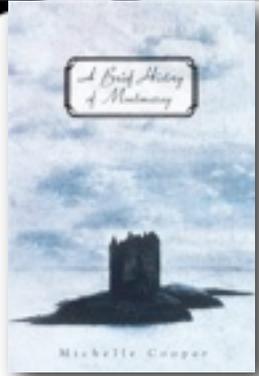




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Reading Guide

from Junior Library Guild



A Brief History of Montmaray

by
Michelle Cooper

**Teacher's
Edition**

A Brief History of Montmaray
By Michelle Cooper
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A Brief History of Montmaray

by Michelle Cooper

JLG Guide written by Sarah Ward Terrell

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About the Book and Author

Summary:

Montmaray, 1936: For Sophie FitzOsborne, who lives in a crumbling castle in the tiny island kingdom of Montmaray, the politics of Europe seem very far away. But when a boat arrives with two German officers and leaves with only one, politics become very personal.

JLG reviewers say:

- Thanks to the romantic isolation of the setting and the narration's poetic but lucid prose, the story of Montmaray's last royal generation feels both immediate and timeless.
- While its central characters experience boredom, loneliness, and loss, the novel never dips too long into melancholia. A large cast of eccentric characters cuts through the gloom and keeps the story moving forward with a manic, screwball energy.
- Readers will enjoy the discrepancy between what they imagine royal life to be and what this particular royal family must put up with: a decrepit castle, a dwindling number of royal subjects, and an interminably grouchy housekeeper.
- Sophie has self-doubts that are easy to relate to: "I am neither pretty nor strong-willed nor particularly talented at anything." By the book's end, though, Sophie has finally come into her own.

Michelle Cooper says, "*A Brief History of Montmaray* began with the idea of a teenage girl sitting on a castle wall and writing in her diary. I decided that she was a princess living on an isolated island kingdom. Her story soon involved eccentric relatives, sinister strangers, ghosts, pirates, aviators, mythical treasures, and her secret crush on an unsuitable young man. Poor Sophie, I made her life far more exciting than she'd ever wanted.

"One of the most enjoyable aspects of writing this book was the research. I spent six months learning about life in 1930s Europe and planning my story. Then I started writing and realized I also needed to know about castles, Cornish folklore, Tudor royalty, the Holy Grail, Portuguese water dogs, how to make a Christmas pudding and a thousand other things so it was back to the research. The difficult part was deciding what to leave out of the story. It was very tempting to squash in some of the intriguing but irrelevant facts I discovered.

"I live in Sydney, Australia, where I work as a speech and language pathologist, helping students with learning difficulties. I'm also very busy writing the sequel to *A Brief History of Montmaray*."

www.michellecooper-writer.com

Prereading Activities

Understanding Genre: Historical Fiction

Reread the summary of *A Brief History of Montmaray* on page 4. Then answer the questions below.



1. What are the characteristics of historical fiction?

Possible response: Historical fiction is a made-up story that includes references to events that really happened and people who really existed.

2. Why is *A Brief History of Montmaray* an example of historical fiction?

Possible response: *A Brief History of Montmaray* is an example of historical fiction, because it is not a true story, but it references European politics from the year 1936.

3. How can historical fiction give valuable insight into past events?

Answers will vary. Possible response: Historical fiction can provide insights into how people may have felt about the historical events happening around them, and it allows readers to imagine themselves as part of an historical time.

4. What are some challenges that authors face when writing a credible historical fiction story?

Possible response: Authors must be sure to write accurately about the time period and the historical events and people they reference, while also creating characters that readers think are believable.

Prereading Activities

Building Background and Making Predictions

Make predictions about the story based on evidence from the text and/or from your prior knowledge or personal experience.

1. What kinds of historical events influenced European politics in the year 1936?

I predict: Answers will vary.

Possible prediction: Violent events leading up to World War II influenced European politics.

Based on what evidence?

The summary says Sophie has a run-in with German officers. I know World War II began in Europe in 1939 as a response to German aggression.

2. What do you think will happen to the German officer who does not return from Montmaray?

I predict: Answers will vary.

Possible prediction: The German officer will be murdered.

Based on what evidence?

Whatever happens to the officer is bad enough to make the politics of Europe (marked by power struggles within and among countries) personal to people in Montmaray.

3. Set a purpose for reading based on your predictions above.

Possible purpose: I want to find out what it was like to live in Europe in the time before

World War II and what happens to the German officer and the people of Montmaray.

Section 1: History and Mystery pages 3–42

Before You Read

Introducing Vocabulary: Political Terms

The following are terms used in the discussion of politics and history. Use context clues and a dictionary to define each term as it is used on the page indicated.

1. Nationalists (page 36) people who favor an independent nation or a strong national government
2. autonomous (page 36) having self-government, at least to a significant degree
3. non-intervention agreement (page 37) an agreement not to intervene, or get involved, in a dispute
4. international (page 37) involving at least two or more nations
5. democratic (page 41) representing the viewpoints of most people in a group
6. Republic (page 41) a political system in which people can elect someone to represent them
7. Communist (page 41) relating to communism, a form of socialism in which there is no private ownership and there are no social classes
8. liberal (page 22) favoring maximum individual liberty in political and social reform
9. Socialists (page 41) people who favor government ownership of all businesses and their earnings
10. separatists (page 41) people who want to separate from a larger group
11. Fascist (page 41) relating to fascism, a belief in the supremacy of one national or ethnic group, contempt for democracy, and insistence on obedience to a powerful leader.

After You Read

Checking Predictions

Before reading, you made a prediction about the kinds of historical events that would be referenced in the story. What kinds of events have you read about so far?

Possible response: I have read about wars, conflicts, and acts of violence that happened to people in Europe during the 1930s.

Analyzing the Writing: Setting and Mood

Setting is the location and time in which a story takes place. **Mood** is the emotion an author communicates in his or her writing.

1. Reread the description of Montmaray in paragraph 3 on page 17. What is the mood of this description, and whose impressions of Montmaray does it reflect?

Possible response: The mood of this description is dark and foreboding. Sophie describes Montmaray as she believes strangers see it: an inhospitable place marked by death and abandonment.

2. Now reread the description of Montmaray that begins in paragraph 4 of page 17 and continues to page 18. What is the mood of this description, and whose impressions of Montmaray does it reflect?

Possible response: The mood of this description is comforting. Sophie describes Montmaray as she sees it: a beautiful place where her family and friends live, play, and celebrate.

3. In the first two paragraphs on page 20, Sophie describes the experiences of tutors who come to live on Montmaray. What things have her tutors liked least about this setting?

Possible response: They have found it hard to cope with living in isolation, with little access to luxury items. They have also been disappointed to learn how different the fantasy of living in a castle is from the reality. Many find castle life uncomfortable and sometimes frightening.

Getting to Know the Characters: Traits

Characters' **traits** can be shown through what they say about themselves, what they do, and how others react to them. The chart below includes the main characters from *A Brief History of Montmaray*, along with traits that describe them. Complete the chart telling how readers learn about each character's trait from the text. The first one is done for you.

Character	Trait	Evidence
Sophie	Romantic	Readers learn that Sophie is a romantic through what she says about her crush on Simon and her excitement for the idea of debuting. Sophie also spends a lot of time dreaming and reading romances, and she shows in her writing that she has a flair for the dramatic.
Toby	Charming	Possible response: Readers learn that Toby is charming through the letters he writes, which are full of humor, and through the reactions of his family members, who adore him, despite his irresponsibility at school.
Veronica	Dutiful	Possible response: Readers learn that Veronica is dutiful through her insistence on focusing her life on family and the kingdom. Her family acknowledges her as the head of household, and she spends her free time caring for the villagers and writing her family's history.
Henry	Mischievous	Possible response: Readers learn that Henry is mischievous through Sophie's stories of Henry running wild on the island. Henry terrorizes her tutors, irritates Rebecca, and plays dangerous games that sometimes result in her narrowly escaping serious injury.
Simon	Self-important	Possible response: Readers learn that Simon is self-important through Veronica, who believes he is a social climber. Simon also shows self-importance by insisting that Montmaray, a country with only two families, should weigh in during the non-intervention talks about Spain.
Rebecca	Covetous	Possible response: Readers learn that Rebecca may be covetous of the royal family's power through her doting on the king, ambitions for her son, and unnatural interest in preserving the family's heritage and possessions.
Uncle John	Unpredictable	Possible response: Readers learn that Uncle John is unpredictable through Sophie, who says he is "rather distracted on his good days and downright alarming on his bad ones."

Responding to the Story

1. Why is it so important to Aunt Charlotte that Veronica and Sophie have a debut?

Possible response: It is the role of royal women to find husbands of noble birth who can help support their kingdom with money or powerful alliances.

2. On page 21, Sophie describes a recurring dream she has. In literature, dreams often play an important role, either by providing insights into the truth about a character or by foreshadowing future events. What happens in the dream, and how has the dream changed?

Possible response: In the dream, Sophie is in a boat, and she feels dread for something she knows is in the water below it. When she looks down, she sees something “long and white and unraveling.” In her most recent version of the dream, the thing signals to her.

3. Veronica objects to Simon speaking to leaders of other nations on behalf of Montmaray, because he does not live in Montmaray. Do you agree with her objection? Why or why not?

Answers will vary. Some students may agree with Veronica, saying that Simon can't be trusted to know or act in the best interest of people in Montmaray, if he isn't in contact with them and invested in living there himself. However, others may think time spent in more modern parts of the world could give Simon new perspectives on how to revitalize the island.

4. Sophie writes about political unrest in Spain that has become a concern to other countries. What does Alfonso XIII have to do with the unrest, and what political groups support him?

Possible response: Spain's king, Alfonso XIII, has been ousted from power, because Spain lost the Moroccan War, and replaced by a new form of government. Alfonso XIII is supported by the Spanish military, led by General Franco, and Fascists.

5. What is the Popular Front, and what political groups support it?

Possible response: The Popular Front is Spain's new, liberal government. They are supported by Communists, Socialists, and Basque Separatists.

6. How and why have Germany, Italy, and Russia taken sides in the Spanish conflict?

Possible response: Germany and Italy are helping the Spanish rebels, because they support fascism, and Russia is helping the Popular Front, because they support communism.

Section 2: Allies and Enemies pages 43–82

Before You Read

Making Predictions

Do you think Montmaray will choose sides in the Spanish conflict? Why or why not?

Answers will vary. If Simon has his way, Montmaray would not choose sides in the conflict, and at this time it seems unlikely the FitzOsbornes will. Though a family link to Alfonso XIII could ally them with the Fascists, and though monarchs are predisposed to opposing communism, Veronica and Sophie both know Alfonso XIII did bad things while in power.

Introducing Vocabulary: Simile and Metaphor

Both **simile** and **metaphor** are types of figurative language that writers use to evoke images in readers' minds. Both similes and metaphors compare two unlike things that are alike in a specific way. Similes always include the word *like* or *as*. Metaphors state two things are one in the same.

Complete the chart below by telling whether each example of figurative language is a simile or metaphor. Then find the example on the page indicated and use context clues to tell what two things the figurative language compares and what the figurative language means.

Figurative Language	Simile or Metaphor?	Comparison and Meaning
All those fervent words tumbling from his lips! (page 48)	Metaphor	Words are compared to objects that tumble; his fervent words are spoken quickly and haphazardly.
. . . I found some bread left over from breakfast and pushed it through the gap at Uncle John, feeling like a zookeeper feeding a caged mountain bear. (page 51)	Simile	Sophie compares herself to a zookeeper and Uncle John to a caged mountain bear; Sophie pushes the food to Uncle John quickly to avoid a bad reaction.
I watch men scurry like ants, quarrying flat the solid rock, cleaving the rock into vast blocks, hauling barrels of sand and lime up onto the mound. (page 55)	Simile	Men are compared to ants; Sophie imagines large numbers of men going about their work in a fast and organized manner.
“And battlements,” Henry says. “[The men] hid behind them and rained down arrows....”	Metaphor	The men are compared to clouds releasing rain; they release arrows that fall in great numbers around their enemies.

After You Read

Checking Predictions

Earlier you made a prediction about whether or not Montmaray would choose sides in the Spanish conflict. What have you read that supports or helps you revise your prediction?

Possible response: At this point it seems as if they will not choose sides. Simon still advises against it, and Sophie is unsure how to side with anyone in the conflict, as all parties involved have done horrible things.

Analyzing the Writing: Footnotes

Footnotes are printed notes below the main text of a page that help to explain the main text. Footnotes often include definitions and the names or titles of other sources used to compile information in the text.

Reread pages 66–67 of *A Brief History of Montmaray*. Then answer the questions below. Use a dictionary or the Internet if you need help.

1. Footnotes include numbers printed in a small font that appear both within and below the main text. What do these numbers show?

Possible response: In the main text, the numbers come after a sentence that includes information taken from another source. The same number at the end of the sentence is used in the notes below to show the name or title of the source.

2. What are the titles of some books Sophie used as resources for her account of how her family gained its fortune, and how do you know they are book titles?

Possible response: Some book titles Sophie references are *The Wreck of the Zenobia and Other Tales of Treacherous Seas*, *Modern Shipping*, and *The Wonderful Whale*. Book titles appear in italic font, and they are followed by the author's name and book's publication date.

3. What does the abbreviation *ibid.* mean?

Possible response: The abbreviation *ibid.* is short for the Latin word *ibidem*, which means “in the same place.” If two or more consecutive footnotes reference the same book's title, *ibid.* can be used instead of repeating the title after its first reference.

Getting to Know the Characters: Relationships and Their Effect on Plot

1. Describe Uncle John's relationship with Rebecca.

Possible response: Rebecca is the only person Uncle John really trusts. Rebecca reveres Uncle John and dotes on him.

2. What are some possible sources of the friction between Veronica and Simon?

Possible responses: One source may be Uncle John, who tolerates Simon, Rebecca's son, but can't stand the sight of Veronica, his own daughter. Another source may be Simon's pride; Veronica is very intelligent, and Simon, though he's older than Veronica, must work hard to keep up with her. Still another source may be Veronica's sense that Simon and his mother want positions of power in Montmaray. A final source may be what Sophie hypothesizes, that Veronica and Simon are actually attracted to each other but unable be in a relationship.

3. Why did Isabella leave her family, and how has her leaving affected them?

Possible response: Isabella left her family, because she could not get along with Uncle John. Since Isabella's leaving, Veronica feels abandoned by both parents; Uncle John still carries anger for Isabella that he takes out on Veronica; and the rest of the family is mystified as to what happened to Isabella and why she never returned.

4. Why is Sophie upset when Simon accuses her of listening to Veronica too much?

Possible response: When Simon accuses Sophie, he takes a shot at both Sophie and Veronica. He accuses Sophie of having no grounds for her faith in Veronica, when, in fact, Sophie has much evidence on which to base belief in her cousin's intelligence and good character.

Social Studies Connection

Great Stock Market Crash

On page 67, Sophie cites the Great Stock Market Crash as a main reason for Montmaray's inability to recover its fortune. The stock market crash she writes about happened in the United States in 1929, yet it affected countries all over the world. Find out how that stock market crash happened and why its effects were so far-reaching. Write a brief report on your findings to share with your classmates.



Responding to the Story

1. Sophie is having difficulty knowing how to take sides in the political uprising in Spain. Why is she undecided?

Possible response: Sophie feels her only choices are to side with the Fascists or side with the Communists. This presents a problem, because she can't fully support either cause. She is inclined toward opposing communism, because she is from a royal family and knows of royals who have been murdered by Communists. However, she can't fully support fascism, because she knows firsthand of the horrible mistakes rulers can make and why their people rebel.

2. Why did King John decide to lead a Montmaravian battalion into the Great War, and what happened to his men?

Possible response: King John was trying to impress some old college buddies—he wanted to help a couple of “Old Etonians” in the war. After only two days on the Western Front, his men were shelled, and all but six of them were killed.

3. Reread page 53, where Sophie tells the history of Carlos's breed on Montmaray. What is the history? How does it make Carlos symbolic of Montmaray's royal family and their life on the island?

Possible response: Sophie describes Carlos as a “majestic” breed that thrived on Montmaray for hundreds of years. However, Carlos is the last of his breed, just as Sophie, her family, and the few others who remain on Montmaray, are the last of theirs.

4. Characters such as Aunt Charlotte and Rebecca represent old ways of thinking. What beliefs of theirs seem outmoded, even in Sophie's time?

Possible response: Aunt Charlotte believes that a woman's main purpose is to be attractive enough to find a husband and that being attractive means appearing unintelligent. Rebecca believes in mystical remedies and the power of being a Montmaravian royal.

5. Why was Britain unable to support the military coup in Spain?

Possible response: Britain could not support a rebellion against a government that was democratically elected.

Section 3: Visitors from England pages 83–104

Before You Read

Making Predictions

Sophie has conflicting feelings about leaving Montmaray. Do you think she will decide to move to England or to stay with her family on the island?

Answers will vary. Sophie loves Montmaray and is nervous about leaving her family. However, she does not seem meant to stay on the island, the way Veronica does. Sophie is drawn to high-society life, and Veronica already knows Sophie will someday be a part of it.

After You Read

Checking Predictions

Earlier you made a prediction about whether or not Sophie would decide to leave Montmaray. What have you read, so far, that supports or refutes your prediction?

Answers will vary. Sophie can't help her interest in Julia's stories about coming-out parties and scandals in England. For this reason, it seems likely she'll want to leave Montmaray eventually.

Mastering Vocabulary

Complete the following chart by going to each page number indicated and telling whether you find a metaphor or simile on the page. Then write the text for the metaphor or simile. **Note:** On one of the pages indicated, there is a figure of speech that contains both simile and metaphor.

Location	Simile or Metaphor?	Text
Page 84	Simile and Metaphor	“And she’s always stabbing away at Veronica with her knifelike tongue, taking aim at anything she thinks might be a soft spot, from Veronica’s gnawing at her bottom lip to Veronica’s runaway mother.”
Page 87	Simile	“Today has been like something out of a Brönte novel—strangers having staggered across hostile moors to collapse upon our doorstep, begging for shelter and a means of conveyance.”
Page 88	Metaphor	“The aeroplane seemed to hesitate in midair, as if contemplating the view.”

Analyzing the Writing: Allusions

An **allusion** is a direct or indirect reference to a person, character, or event from history or a piece of literature. When an author makes an allusion, it is a way of helping readers to make connections. These connections help readers understand important ideas and events in the author's writing.

Complete the chart below by telling the event(s) and/or person(s) that is subject of the allusion. Then tell the allusion's purpose, or how it helps readers understand ideas or events in the story. Use the Internet or an encyclopedia if you need help.

Allusion	Subject or Subjects	Purpose
“It always amazes me, the size of Russia—I mean, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics or whatever they’re calling themselves this year. It is absolutely enormous. If the Tsar had lived for a thousand years, he couldn’t have visited all his subjects. And not knowing the individual people he ruled over, it would be so much easier to be unfair to them.” (page 85)	Event: Russia is renamed the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics Person: the Tsar	Answers will vary. Possible response: The allusion helps illustrate themes in the story, such as that rulers sometimes abuse their power and that rulers can’t act on behalf of their subjects without knowing who they are. It also gives insight into what people in 1936 thought about the changes happening in Russia.
“[Veronica] also pointed out where Napoleon’s cannons had shot an enormous hole in our curtain wall in response to King John the Fifth’s threats.” (page 90)	Person: Napoleon	Answers will vary. Possible response: The allusion helps readers understand that Montmaray was once significant enough to be a target for Napoleon.
“‘But it’s so, so . . . unfair!’ he burst out. ‘Now that blasted Prime Minister of ours has banned British businesses from selling weapons to the Spanish government, and you know Hitler and Mussolini are giving those Fascist rebels all the help they can!’” (page 95)	Event: British banning of weapon sales to Spain Person: Hitler Person: Mussolini Persons: Fascist rebels	Answers will vary. Possible response: The allusion helps readers connect the names of historical figures to the causes they supported, and it also gives insight into how some of Great Britain’s subjects felt about its non-intervention policy.
“‘And yet,’ Veronica says thoughtfully, staring up at the ceiling, ‘didn’t Marx also predict that the government would wither away when the [Soviet] workers were finally in control of the means of production? And there’s certainly nothing withering away about Stalin’s government, is there?’” (page 100)	Event: Workers take control of the means of production in the Soviet Union Person: Marx Person: Stalin	Answers will vary. Possible response: The allusion helps readers connect the names of historical figures to the causes they supported, and it also gives insight into why some people felt communism was a progressive movement in the 1930s.

Getting to Know the Characters: Relationships

1. Reread the information about Rebecca on pages 83–84. When does Alice scold Mary for telling Sophie about Rebecca’s marriage to Phillip Chester?

Possible response: Alice scolds Mary just as she is about to tell Sophie about why Alice had to marry Phillip Chester.

2. Why is Veronica, rather than Rebecca, recognized as the head of the FitzOsborne household?

Possible response: Rebecca spends all her time “fawning over Uncle John,” so Veronica has taken on responsibilities, such as tracking bills, handling correspondence, ordering supplies, remembering villagers’ birthdays, and fixing the plumbing.

3. Why did Julia and Anthony come to Montmaray?

Possible response: They needed a place to stop, because their airplane was in need of repair. They knew they could go to Montmaray, because Julia’s brother Rupert has been best friends with Toby for a long time.

4. Anthony and Julia are working to support communism in Spain. Why might some consider their support of communism ironic?

Possible response: It is ironic that they would support a form of government in which private ownership and social classes have been abolished, because both are from families with a lot of money and Anthony has promised not to fight in Spain, because his family wants to pass on their fortune to him.

Social Studies Connection

Feudalism

On page 100, Veronica describes Montmaray as being like a feudal society. Feudalism is the type of government that prevailed in Europe during medieval times. Find out how feudalism worked, what its benefits were, and why it eventually disappeared. Then discuss with a peer how Montmaray is similar to and different from a feudal society.



Responding to the Story

1. Earlier in the story, Sophie said she didn't think Montmaray could be affected by Spanish politics. However, Montmaray has been affected by international conflicts before. What evidence of this is given in these chapters?

Possible response: The FitzOsborne castle has a hole in one of its walls from a cannonball Napoleon shot at it.

2. Who was the first British volunteer to die in the Spanish conflict, and what about the volunteer offends Anthony?

Possible response: The first volunteer to die was a woman artist in Barcelona, who was part of a unit that was trying to blow up a Fascist munitions train. Anthony is offended by her, because he was not allowed to volunteer—and he thinks that being a man makes him more qualified for consideration than she was.

3. Why was Anthony rejected by London recruiters for the Spanish Republican cause?

Possible response: Anthony was rejected, because he wasn't a member of the Communist Party or a trade union movement and he didn't have any military background.

4. The conflicts described in these chapters are part of what led to World War II, which has been called "the war to end all wars." Yet, in the story, these events are discussed alongside gossip about debutante parties and scandals in England. How does this affect your understanding of how average people living outside of Spain viewed events leading up to World War II?

Answers will vary. Possible response: Average people sympathized with those who were victims of the conflict and thought the politics of the conflict were an interesting subject for debate. However, many did not comprehend the gravity of situation or fully understand the aims of the parties they rallied behind.

**Section 4:
Burial at Sea
pages 105–140**

Before You Read
Making Predictions

So far, Montmaray has not been involved in the conflict the Germans and Russians are aiding in Spain. How do you think the Germans will come to take an interest in Montmaray? Explain your answer.

Answers will vary. Some students may predict that Anthony will unwittingly bring German attention to Montmaray, because he has been trying to aid the communists in Spain, and he has landed his airplane in Montmaray.

Introducing Vocabulary: Greek and Latin Roots

A **root word** is a word part that has its own meaning. Each of the following vocabulary words contains a root word from the Greek or Latin language. Complete the chart below by writing a definition for each word, based on the meaning of its root word. Use a dictionary, if you need help.

Vocabulary Word	Root Word and Meaning	Definition Based on Root Word
audible (adjective)	<i>aud</i> meaning “hear”	Able to be <u>heard</u>
translate (verb)	<i>trans</i> meaning “across or through”	To read <u>across</u> languages
sensible (adjective)	<i>sens</i> meaning “feel or think”	Showing <u>thought</u>
natural (adjective)	<i>nat</i> meaning “born”	<u>Born</u> with
monologue (noun)	<i>mono</i> meaning “one”	A speech made by <u>one</u> person

After You Read

Checking Predictions

Earlier you made a prediction about whether or not Sophie would decide to go to England. Was your prediction correct? Why or why not?

Answers will vary. Responses should reflect an understanding that Sophie has decided to go to England, because she feels naturally inclined to do so, and she thinks it is better for her to go than to sit around Montmaray dreaming about Simon.

Analyzing the Writing: Archetypes

The word **archetype** comes from the Greek word *archetypos*, which means “the first of its kind.” There are many archetypes, or models, for storytelling that have been around for as long as stories have been told. One archetypal storytelling device represented in *A Brief History of Montmaray* is *The Dream*. As mentioned earlier in this study guide, dreams in literature often provide clues about the truth of a situation or they foreshadow coming events.

1. What things have changed about Sophie’s dream, since the last time she described it in detail?

Possible response: This time, Sophie doesn’t have the dream while sleeping; she falls into the dream while wide awake, and she realizes the dream is real. Even more importantly, Sophia realizes the figure in the shroud is Isabella, as she looked when Sophie last saw her.

2. During what event does Sophie’s latest experience with the dream happen?

Possible response: Sophie’s latest experience with the dream happens during George’s burial at sea.

3. What event preceding the dream also reminded Sophie of Isabella, and when did it happen?

Possible response: On the day George died, Isabella saw Veronica with a piece of cloth that looked like one of Isabella’s dresses.

4. Sophie is unsure what Isabella is trying to tell her. What do you think Isabella wants her to know?

Answers will vary. Possible response: Isabella wants Sophie to know what actually happened to her the day of her disappearance.

Getting to Know the Characters: Motives

As the story progresses, the FitzOsbornes come in contact with more and more people who want to be involved in the politics surrounding the Spanish conflict. Their motives for becoming involved are as varied as their viewpoints.

1. Veronica thinks Simon is taking a stand for Montmaray's neutrality, because he wants to be recognized as a person of importance. What about Simon's actions at Lord Bosworth's party also show that he has political ambitions?

Possible response: Simon has a long fireside chat with German Ambassador von Ribbentrop, after showing off his knowledge of Montmaravian history and literature to the party guests.

2. How is German Ambassador von Ribbentrop like Simon?

Possible response: Based on what Toby has heard, von Ribbentrop was not originally recognized as an aristocrat. He, too, wanted a position of importance, and he got one by convincing a noble woman to adopt him, so that he could add von to his name.

3. Toby's dorm-mate, Pemberton, has become a member of the British Union of Fascists. What does he know about fascism, and why does he support the cause?

Possible response: Based on Toby's conversation with him, Pemberton knows next to nothing about fascism. He joined the union, because he likes its leader, Sir Oswald Mosley (and also, Toby suspects, to satisfy a violent streak).

4. Anthony took part in a Communist rally to support King Edward, who abdicated his throne. Why is this ironic?

Possible response: King Edward actually supported the Fascists.

Literature Connection

Shakespeare

On page 121, Sophie quotes a passage from a famous Shakespearean play. Find out what play the passage comes from, as well as what the play is about, and what character originally said the words Sophie quoted. Share your findings with a peer.



Responding to the Story

1. Sophie believes that being sensible means doing what you are naturally inclined to do. Do you agree with her? Why or why not?

Answers will vary.

2. Why is Sophie irritated with Toby after receiving his letter about Lord Bosworth's party?

Possible response: Toby never acknowledged George's passing in his letter; he glossed over it, because he has difficulty dealing with anything that is serious.

3. What does Toby believe about politics, and how did he come by this belief?

Possible response: Toby believes that "some of the people who care most about politics seem to have the least compassion for ordinary human beings." He came by this belief early in life, after watching his parents die at the hands of a Moroccan freedom fighter, who bombed guests at a wedding who had nothing to do with his cause.

4. Why does Alice think it is inappropriate for Jimmy and Henry to continue their friendship? Do you think she is right in her judgment? Explain your answer.

Answers will vary. Alice thinks it is inappropriate for Jimmy and Henry to continue their friendship, because Jimmy is Henry's subject. She fears Jimmy will begin to think he is entitled to the opportunities that royals have, when, in reality, those opportunities won't exist for him. Some students may think her judgment is a sign of her being old-fashioned. However, others will see that Alice is trying to protect Jimmy from disappointment.

Section 5:
Trespassers
pages 141–195

Before You Read

Making Predictions

Do you think Sophie and her family will leave Montmaray, or do you think they'll find a way to maintain their kingdom there?

Answers will vary. Sophie is convinced that there is no way the FitzOsbornes can continue to survive on the island, without the help of the villagers. However, Veronica is always adamant about staying on the island. Perhaps she will know how to get help, so they won't have to leave.

After You Read

Mastering Vocabulary

Below are Greek and Latin root words from the Vocabulary lesson in Section 4. For each root word, write its meaning and then two words in which the root word can be found. Do not use words given in the last lesson. If you need help, use a word origins book or the Internet. Answers will vary; possible responses shown.

- | | | | |
|-----------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. <i>aud</i> | Meaning: <u>hear</u> | Word 1: <u>audio</u> | Word 2: <u>audibility</u> |
| 2. <i>trans</i> | Meaning: <u>across or beyond</u> | Word 1: <u>transportation</u> | Word 2: <u>transpire</u> |
| 3. <i>sens</i> | Meaning: <u>feel or think</u> | Word 1: <u>sensitive</u> | Word 2: <u>sensual</u> |
| 4. <i>nat</i> | Meaning: <u>born</u> | Word 1: <u>nativity</u> | Word 2: <u>nature</u> |
| 5. <i>mono</i> | Meaning: <u>one</u> | Word 1: <u>monosyllabic</u> | Word 2: <u>monotone</u> |

Checking Predictions

Earlier, you made a prediction about who would draw Germany's attention toward Montmaray. What have you read that supports or refutes your prediction?

Answers will vary. Students should note that Sophie believes Simon piqued the Germans' interest in Montmaray by quoting Edward de Quincy's epic poem during Lord Bosworth's party. The poem includes a reference to the Holy Grail, which the Germans want to find.

Analyzing the Imagery

Imagery is a description that engages one of the five senses: sight, touch, hearing, smell, and taste. Complete the chart below by finding text with imagery on each page indicated, that appeals to the sense matched with the page number(s) in the chart. Underline words in the text that appeal to the sense.

Location	Sense	Text
Pages 143–144	Taste	“We had <u>roast chicken</u> , <u>glazed ham</u> , and all the <u>vegetables</u> Henry could salvage from the waterlogged garden. The pudding was...well, it had a very <u>interesting texture</u> . Henry dropped her slice on the floor and it bounced.”
Page 159	Sight	“ <i>And hoisting brave Benedict o’er his head Gazed down upon <u>glimmering gold and red</u>, The Holy Grail ris’n <u>from the depths to aid</u>, And with fresh strength—the sea monster was slayed.</i> ”
Page 164	Touch	“The rain was <u>whipping</u> back and forth, <u>stinging</u> my face, and my hands were <u>frozen</u> .”
Page 178	Hearing	“I whimpered and then <u>clapped</u> my hand over my mouth, too late. It was only the <u>wind</u> , of course, but I was spooked beyond all rational thought—even more so a second later when I heard the <u>scritch-scratch</u> of mice (I simply couldn’t face the possibility they were rats) in the corner.”
Page 190	Smell	“The tunnel was, as Veronica admitted, cramped. It was also <u>damp</u> , <u>icy</u> , and <u>malodorous</u> .”

Science Connection

Radio Normandie

Sophie mentions that the girls listened to Radio Normandie for help with learning to speak other language until their uncle smashed their radio. Broadcast radio was a relatively new technology in Sophie’s time. Find out who invented the radio, when and why radio was invented and what Radio Normandie was. Then write a brief report to share with your peers.



Getting to Know the Characters: Internal and External Conflict

An **internal conflict** is a problem a character experiences within him- or herself, such as indecision or grief about a loss. An **external conflict** is a problem caused by actions taken against a character by others in the story or forces in nature, such as weather or animals.

In the chart below are examples of conflict Sophie experiences in Section 5. Complete the chart by telling whether each conflict is internal or external and then explaining your answer.

Note: Some conflicts can have both internal and external causes.

Conflict	Internal, External, or Both?	Explanation
Sophie wonders if her family will ever be able to manage without Alice, Mary, and Jimmy.	Both	External: Because Alice, Mary, and Jimmy have left, Sophie's family no longer has help with growing and harvesting food. Internal: Sophie and her family will miss these villagers, who are close friends.
Two German officers have made camp on Montmaray.	Internal	Sophie and her sisters are wary of the German officers, because there is no one who can protect the girls, if the men are dangerous.
Herr Otto Rahn has broken into the library.	External	Herr Otto Rahn has trespassed onto the FitzOsborne's property, even after being forbidden to go there.
One of the German officers has been killed.	Both	External: Sophie's family will be punished harshly if the body is found. Internal: Sophie is horrified that a man has been killed in her house.
After burying the German officer at sea, the girls must find their way back to the house through the tunnels, with no light.	External	Darkness is a force of nature.

Responding to the Story

1. Herr Otto Rahn was a real person whose research was of interest to the Germans. What was his research, and why was Germany interested in it?

Possible response: Rahn's research had to do with medieval history. He was tracing the path of French heretics who fled persecution from the Church in the thirteenth century. The heretics were called the Cathers, or the Pure Ones, and some people believe they carried with them the Holy Grail. Germans such as Hitler and Himmler were interested in the grail, because they thought finding it would help prove the Germanic culture's superiority.

2. Who has been writing to Veronica, and what do the letters contain?

Possible response: Daniel Bloom, the children's old tutor, has been writing to Veronica. His letters contain information about politics and history, including that related to the Nazi party.

3. Veronica says Hitler is the "worst kind of dictator." What does she accuse him of doing?

Possible response: She accuses him of having the Nazis burn books, censor the press, and murder their enemies. Also, Veronica believes he had Nazis burn the Reichstag.

4. How many Montaravians were killed in the Great War, and how many Montmaravians died of influenza, just as peace was being declared?

Possible response: One hundred fifty eight Montmaravians were killed in the Great War, and Sophie estimates that twice that many people were then killed by the influenza epidemic.

5. What does Hans, the German SS officer, have to do with Sophie's dreams about Isabella?

Possible response: Sophie gets the same horrible feeling she has in her dream whenever she sees Hahns.

6. On page 172, Sophie makes an allusion to Alfred Lord Tennyson's "The Passing of Arthur." Why does this passage remind Sophie of Uncle John, and what might it foreshadow?

Possible response: The passage reminds Sophie of Uncle John, because he, like King Arthur, is a king among the dead, those he led to die in battle during the Great War. The passage may foreshadow that Uncle John will commit an act that shows how sick and confused he really is.

Section 6:
Revelations
pages 196–250

Before You Read

Making Predictions

At the end of the last section, Veronica, Sophie, and Rebecca have frantically hidden evidence that Hans, the German SS officer, was killed in their house. Do you think Herr Rahn and other German officers will suspect that Hans was murdered? Explain your answer.

Answers will vary. Herr Rahn does not seem like the suspicious type, but Veronica is seriously afraid of what the SS will do when they discover that one of their officers is missing. Veronica seems to assume there will be retaliation against them.

After You Read

Checking Predictions

Before reading you made a prediction about whether or not the German SS officers would suspect Hans Brandt was murdered. What happened that confirmed or refuted your prediction?

Possible response: The leader of Hans Brandt's unit, SS-Obergruppenführer Gebhardt, seems ready to retaliate against the FitzOsbornes for Brandt's disappearance, whether or not foul play was involved. The officers never find evidence of Brandt's murder, but Otto Rahn suggests that the FitzOsbornes leave the island anyway, because Veronica, Uncle John, and Carlos all have done things to anger Gebhardt.

Analyzing the Writing: Mood

1. How has the mood of the story changed since the first half of the book?

Possible response: The mood of the story is decidedly more tense than it was at the beginning of the story, when Sophie's main concerns were that she attract Simon's attention and convince Veronica to debut in England with her.

2. Why can't the FitzOsbornes allow themselves to feel completely relieved after the German officers leave?

Possible response: Herr Rahn is very nervous as they are leaving, and he suggests that the FitzOsbornes leave the island as soon as possible.

3. When Uncle John dies, how is the mood different from when George died, and what explains this difference?

Possible response: When Uncle John dies, there is less sadness. Sophie thinks this may be due in part to shock over all that has just happened with the Germans. However, it may also be due to the fact that Uncle John was always such a small part of everyone's lives.

Getting to Know the Characters: Motives

In this section, a number of motives are revealed that help explain characters' behavior earlier in the story. Complete the chart below by telling what behavior each motive helps explain.

Character and Motive	Behavior
Isabella was overwhelmed with life in Montmaray, due to King John's madness and her responsibility for all the FitzOsborne children.	Possible response: Isabella decided on a whim to leave Montmaray.
Veronica was angry with George and in morning for her mother during George's funeral.	Possible response: Veronica was as white as George's shroud during his funeral and uncharacteristically stoic; it seemed as if she were in shock.
George felt guilt over the truth about Isabella's death.	Possible response: George always took a special interest in Isabella but didn't feel comfortable taking meals in the FitzOsborne home with the other villagers.
Rebecca believes Simon is King John's son and the true heir to King John's throne.	Possible response: Rebecca dotes obsessively over Uncle John and Simon and resents anyone who would stand in the way of Simon's ambitions.
Toby does not want to become Montmaray's king.	Possible response: Toby refuses to take responsibility in school, and he encourages Simon to act as a diplomat for Montmaray.

Responding to the Story

1. Why is Hans Brandt of particular importance to the SS?

Possible response: He is the nephew of Hitler's personal physician.

2. What are the facts of Isabella's disappearance, and how are these facts reflected in Sophie's dreams about Isabella?

Possible response: Isabella was accidentally killed during a fight with George, when she tried to leave Montmaray. He buried her at sea in the same place he was later buried.

3. What are some examples of how Veronica has suffered due to views about women in her culture?

Possible response: Veronica's parents have always treated her with resentment over the fact that she was born an intellectual girl. Also, Veronica is unable to take on the responsibilities of ruler, even though she is clearly qualified to do so, because of Salic Law.

4. Why does Veronica believe there is a curse on the kingdom of Montmaray, and what events support her conclusion?

Possible response: Sophie and Veronica have both lost their parents, all of Montmaray's subjects have either died or had to move, and the Germans are now angry with the family, due to circumstances that were beyond Veronica or Sophie's control.

5. Why do you think it is so important to Veronica to prove Simon is unfit to inherit Uncle John's throne?

Answers will vary. Students may think it is partly because Veronica resents that she can't inherit the throne, based on the technicality that she is a woman. If she must submit to the rules for inheriting the crown, so must Simon.

Section 7:
The Curse Is Lifted
pages 251–294

Before You Read

Making Predictions

Do you think Sophie will continue to have dreams about Isabella, now that the reasons for Isabella’s disappearance are understood? Explain your answer.

Answers will vary. Some students may think Sophie’s dream about Isabella was due to something Sophie always sensed about Isabella’s disappearance but never understood; now that all is out in the open Sophie will be free of the dreams. However, others may think Sophie’s dreams are actually a haunting and that Sophie will always experience them when something very bad is about to happen (as she did just before the murder of Hans Brandt).

After You Read

Checking Predictions

Based on what you read, did you predict accurately about Sophie’s dreams?

Answers will vary. Students should note that Sophie experienced another appearance of Isabella, just as her family most needed help reaching a rescue ship.

Mastering Vocabulary

On the lines below, write a summary of the political events that influenced Sophie’s story. Use words from the Vocabulary activities on pages 6, 18, and 22.

Answers will vary.

Analyzing the Writing: Pacing

Pacing is momentum of action in a story. Changes in time, space, and mood create ebb and flow in the action that carry readers through to the story's climax, when tension is greatest.

1. Sophie and her family have survived a visit from German officers and buried their King. Just as all is beginning to settle down, what happens?

Possible response: Toby suffers a bad leg break and a dislocated shoulder while trying to rescue Henry from falling off the wharf.

2. What are events that cause tension to increase, until Anthony arrives in his airplane?

Possible response: Toby's injuries and pain increase, as Simon, Sophie, and Veronica try to get Toby up to the house. Dusk falls without any ships appearing. The next day, they send out Toby's carrier pigeons, in hopes of contacting Rupert (who may or may not be home), so he can call Aunt Charlotte (who may or may not have a phone), so she can send someone for help. If all goes well, it will be a week before someone shows up. When Anthony arrives in his plane, Sophie hears it and thinks it's the Germans returning in fighter planes.

3. As Anthony's plane leaves, what causes tension to rise and then drop again?

Possible response: The FitzOsbornes realize that Toby and Henry may be leaving Montmaray forever, and Sophie fears she may never see them again. Then Sophie, Veronica, Simon, and Rebecca find themselves with nothing to do for two days.

4. During the Germans' bombing of Montmaray, how do relationships among characters cause tension to reach its greatest height.

Possible response: Veronica doesn't trust Simon to come back for her and Sophie if he takes Rebecca on the raft, and Rebecca attacks Veronica while Simon and Sophia.

Science Connection

Carrier Pigeons

Toby's carrier pigeon experiment with Rupert ends up saving the day when Toby is hurt. Find out more about how carrier pigeons are bred and trained and how long people have used them as a way of conveying messages over long distances. Create a poster about the carrier pigeon to share with your classmates.



Responding to the Story

1. How does Anthony find out that Toby is in need of help?

Possible response: Rupert finds the carrier pigeons, because he is home sick, and he calls his sister Julia, who in turn called Anthony, who was on his way back from Spain.

2. What news does Anthony bring, and how did he find out about it?

Possible response: Anthony brings news that the Germans are planning an attack on Montmaray. Anthony found out about it through a network of people connected Julia's family: her father's cousin Churchill has a brother in British intelligence.

3. How does Isabella redeem herself?

Possible response: When Sophie calls on Isabella to help Veronica get to safety, a wave comes that pushes their rowboat toward the ship that will rescue them, as a pale form moves beneath the boat.

4. How does Sophie envision Montmaray, as she sits in the drawing room of her Aunt Charlotte's house?

Possible response: Sophie envisions Montmaray as it was during a happier time. George, Isabella, Uncle John, and Sophie's parents all are alive and smiling, and Sophie feels as if they will exist that way in her heart forever.

5. What is left unresolved at the end of the story?

Possible response: What will happen to Rebecca is unknown, as is what will happen with Sophie's family. Though they are all safe, life for them is about to become very different. Will they be able to maintain their royal status, without having a homeland? Will Veronica be forced to debut with Sophie? Will all find a home with Aunt Charlotte? All these questions loom along with that of how the family will survive World War II.

Wrap-up

Reviewing Predictions

Turn to page 5 of this guide to review your first predictions. How accurate were they?

Answers will vary.

Making Connections

1. How would you feel about living in isolation the way Montmaravians did for hundreds of years?

Answers will vary.

2. Imagine you are like Veronica or Simon, gifted with talents that won't be put to full use, due to your gender or social class. How would that make you feel?

Answers will vary.

Thinking About the Genre: Adventure

1. This historical fiction story is also an adventure. What are the characteristics of an adventure story, and how are they reflected in *A Brief History of Montmaray*?

Possible response: In an adventure story, the main characters escape a dangerous situation by thinking quickly, acting bravely, and taking advantage of lucky breaks. This story is an example of an adventure, because Sophie and her family use their wits to escape a German attack.

2. Do you think historical fiction makes for a more compelling adventure than fantasy or science fiction would? Why or why not?

Answers will vary.

Thinking About Theme

1. During Sophie's time, a significant number of people supported fascism, simply because it opposed communism, and vice versa. Why might it be unwise to side with a person or group simply because you both have the same enemy?

Answers will vary. Possible response: In siding with that person or group, you give them power to pursue agendas you may not believe in.

2. As much as this story is about European politics of the 1930s, it is also about the importance of preserving history. What are some methods the FitzOsbornes have used to record the facts (and fantasies) of their family heritage for future generations?

Possible response: The FitzOsbornes have used tapestries, poetry, journals, artifacts, ceremonies, ledgers, and history books to preserve their heritage for future generations.

3. If Sophie's journal were nonfiction instead of fiction, in what ways would it be valuable to historians?

Answers will vary. Possible response: It would give insight into: the daily life of someone living in Montmaray in the 1930s; a history of Montmaray's royal family from the viewpoint of an insider; the names of resources the historian could use for research; a firsthand account of how Montmaray was destroyed; a background on any Montmaravian artifacts that were preserved; and the personal life of a princess.

4. In the 1930s, people around the world suffered the effects of the Great Depression. Sophie's family is among those struggling to stay afloat financially. However, Sophie does not think of her family as poor. What are things her family does to ensure they have everything they need?

Possible response: Her family cooperates with villagers to ensure gardens, livestock, fish, and lobster pots are maintained and put to good use. They spend money only on the things they think are most important, such as Toby's education, and they sell off family property when money becomes tight. Also, they rely on extended family for help with emergency expenses.

Library Applications

Castles

The castle (or “fortified house”) in which the FitzOsbornes live is the subject of many descriptions in Sophie’s journal about Montmaray, some of which can be found here:

- Page 26
- Page 44
- Page 45
- Page 55

Have students find out more about the different types of castles that were built during medieval times, as well as how the style of castle was determined by the time and place in which it was built and what it was like to live in a castle. Have students use what they learn, along with information of *A Brief History of Montmaray*, to build models of the FitzOsborne home.



History Detective

A Brief History of Monterey includes numerous references to events in European history. Have students work together to compile a list of events to split among individuals or groups. Have them conduct research to find out how the events were important to European history. Then have them create a graphic organizer that gives a summary of facts about each event, along with the fictional role the FitzOsbornes had in what happened.



Literary Allusions

Have students revisit the book titles referenced in *A Brief History of Montmaray* and share what they know about novels and authors that are familiar to them. Then discuss the importance of literature to the FitzOsbornes, not only as their source of education but as part of their identities. Ask questions such as the following:

- How does Sophie’s preference in books differ from Veronica’s and Henry’s?
- In what ways do the FitzOsborne girls use books as a source of information about the outside world?
- How does Sophie’s preference in books affect her writing style?
- What are some examples of literary allusions that Sophie and Veronica use to sum up the essence of a situation or character in the story?

Suggestions for Further Reading

Other books by Michelle Cooper:

Stay tuned for the sequel to *A Brief History of Montmaray*

Historical fiction books about World War I or II:

Winnie's War by Jenny Moss

The Art of Keeping Cool by Janet Taylor Lisle

A Boy at War: A Novel of Pearl Harbor by Harry Mazer (and other Harry Mazer novels)

Code Talker by Joseph Bruchac

Under a War-Torn Sky by L. M. Elliott

Under the Blood-Red Sun by Graham Salisbury

Eyes of the Emperor by Graham Salisbury

Nonfiction books about World War II in Europe:

World War II (DK Eyewitness Books) by Simon Adams

World War II by Tom McGowen

The Good Fight: How World War II Was Won by Stephen E. Ambrose

Remember World War II: Kids Who Survived Tell Their Stories by Dorinda Makanaonalani

World War II: An Interactive History Adventure (You Choose Books) by Elizabeth Raum

My Secret War: The World War II Diary of Madeline Beck (Dear America) by Madeline Beck

The Big Book of World War II: Fascinating Facts about WWII Including Maps, Historic Photographs, and

Timelines by Melissa Wagner and Dan Bryant

Soldiers on the Battlefield series published by Twenty-First Century Books

Correlations to National Standards For Grades 9–12

Content Area	Standard Number	Standard Objective
Languages Arts: English	NL-ENG.K-12.1	Reading for Perspective
Languages Arts: English	NL-ENG.K-12.2	Reading for Understanding
Languages Arts: English	NL-ENG.K-12.3	Evaluation Strategies
Languages Arts: English	NL-ENG.K-12.4	Communication Skills
Languages Arts: English	NL-ENG.K-12.5	Communication Strategies
Languages Arts: English	NL-ENG.K-12.6	Applying Knowledge
Languages Arts: English	NL-ENG.K-12.7	Evaluating Data
Languages Arts: English	NL-ENG.K-12.8	Developing Research Skills
Languages Arts: English	NL-ENG.K-12.12	Applying Language Skills
Science	NS.9-12.1	Science as Inquiry
Science	NS.9-12.5	Science and Technology
Social Sciences	NSS-EC.9-12.1	Scarcity
Social Sciences	NSS-G.K-12.1	The World in Spatial Terms
Social Sciences	NSS-G.K-12.6	The Uses of Geography
Social Sciences	NSS-C.9-12.1	Civic Life, Politics, and Government
Social Sciences	NSS-C.9-12.3	Principles of Democracy
Social Sciences	NSS-WH.5-12.7	Era 7: An Age of Revolutions, 1750–1914
Social Sciences	NSS-WH.5-12.8	Era 8: A Half-Century of Crisis and Achievement, 1900–1945
Fine Arts	NA-VA.9-12.4	Understanding the Visual Arts in Relation to History and Cultures