp. 84–86—and compare and contrast them with real-world religious beliefs and customs. Do you think Elisa's religion closely resembles any real-world religion, or does it contain elements from different belief systems? What similarities can be found between the cause of Elisa's war and the root of real-world religious conflicts? (RL.9-10.9)

Consider Elisa's thought: "I didn't need faith in God so much as I needed faith in myself" (p. 422). What roles do Elisa's faith in God and her faith in herself play in the outcome of the story? Does one play a bigger role than the other? (RL.9-10.2)

What do you think will happen in book two? Write your own first chapter for the second book. (W.9-12.4)

Some discussion questions courtesy of Epic Reads (<http://www.epicreads.com/>). Guide available online at <http://www.scribd.com/doc/124535555/The-Girl-Of-Fire-And-Thorns-Discussion-Guide>. Used with permission.

Go Further (continued)

Survival in harsh conditions is a recurring theme in **The Girl of Fire and Thorns**. Imagine you are dropped into a remote location with limited supplies. What are some of the resources you would need to survive? What are some strategies you would use to protect yourself from strangers or animals?

(English Language Arts SL.9-12.1; Social Studies: High School – World Geography: Environment and Society)

Many of the characters mentioned in **The Girl of Fire and Thorns** are skilled in traditional trades, such as hunting, farming, ceramics, and metal-working. Pick a trade skill mentioned in **The Girl of Fire and Thorns**, and research what it takes to make a living from that trade. What tools are used? What skills are needed? Would you be able to make a living in that profession?

(Social Studies: High School – Economics and Financial Literacy – Fundamentals of Economics; Social Studies: High School – Economics and Financial Literacy – Working and Earning)

Check It Out

Companion books for *The Girl of Fire and Thorns*.

Read **Graceling** by Kristin Cashore. (ISBN 9780547258300). In **Graceling**, quick-witted Katsa is one of the few who receives a Grace. Graces are special skills that vary from person to person. Some have a Grace that helps them dance. For the King's beautiful niece, her Grace makes Katsa a skilled assassin. Katsa's dark talent is noticed by the king, who forces her to put her deadly efficiency to use as his agent. For her part, Katsa seeks to understand the meaning of her Grace, and how her murderous skill can be used for good. Or can it?

Read **Red Queen** by Victoria Aveyard. (ISBN 9780062310637). Victoria Aveyard's sweeping tale of seventeen-year-old Mare, a common girl whose once-latent magical power draws her into the dangerous intrigue of the king's palace. Will her power save her or condemn her? Mare Barrow's world is divided by blood—those with common, Red blood serve the Silver-blooded elite, who are gifted with superhuman abilities. Mare is a Red, scraping by as a thief in a poor, rural village, until a twist of fate throws her in front of the Silver court. Before the king, princes, and all the nobles, she discovers she has an ability of her own.

Read **The Burning Sky** by Sherry Thomas. (ISBN 9780062207296). Iolanthe Seabourne is the greatest elemental mage of her generation—or so she's been told. The one prophesied for years to be the savior of the Realm. It is her duty and destiny to face and defeat the Bane, the most powerful tyrant and mage the world has ever known. This would be a suicide task for anyone, let alone a reluctant sixteen-year-old girl with no training.

Read **Dune** by Frank Herbert (ISBN 9780340839935). In the distant future, young Paul Atreides is the heir of House Atreides, which has just acquired a new possession: the desert planet Arrak. Arrak is known throughout the stars as the only source of Melange, the most valuable substance in the universe. Surely such a valuable planet was not given to the House Atreides out of the Emperor's generosity, but it would be politically foolish for Paul's father, Duke Leto, to refuse. Intrigue, betrayal, and a fight for survival all unfold in what has been cited as the world's best-selling science fiction novel.

Select descriptions of companion books provided by HarperCollins. Used with permission.

Explore More

Additional ideas and resources to use with *The Girl of Fire and Thorns*.

The British Library: Turning the Pages

<http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/virtualbooks/index.html>

The British Library presents a collection of manuscripts, viewable online with a realistic page-turning interface. Recreate Elisa's experience of reviewing ancient manuscripts through this interactive and award-winning collection.

Epic Reads Book Club: The Girl of Fire and Thorns

<http://www.scribd.com/doc/124535555/The-Girl-Of-Fire-And-Thorns-Discussion-Guide>

A discussion guide for *The Girl of Fire and Thorns*. (Select questions from this resource are presented with permission in the "Talk About It" section of this guide.)

NOVA: Desert Biome

<http://www.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/tdc02.sci.life.eco.desert/desert-biome/>

This website offers an informational video and other teaching materials about desert biomes like the one featured in *The Girl of Fire and Thorns*.

Choose to Read Ohio, a project of the State Library of Ohio, the Ohioana Library Association, and the Ohio Center for the Book, encourages public libraries, schools, families, and others to build a community of readers and an appreciation of Ohio authors and literature. CTRO is adaptable for use in classrooms, libraries, bookstores, by book discussion groups, families, and other community groups.

Explore Choose to Read Ohio resources & toolkits:

<http://library.ohio.gov/ctro>.

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