



# Unraveller

Frances Hardinge

Tome Society Book Award

## Discussion Guide



### Pre-reading questions

1. Curses are a major theme of the novel Unraveller. Have you read other books that involved curses? If so, what were they and how were they able to be broken?
2. There are many dangerous creatures in the Wilds that are inspired by folklore. Discuss the creatures of folklore you know and then read Unraveller to discover if they appear throughout the story.
3. Based on the cover, make some predictions about what you think will happen in the book.

### Post-reading questions

1. How do you feel about the treatment of convicted cursers? What about those who voluntarily turned themselves in before releasing their curse?
2. Nettle tells Kellen that he has a responsibility to the cursed people he saves, however, Kellen believes that can be someone else's job. Why does Nettle say, "You've only begun to save them."?
3. Discuss the relationship between Kellen and Nettle. What has brought them together and how are their lives intertwined? How do they bring out each other's strengths and weaknesses?
4. Why does Kellen not want to dwell on the past? What is it that he is trying to avoid? How did he come to possess the power to unravel curses?
5. What was Nettle's curse? How did being cursed affect her and the rest of her family? How did each sibling cope with no longer being cursed? How did it affect the way Nettle interacts with those around her?
6. **\*\*Spoiler\*\*** Why is Clover different from other cursers? How does this affect the way Kellen and Nettle deal with cursers?
7. Why did the Little Brothers originally decide to give their gifts of curse eggs to the powerless? Discuss this quote, "Most curses are unfair. Hatred is blind." Why do you think that most curses are unfair? Is there ever a fair curse? Use examples from the book.
8. Did you enjoy getting to meet human Yannick? Discuss the bond between Nettle and her brother.

### Post-reading activities

1. Did you know that Unraveller has two covers? Do some quick research and compare the novel's different cover art. Which do you prefer and why? Redesign the cover using a graphic design program and submit your finished project to the Tome Digital Cover Redesign competition. Be sure to review the competition rules and guidelines on our website.
2. Using this Georgia PBS link, research and read excerpts from Nelly Bly's article "10 Days in a Mad House": <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/world-nellies-madhouse-memoir/> Compare and contrast this to the Red Hospital in Unraveller. Are there any similarities between the two institutions?
3. Write a blog article reviewing Unraveller. Follow the guidelines and submit your final article to the Book Review Blog Competition.

### More About This Book

Author's Website: [www.franceshardinge.com](http://www.franceshardinge.com)