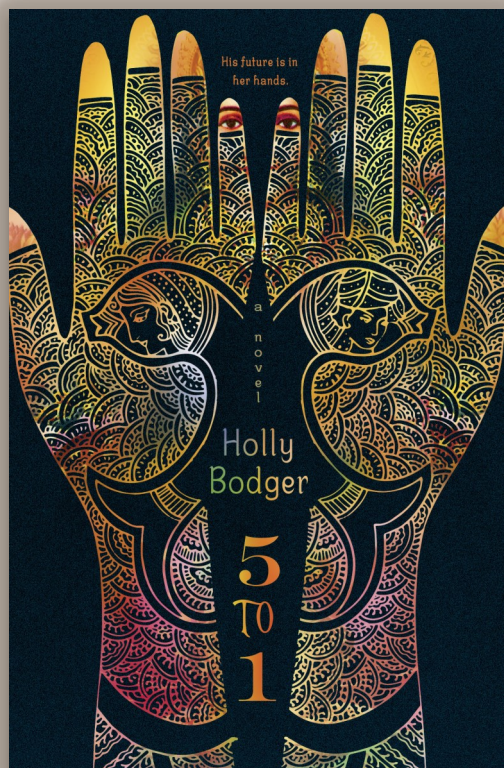


EDUCATORS' GUIDE

INCLUDES COMMON CORE STANDARDS CORRELATIONS

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5 TO 1

by Holly Bodger

Knopf Books for Young Readers

Trade

978-0385391535

256 pages

\$17.99

Reading level ages 12-18



Note to Educators

The young adult novel, *5 TO 1*, examines the issues of price of freedom and the roles of women and men in society. Through the eyes of Sudasa and Kiran, 17 year-olds facing a life-changing decision, the novels follows their choices over three days. The educator's guide for *5 TO 1* provides discussion questions, literature questions, writing ideas, and activities relating to the book, its topics, and Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for use in the classroom, writing assignments, and general discussion of the novel. These questions will allow you to look more deeply into the story and characters while addressing the relevant CCSS in the curriculum. The standards listed are for grades 6-12 and educators can apply the standard to their grade with few adaptations. These suggestions can be used as written or changed to fit individual educator needs and ideas specific to the classroom.

About the Book

The young adult novel, *5 TO 1*, opens with 17-year-old Sudasa living in a society run by her grandmother, a matriarchal dictator, in 2054. Due to a reduction in the birth of girls because of the previous years rampant gender selection, the country now has five boys for each girl of marriageable age. The government is run entirely by women. Boys and men have no say, choice, or decision in their life or future. They are destined to serve and a lucky few may have the honor of siring daughters.

The 17 year-old girls choose their future mates from a group of five boys selected by lottery. These boys compete in five tests which are devised to give every teen male a chance to marry. The four losers from each group must serve the country's women or work for the country's protection.

Sudasa finds herself with a group of five boys that includes her arrogant, brutal cousin, whom her grandmother wishes her to choose. Torn by the dawning realization that in spite of her luxurious life as a woman, she wishes for freedom even more, Sudasa has a difficult choice: choose her cousin to satisfy her family's wishes or choose the young man who rebels at the tests and challenges the system. Sudasa is forced to make a life-changing decision that will affect her happiness for the rest of her life. The story, set in the fictional country of Koyanagar, is told in authentic, alternating points of view by Sudasa and Kiran through lyrical, realistic prose and poetry. The text is sprinkled with Hindi terms and a few other dialects that lend an authenticity to the novel's story. The author's website contains additional information about the country, including rules governing it and a vocabulary list of the terms.

About the Author

A long-time resident of Ottawa, Canada, Holly has been working in publishing since she graduated with an English degree from the University of Ottawa.

5 TO 1 is Holly's debut novel.



Discussion Questions

What was the role of men in the Koyanagar society? How do you think men viewed their roles in society? How did women view the roles of men? [RL.1, 2]

What kind of marriage do you think Sudasa would have with her cousin if she chose him? How might she feel and how would he treat her? Give reasons that support your explanation using examples. [RL.1, 6]

The theme of choice runs throughout the entire novel. Using examples in the novel, discuss the advantages and disadvantages of both having freedom of choice and not having it in this society. Use examples from particular scenes. How does this compare to your freedoms and limitations. [RL.1, 2, 5]

What other themes were present in the book? How were they portrayed? [RL.2]

What were the issues relating to gender, both before and after the government changed? What gender issues are present today? Are there any? Why do they exist? [RL.1, 6]

The phrase “second class citizen” comes to mind throughout the book. What does that mean and give examples from the book. How does the issue correlate with society today? [RL.1, 2]

Discuss the role of rocks as both as a reward and their use to both reward freedom and prevent it. Include the use of irony for this symbol and find a parallel to something in current day that has this duality and explain it. [RL.4, 6]

What part does the structure and style of the story contribute to the overall mood of the book? How so? [RL.5]

What elements made the setting in Koyanagar believable, even though it is a fictional country? [RL.3]

Gandhi was known to say, “An eye for eye makes the whole world blind.” Explain the statement and discuss how this statement is demonstrated in *5 TO 1*. [RL.1]

Why were the male teens ages 15-17 made to undergo the Tests? Do you agree or disagree that this is the appropriate age for the selection and marriage? Why? [RL.1, 5]

What decision do you believe Sudasa made at the end of the novel? [RL.3]

Who had some form of power in the course of the novel? How did they use their power and how did it affect them and others around them? [RL.2, 3]

Reading

Describe Sudasa in her environment and how she changed over the three days in the book. Support your description and reasons with evidence or quotes from the text. [RL.1, 3]

Explain gender selection. Analyze the text to find reasons why gender selection became such a problem before Koyanagar was formed. Provide additional reasons for why it continues to be a problem. [RL.4, 6]

Sudasa refers to Kiran as Contestant Five until Chapter 32 and then uses his name. Discuss the evolution of her attitude toward him. How did her view of him progress or change? [RL.1, 3]

How do the differences in POV reflect the social differences in the characters? Provide specific examples. [RL.6]

What is the relationship between Sudasa and each of her family members? What changes occur in them by the end of the tests and how does this affect the story's end? [RL.3, 6]

Locate examples of words used in the text in which context played an important part in understanding the meaning. Explain how the context helped define the words. [RL.4]

How did the vocabulary choices enhance the novel? Did it add to an understanding of the fictitious country or setting? How? [RL.1, 4, 5]

Discuss the significance of the title and give your interpretation. Does it hold a dual meaning? Explain your thoughts. [RL.1, 2, 4]

How did the different points of view define the characters and in what ways did they affect the novel's storyline? [RL.1, 6]

Compare and contrast the points of view of the two main characters. Support your answers with examples. [RL.1, 6]

Choose a scene and explain how it moves the plot along or contributes to a significant change in the story or plot. [RL.5]

What event triggers Sudasa's determination to escape? Was there more than one? Explain and provide examples. [RL.1, 3]

Give an objective summarization of the plot and relate the theme or central idea to the plot. [RL.2]

Reading cont...

How does the setting shape or influence the characters in their relationships? Explain. [RL.1, 6]

How does the author use dialogue to reveal the storyline and characters? Give examples using two characters. [RL.1, 3]

Analyze the cultural experience of the fictional country of Koyanagar depicted in this novel and compare and contrast it with the country of India, one of its neighbors, by reading an Indian folktale or nonfiction book about India. [RL.9]

Discuss the relationship of Sudasa and her father. How did they influence the other? [RL.1, 3, 6]

Describe how the novel's plot is revealed. Did Sudasa respond or change from the beginning to the time she made her decision? Explain your ideas. [RL.1, 3]

How did the structure of the book contribute to the story line? Do you think it was effective or not? Explain your reasons using evidence from the novel. [RL.3, 5]

In what ways did the author use the structure of the book to create tension, mystery, or surprise? [RL.1, 4, 5]

How did the author's choices in relating the story elements affect the setting, the action's order, and each character's actions? [RL.3, 6]

What effect does the author's use of repetition in Chapters 1, at the end of 4, and 31 add to Sudasa's and Kiran's sense of being trapped, yet changing internally? What words are used to show this? [RL.1, 2, 3]

Give examples from the novel of the ways the author uses words to emphasize the events occurring. [RL.1, 4]

How does the author use words to convey Sudasa's feelings? Cite specific examples from the novel. [RL.4, 6]

How does the structure contribute to the novel's pacing and the increasing urgency that shows the need for Sudasa to take action? [RL.4, 5, 6]

Activities

Create a fictional country and develop a set of rules for governing it. [W.3; RL.2]

Write and present a play that clearly illustrates one of the Tests. [W.1,3; RL.1, 2, 3]

Develop a vocabulary list of the words indigenous to Koyanagar and give them definition based on context. [W.4; RL.4]

Read another novel for this age set in India. Compare and contrast the story elements of both books and support your analysis using examples from both books. [RL.7]

After reading 5 TO 1, read the *Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins, *Divergent* by Veronica Roth, *The Maze Runner* by James Dashner, or *Ship Breaker* by Paolo Bacigalupi. What similarities did you find in both novels? Did you find their two worlds similar or different? Explain how using specific examples from both books. [RL.7]

Set up a debate and hold it. Use the topic: Would men or women be better suited to make the rules and carry out the governing of a country? [SL.1, 3, 4, 6]

Writing

Appa says, “There are no bad people. Only bad choices.” Do you agree with this? Support your claim by analyzing three characters and their choices. [W.1, 3]

Compare and contrast the gender roles before and after the new government in Koyanagar came to power. Discuss your personal reaction to them. [W.1, 3, 4]

Appa says, “The people at the top of the pyramid always think the sun shines the brightest.” Using examples from the text, prove or disprove his point. [W.1, 3, 4]

The laws of Koyanagar were created with the intention of making a more fair country. Using the laws posted on the author’s website, discuss which you would change in order to fix this country? <http://hollybodger.com/extras/laws-koyanagar/> [W.1, 3, 4]

Discuss the relationship between Sudasa and her mother. How did it differ from Sudasa’s relationship with her grandmother? [W.3]

Analyze how the author wrote about the two main characters and give evidence of how the story structure supported their similarities and differences. [W.1]

Write about the choice you believe Sudasa made and support your answer with evidence from the novel. [W.3e, 4]

Beyond the Book

The novel centered on the government by a matriarchal society and dictator and results of a restriction of freedom by a few key characters.

Research a current form of government outside your country. Compare and contrast the fictional government and laws with a current society and their current laws.

Research issues concerning the rights of women and current claims of inequality. What are they and what changes are taking place in the roles of society and women? Take a side and argue the need for change and what might be done.

Other Titles of Interest

Jasmine Skies by Sita Brahmachari

Gandhi and the Quit India Movement: Days of Decision by Jen Green

Karma by Cathy Ostlere

The Midnight Palace by Carlos Ruiz Zafon

Saraswati's Way by Monika Schroder

Secret Keeper by Mitali Perkins

Climbing the Stairs by Padma Venkatraman

About this Guide's Writer

Shirley Duke is a freelance children's writer and former teacher. She holds a bachelor's degree in biology and a master's degree in education from Austin College in Sherman, Texas. She taught many years in the Texas public school system in elementary, middle school, and high school. She is the author of over forty nonfiction books for the school and library market and writes many teacher and educational guides for several publishers and authors. She wrote a picture book and also co-authored a book for librarians, *Teaching STEM and Common Core with Mentor Texts: Collaborative Lesson Plans, K-5*.

Praise for 5 TO 1

“An engaging dystopian novel set in India that poignantly explores gender politics.” – School Library Journal

“Flavored by a South Asian cultural essence, this accessible dystopian novel builds readers’ belief in the driving message: to be fair to oneself.” – Booklist

“5 to 1 is a visual and intriguing masterpiece that opens the imagination and never leaves even after the book is closed.” – USA Today

“This is a fast, fascinating story that will appeal to many readers.” – VOYA
