

THE WICKED AND THE JUST BOOK CLUB DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

The Wicked and the Just is told from two different points of view. Why do you think the author wrote the book this way? Which of the characters did you relate to more?

The voices of the characters, particularly Cecily's, feel slightly modern at times. How does it make this novel different from other historical novels? What do you think of this technique?

Girls and women in the middle ages are sometimes characterized as powerless because they don't have the same opportunities they have today. Would you describe Cecily as powerless? Is there anyone in the story you would consider powerless? How do the power dynamics change over the course of the story?

In the middle ages, just living in a town did not make you a citizen. You had to take a special oath like Cecily's father did. What changed for Cecily after her father took the oath? How did her attitude and behavior change?

In literature, characters are "sympathetic" when the reader can easily relate to them and put themselves in the characters' shoes as they move through the story. Which, if any, of the characters in *The Wicked and the Just* do you find sympathetic? Why do you think the author chose to write characters that readers may find difficult to relate to?

For a considerable part of the story, Gwenhwyfar does not use *I* when talking about herself. What is the effect of this literary device? When does she start using *I* in her narrative? What do you make of this change?

What does Cecily think about Wales and the Welsh before she arrives in Caernarvon? How do her views change, and why? What are Gwenhwyfar's views on the English? In what way do her views change, and how does her journey compare with Cecily's?

At the beginning of the story, Gruffydd sees little point in challenging the status quo and instead prefers to stay under the authorities' radar. By the end, he's an active participant in the agitation and eventually the rebellion itself. What events cause this change in his mindset? Why do you think Dafydd doesn't experience a similar radicalization?

Officially, the laws of the Principality of North Wales were supposed to apply to both the English and the Welsh equally, but the English burgesses in Caernarvon worked hard to ensure the Welsh weren't allowed to have the same privileges they did. Why didn't the burgesses govern as the king instructed? How were they able to get away with it for so long (ten years)? Do you think there would have been a rebellion if North Wales had been governed more fairly?

Why do you think the author wrote this particular story for a young adult audience? What ideas or themes do you think teen readers can relate to?