

Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children Study Guide

Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children by Ransom Riggs

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Plot Summary

This fantasy novel is the story of Jacob, a moody teenager who discovers, over the course of a series of increasingly dangerous adventures, that his grandfather's stories of monsters and children with strange powers are actually true. As it flips back and forth between past and present, and as Jacob learns old truths about his grandfather and new truths about himself, the narrative pays thematic attention to the question of what constitutes individual identity, and also explores the differences between appearance and reality.

First person narrator Jacob Portman begins his story by describing his relationship with his grandfather - specifically, how Grandpa Portman (Abe) told exciting stories about his childhood that, as Jacob grew older, he became convinced were fairy tales. When his grandfather is savagely murdered, and when Jacob sees a strange and terrifying face watching him from the woods near where Abe's body is found, he starts to think he's losing his mind. As his concerned parents try to help Jacob put what he saw, and the nightmares the image triggers, into the past, Jacob discovers evidence that his grandfather's stories might have been true. He convinces his parents to let him travel and explore the possibility, but his father insists on accompanying him. Together Jacob and his dad travel to an isolated island in Wales, in search of the truth behind Abe's stories about Miss Peregrine and her Home for Peculiar Children.

Jacob is dismayed to discover that the Home was destroyed in a bomb attack early in World War II. One day, however, as he's exploring the ruins, he encounters a girl whom he recognizes from one of the photos Abe showed him from his childhood. He follows her, but she (Emma) turns the tables on him and captures him, taking him through a mysterious tunnel into the past. There, the Home is not yet bombed and there, Emma and several other children with special abilities make their home under the strict protection of Miss Peregrine, a middle aged woman who can turn back and forth into a bird and who keeps them safe in a time loop that repeats the same, safe, perfect day over and over. Elated to discover that his grandfather was telling the truth, concerned about the secrets that Miss Peregrine and Emma appear to be keeping, and worried about what his father would say if he learned the truth, Jacob returns to the village where he and his dad are staying. He tells his father that he's made new friends on the other side of the island, but neglects to tell him they're hidden in the past.

Over the next few days, Jacob goes back and forth between the past and the present, finding the past more attractive (Emma in particular) and the present more frightening, particularly when first a flock of sheep and then a friendly villager are slaughtered. When he passes this news on to Miss Peregrine, Jacob is shocked to learn that the killings are probably the result of attacks by wights, monsters in human form in search of food for their masters, a group of even nastier monsters called the hollowgast who feed on peculiar children like those under her care ... and like Jacob. He, Miss Peregrine says, has the same special ability as his grandfather - the ability to see the hollowgast.



Jacob, Emma and some of the other students break Miss Peregrine's rules and go into the village in search of the truth behind the killings. They discover that they were, in fact, the result of attacks by a wight who, in turn, attempts to have them killed by a hollowgast. Jacob and the others escape, evading the hollowgast's pursuit. Jacob faces it alone and kills it, but a short time later discovers, along with the others in his group, that Miss Peregrine has been kidnapped by the wight. Jacob and Emma lead a rescue effort, killing the wight and rescuing Miss Peregrine. Meanwhile, something has gone wrong with Miss Peregrine's time loop, and time in the past is moving forward at its regular rate. Jacob decides to stay in the past with Emma and his new friends, searching out both new loops in which to hide and doing what they can to help others like them fight off wights and hollowgasts.



Prologue

Prologue Summary

This fantasy novel is the story of Jacob, a moody teenager who discovers, over the course of a series of increasingly dangerous adventures, that his grandfather's stories of monsters and children with strange powers are actually true. As it flips back and forth between past and present, and as Jacob learns old truths about his grandfather and new truths about himself, the narrative pays thematic attention to the question of what constitutes individual identity, and also explores the differences between appearance and reality.

Narrator Jacob begins his story with a comment on how his life changed as the result of a particular event (see "Quotes", p. 8), and how at least part of that change is the result of his relationship with his Grandpa Portman (Abe). Jacob describes how his grandfather looked after him and told stories about his own childhood at a special school populated by peculiar children (see "Quotes," p.9). He and all the other children went there, he says, to get away from the monsters that were after them. Jacob describes how, as he grew older, he becomes more and more curious about the specifics, and the truth, of his grandfather's stories. Eventually Abe showed him photographs of the people he'd been talking about - a girl who can fly, an invisible boy, a brother and sister who can lift boulders (see "Objects/Places - The Photographs"). As he grows into adolescence, Jacob says, his disbelief increases, until one day, after being teased about the stories at school, he told his grandfather he didn't believe him any more. His grandfather accepted the news calmly. Some years later, Jacob's father reveals the grain of truth within the stories - Abe had been the only member of his family to escape when the Nazis invaded Poland in World War II, and had been sent to live in what amounted to a Home for other Jewish refugee children. This leads Jacob to comment, in narration, that the "monsters" Abe referred to were "monsters with human faces, in crisp uniforms, marching in lockstep", while the "peculiar" children weren't really peculiar at all (see "Quotes," p. 17). The prologue concludes with Jacob's comment that when he was fifteen, the "extraordinary and terrible thing" that changed his life forever took place.

Prologue Analysis

Aside from providing essential exposition (i.e. providing important history, laying the groundwork for the story that follows), the main point to note about the prologue is its introduction of the narrative technique that makes this book uniquely engaging. This is the incorporation of photographs into the narrative (see "Objects/Places - The Photographs"), each of which is described by Jacob and many of which prove to be of characters and/or situations encountered by Abe in his youth, Jacob in his youth, or both. In this case, the photographs specifically referred to by Jacob are of people he later encounters when he slips into the past - the flying girl is Olive, the invisible boy is



Millard, the brother and sister are Victor and Bronwyn. In short, the photographs are intriguing foreshadowing of events to come, of situations encountered by Jacob as he explores both the truth of his grandfather's life and discovers the truth of his own.

The Nazis (see "Characters") and their leader, Adolf Hitler, have for decades been referred to as "monsters" in human form, making Jacob's comment both appropriate and reflective of a widely held opinion. The truth of what Abe meant when he used the term monsters, however, is something very different. In any case, the story Jacob's father tells about Abe's past can be seen as an early manifestation of one of the book's central themes. What Abe appeared to be was not necessarily all that he was - in other words, his reality was different from his appearance (see "Themes") as, indeed, was the case in several other aspects of Abe's life, as the narrative eventually reveals.



Chapter 1

Chapter 1 Summary

NB when the phrase (*photo) appears in a chapter summary, it means that a description of a photograph follows in that chapter's analysis.

In the middle of a shift at his much hated job as a clerk in one of a chain of family owned drugstores, Jacob is called to the phone. On the other end is his grandfather, desperately asking where his key is. Jacob comments in narration that as his grandfather got older, his dementia became worse and worse, making him talk more and more as though the old stories about the monsters and about the island were real. Jacob also comments that the key is for the collection of guns and weapons (*photo) his grandfather had kept in the garage, and that Jacob's father had hidden it - Grandpa Portman was becoming too unpredictable. Jacob promises to go and help him. He calls his father, who tells him to take the rest of the day off work and go to his grandfather. Jacob then calls his punk rocker friend Ricky who has a rebellious attitude, neon-colored hair, and a tendency to wear both black and metal studs. Ricky drives him to the suburban neighborhood where his grandfather lives. Ricky, however, gets lost, and while they're searching for the house, Jacob notices for the first time that one of his grandfather's neighbors has a white film over his eyes, and is probably completely blind. They eventually find the house, which is a mess; Abe had apparently turned the place upside down looking for the key. Jacob goes into the backyard, noticing that there's a long sharp cut in the back screen door. As Ricky fetches a gun in his trunk, Jacob follows a trail into the woods at the back of Abe's house, eventually discovering him bloody and semi-conscious. Jacob holds him as he tells Jacob to go to the island where he will be safe, and gives him some directions (see "Quotes", p. 33). The old man dies (see "Quotes," p. 32) just as Ricky returns. Jacob, suddenly sensing a presence, looks up and sees a face "from the nightmares of [his] childhood" staring at him. He screams, Ricky shoots, and the face disappears. Jacob then blacks out.

Chapter 1 Analysis

This chapter contains the moment that divides Jacob's life into the Before and After to which he referred in the Prologue (see "Quotes", p. 8) - the death of his grandfather, and Jacob's sighting of the face in the woods (a sketch of the face is included in the following chapter). Like most such Before and After moments, it marks the end of one phase of life and the beginning of another - in this case, what amounts to the end of Jacob's childhood and the beginning of his maturation into adulthood. It also marks the beginning of his journey into the truth, both of who his grandfather was and who Jacob actually is. Finally, it also foreshadows Jacob's next encounter with just such a monster (in Chapter 10 Part 1). Actually, since the blind old man is eventually revealed to be the wight associated with that second monster, it's very possible that Jacob's encounters with both monsters are, in fact, with the same monster. Meanwhile, the glimpsed



appearance of the old man and his milky white, seemingly unseeing eyes, foreshadows Miss Peregrine's revelation later in the narrative (Chapter 9) that wights have no pupils, and Jacob's almost simultaneous realization that the old man glimpsed here was not blind, but was in fact a wight.

Other important elements in this section include the sketching in of Jacob's family life - the wealthy circumstances in which he lives thanks to his mother's family business, his essentially ineffectual father, his relative lack of friends. All these contribute to the dilemma in which Jacob finds himself later in the novel - specifically, his choice between returning to his comfortable but essentially empty life at home, or the more personally fulfilling but much less comfortable life he has the chance to live with Miss Peregrine and the other peculiars.

Photos in this section: Photo 1 - a faceless man sleeps on his couch, a gun in his right hand.



Chapter 2

Chapter 2 Summary

In the aftermath of Abe's murder, Jacob experiences intense fear that keeps him from leaving the house and frequent, horrifying nightmares. He tells his parents and the police the truth of what he saw, but they don't believe him. Neither does Ricky, which leads to the severing of their friendship. In their first attempt to calm him down, Jacob's rich socialite mother and unsuccessful bird researcher/writer father get the police to send a sketch artist to draw the face Jacob saw (*photo). Jacob, however, realizes he is just being humored when the artist, rather than taking the sketch to the police, says he can keep it. In their next attempt to help Jacob recover, his parents send him to a psychiatrist, Dr. Golan, who prescribes medication to keep him calm and repeatedly attempts to help the resistant, sullen Jacob understand the meaning of his grandfather's last words.

In a further attempt to help him recover, Jacob's father and aunt take him along while they clean out grandfather's house. Arguments over what should be kept lead Jacob to hide in his grandfather's bedroom, where he discovers a handful of photographs his grandfather had never shown him (see "Quotes", p. 43). Resentful of the traumas his grandfather's stories have caused, Jacob takes the pictures to his father, who puts them with the rest of the junk to be tossed. In yet another attempt to help Jacob recover, his parents throw him a surprise party for his sixteenth birthday, at which he receives a number of presents he doesn't want and has to speak with a number of relatives he doesn't like. The final present, however, given to him by his aunt, takes everyone by surprise - a book of poetry by Ralph Waldo Emerson which grandfather had inscribed to Jacob. Jacob, relating the book to his grandfather's last words (see "Quotes," p. 33) finds a letter inside written by the apparent headmistress of the Home, Alma LeFay Peregrine (*photo) who, Jacob theorizes, might be the "bird" referred to by his grandfather (see "Quotes," p.9 and 33). The letter refers to "brave, handsome Abe" to "those few who remain," and to "E," who misses Abe terribly. The return address is an island in Wales, and Jacob convinces his parents and Dr. Golan that visiting the island will help him recover from the trauma of his grandfather's death. His father, having discovered that the island, Cairnholm, is a nesting ground for a rare bird, agrees to go along as well. While Jacob worries that his trip may "be spent evading drunken maniacs and watching birds evacuate their bowels on rocky beaches," he also sees it as an opportunity to resolve the questions of his grandfather's life and death once and for all.

Chapter 2 Analysis

There are several important points to note in this section. These include the police sketch included in the narrative, its content foreshadowing the reappearance later of what is, in all likelihood, the same monster, and the appearance of Dr. Golan. The latter is particularly noteworthy, in that he is, in most of the narrative, one of the few sources



of support and encouragement that Jacob actually has but is eventually revealed to be a wight, a procurer/hunter of peculiars to be fed to his hollowgast. In other words, Golan is a manifestation of the book's thematic interest in the differences between appearance and reality (see "Themes").

Other noteworthy elements in this section include the increasing sense of just how uncomfortable Jacob's home life really is, and the emergence of some new photographs. None of the photos found by Jacob here are of people he encounters when he visits Miss Peregrine's home. However, the fact that Jacob has personal encounters with the subjects of several other photographs does suggest that the subjects of these photos are also peculiars. Then there is the collection of the poetry of Emerson, a poet whose writing tended towards the impenetrable in much the same way as the situation facing Jacob appears, and the photo (see "2" below) and letter Jacob finds tucked away in that collection. In that letter, "E" clearly is a reference to Emma, with whom, as the narrative later reveals, Abe had a teenage romance, while Jacob's deduction that Miss Peregrine is "the bird" that Abe's last words referred to proves to be correct. Here it's interesting to note the irony of Jacob's father's occupation. An ornithologist is a bird scientist and researcher. Now, as his quest for Miss Peregrine begins, it could almost be argued that Jacob is, to some degree, following in his father's footsteps, both searching for a particular bird. Also in relation to this point, and on a slightly more serious note, it could be argued that the irony of both father and son going to Cairnholm to search for birds is an important point along Jacob's thematically central search for his own identity. He feels, in many ways, as ineffectual as his father. But, as the result of the events that overtake him over the course of his narrative, he becomes substantially more of his own person. Even though he is, to a significant degree, recreating the life and purpose of his grandfather, he is still choosing his own destiny and life circumstances rather than having both chosen for him by his parents.

Photos in this section: 1 - an ink sketch of a man with snakes coming out of his mouth. 2 - a middle aged woman in a long dress smokes a curved pipe.



Chapters 3 and 4

Chapters 3 and 4 Summary

Chapter 3 - As Jacob and his father ride a ferry on the last leg of their journey to Cairnholm Island, they sail over a ship's graveyard, where large numbers of vessels of all sorts and sizes were either sunk on the rocks or by German submarines in World War II. After landing, they make their way through Cairnholm Village searching for the Priest's Hole Inn (see "Objects/Places"), eventually given directions by the friendly curator of the local museum who, when Jacob asks about the Home, says it's abandoned, far away, and dangerous. When they finally get to the Inn, the landlord shows Jacob and his father to their small, worn suite of rooms. That night, in spite of the relatively unwelcoming atmosphere, Jacob sleeps well for the first time in months.

The next morning, after a rich breakfast, Jacob and his father head out to start working out the best process for studying birds. Jacob's father soon becomes completely absorbed, eventually agreeing to Jacob going in search of the Home if he manages to find someone reliable to go with him. After asking at a fishmonger's, Jacob meets Dylan, a sullenly quiet boy about his own age who agrees to take him up to the Home. Along the way, they're joined by Dylan's rapper wannabe friend Worm, the two of them tricking Jacob into going into an abandoned house that is shin deep in sheep shit. When they realize that Jacob is serious about wanting to see the Home, they leave him to proceed on his own. He eventually finds that the Home is beyond run down - almost completely hidden by overgrown trees and brush, overwhelmed and almost destroyed by nature. He makes his way inside, discovers remnants of its previous inhabitants - abandoned clothes, toys, and food - and finds himself both troubled and confused (see "Quotes," p, 81)

Chapter 4 - When Jacob returns to the village, he finds his father in The Priest's Hole, working on his laptop, a beer by his side. When Jacob tells him what he found, his father is sympathetic, explaining that he had never understood his own father at all (see "Quotes," p. 85) and revealing that he and his sister once found a letter suggesting that Abe was having an affair. That, he thinks, would explain why he was gone from home so long and so often. Jacob refuses to believe him and storms out (see "Quotes," p. 88). He makes his way back to the museum, hoping that the curator will be able to give him some answers. On his way in, he encounters a frightening display that reminds him of the figure he saw in the woods but which the curator, Martin Pagett, reveals are the two thousand year old mummified remains, found beneath a stone cairn, of a voluntary participant in human sacrifice, referring to the remains as "the old man." When Jacob explains what he's searching for, Pagett admits that he tried to steer Jacob away from the Home the previous day, but can see he's determined. He therefore takes Jacob to meet his Uncle Oggie, who describes how the Home was bombed early in the war - September 3rd, 1940, a date that Jacob recognizes from his grandfather's last words (see "Quotes," p. 33). Oggie adds that everyone in the Home was killed - everyone, that is, except one sixteen year old boy. Jacob reveals that that must have been his



grandfather and leaves, his two listeners shocked and surprised. Back at The Priest's Hole, Jacob updates his father, suggesting that the trauma Grandpa suffered might have explained why he was such a poor father. As he goes to bed, Jacob wonders how it's possible that Miss Peregrine, who was apparently killed in the bombing, wrote a letter to his grandfather fifteen years after she died.

After a night of uneasy but dreamless sleep, Jacob wakes to find a bird of prey perched on his dresser. He calls for his father, but the bird flies out the window. Jacob's father identifies the bird through a feather it left behind - a peregrine falcon, which he describes as like a "shapeshifter, they way they streamline their bodies in the air." At breakfast, Jacob decides to go back to the Home and search for letters, more photographs, a diary - anything that might tell him more about what happened before, during, and after the bombing.

Chapters 3 and 4 Analysis

In these two chapters, Jacob begins the search for the truth of both Abe's life and his last words, starting to put together the pieces of the puzzle and encountering significant obstacles along the way, primarily the apparent destruction of the Home but also his father's revelations of Abe's poor parenting and apparent affair. Meanwhile, the narrative in this section contains several key pieces of foreshadowing. First, there is the reference in the opening images of Chapter 4 to German U-boats (military submarines) being among the sunken ships surrounding the island. This foreshadows the appearance, in Chapter 10, Part 2, of just such a boat. Then, the appearance of Martin Pagett and the information he has to offer foreshadows both his eventual death and the information he provides after his death, both situations narrated in Chapter 10 Part 1, while his story of the Old Man and his cairn foreshadows Jacob's discovery of the cairn and what it leads to in Chapter 5.

Then there is Jacob's encounter with Dylan and Worm, important for several reasons. Jacob's encounter with Dylan at the fishmonger's foreshadows later events that take place there (again, Chapter 10, Part 1), while the building that Dylan and Worm trick Jacob into entering is, like the fishmonger's (also Chapter 10, Part 1). The appearance of Worm foreshadows his reappearance in Chapter 9 in which, interestingly enough, the bravado and overconfidence he shows here have completely disappeared. Meanwhile, the reference made by Jacob's father to the letter he and his sister (Jacob's Aunt Susie) found foreshadows Jacob's discovery in Chapter 8 Part 2 of Abe and Emma's extensive correspondence, while the reference to Abe's frequent absences from the family foreshadows the revelation of what, exactly, those absences were about (Chapter 9). Finally, the reference to peregrines being referred to as "shapeshifters" foreshadows the eventual revelation that the bird in Jacob's bedroom was in fact Miss Peregrine and that she is, herself, a "shapeshifter."

One other point to note is that in his conversation about the Old Man, Pagett introduces the idea of human sacrifice, of giving up one's life in the name of serving and/or exploring a greater truth. This can be seen as a metaphoric reflection and/or illumination

of the life choices made by both Abe and Jacob. See "Topics for Discussion - In what way does the story of ..."



Chapter 5, Part 1

Chapter 5, Part 1 Summary

Jacob makes his way back to the Home and searches its main floor for evidence of the truth of his grandfather's story. When he finds none, he realizes he has to take the risk of looking either upstairs or in the basement, and chooses the more brightly lit second floor. After navigating the rickety staircase, he looks through a series of rooms and eventually finds one in which there are two single beds - a room that Jacob senses was once his grandfather's. He finds a suitcase that he imagines once belonged to his grandfather, but is upset when he opens it and finds nothing. He lies on what he believes to have been his grandfather's bed, weeping - for all his family's losses, and for his own (see "Quotes," p. 104). When he is again calm, he looks around the room, and notices a large trunk under the other bed. He struggles hard to pull it out and then to get it open, but it remains locked. He realizes that if he dropped it to the main floor, it might break open. So he drops it, but the trunk goes through the rotting main floor and into the basement.

Jacob ventures down into the dark and smelly basement, using the light from his cell phone as a flashlight. After making his way through a cellar with shelves filled with floating organs, he finds the broken trunk, and discovers that it was full of letters and photographs, many of which were similar to those he discovered in his grandfather's bedroom (see "Quotes," p. 110 - 11). He also discovers a photo of a young girl, apparently with light coming out of her hands. His studies of these photos are interrupted by the sound of footsteps and voices from the floor above, and calls for "Abe." He remains silent, but is shocked when the girl from the photo looks down at him through the hole created by the trunk! As Jacob recognizes her and the others, who are also in the photos, they all run away. Jacob jumps to his feet, runs back upstairs and chases after them, following their footsteps into the bog surrounding the Home. Eventually, those footsteps lead him through a narrow tunnel into a small dark chamber, now empty.

Frustrated, and believing now that his mental state combined with memories of the house trigger an "episode," Jacob makes his way back out, realizing that he's seen the view he sees from this end of the tunnel (*photo) before. It was in the museum, in a photograph of the cairn within which the "old man" was found (see "Quotes," p. 121). He realizes that he doesn't care about what happened to his grandfather any more - he only wants to go home.

Chapter 5, Part 1 Analysis

There are several important points to note about this section. The first relates to the quote on p. 104, which refers to Jacob's feeling as though he's inherited his family's suffering. There is significant irony here, in that he has indeed inherited something from



his family, but not necessarily suffering - the opportunity to end the suffering of others. In other words, Jacob inherited Abe's ability to see the monsters (the hollowgasts) chasing the peculiars, which means that both of them could conceivably save those peculiars from being taken and eaten. Later in the narrative, Jacob discovers that that is exactly what his grandfather did, and in the book's conclusion, chooses to follow another similar path. He has inherited not what he at this point thinks is a curse but is, in fact, a gift. As the narrative later makes clear, he has also inherited his grandfather's courage.

Meanwhile, this section also contains an important turning point in the narrative - Jacob's encounter with the past, and more specifically, with the truth about his grandfather's life and identity. The trigger for this is not, as it has been, his study of the photographs - at this point, he actually encounters a person, a circumstance that raises the narrative and personal stakes significantly. It's also significant, at least to some degree, that the girl in the photo (Emma) has the ability to generate light and heat with her hands; light is, after all, and has been throughout the history of narrative, a symbol of truth, knowledge, and power.

Another important point is the brief, almost in-passing narrative reference to the jars filled with decaying organs, a foreshadowing of the later revelation that one of the peculiars, Enoch, preserves organs in the basement to assist in the manifestation of his ability (Chapter 8, Part 1). Such preserved organs play an important role in the plot - specifically, in uncovering the truth about the presence of a wight and a hollowgast on the island (see Chapter 10, Part 1).

Photo in this section: a tunnel with a "gauzy light" coming from its mouth. This photo is particularly interesting, in that it has significant metaphoric value with a couple of possible, but related, meanings. On the one hand, a long dark tunnel is often evocative of both the human birth canal and the journey new beings take down it - from darkness into light, from what amounts to preparation into new life. Jacob is, as he moves down the tunnel here, preparing to move into a new life. Also, the "light at the end of the tunnel" is a phrase/image often used to evoke hope, or possibility, both of which Jacob is about to discover as he follows the light here. Finally, there is the evocation of death. There are several reports of individuals who, in the midst of a near-death experience, have described moving through a tunnel towards a warm light. Jacob is doing the same here, beginning the process of leaving his old life behind (i.e. dying to what he once was) and moving into a new life beyond. In short, the image, here and throughout narrative history, is evocative of both new life and death. Either way, it is the threshold of transformation, which Jacob is now about to cross.



Chapter 5, Part 2

Chapter 5, Part 2 Summary

When Jacob emerges from the tunnel, he discovers that the weather, cold and rainy when he went in, has changed - it's now bright and sunny. As he makes his way back into town, he becomes aware that people are staring at him, and thinks it's because he's all muddy from the bog. Intending to change clothes, he returns to The Priest's Hole, but discovers that there's a different landlord there, who insists there are no rooms to rent. One of the customers accuses Jacob of being a German spy, and urges the others in the room to grab him. Jacob escapes, and is walking down an alley when he is grabbed by the girl he just chased, who subdues him with a knife and accuses him of being a "wight." He tries to explain who he is, saying he is Abe's grandson and offering to show her the letter from Miss Peregrine as proof. She slaps it away, just as the regulars from the bar rush out in search of Jacob. The girl walks him at knifepoint down another alley and into a small hut, where they hide quietly. On the wall of the hut there is a calendar, and Jacob looks at it - the year, it seems, is 1940. The month is September - the time of the deadly air raid. Jacob faints in shock.

When Jacob wakes up, the girl is in conversation with a young man Jacob can't see, who refers to the girl as Emma and introduces himself as Millard, commenting that they need to get him to see "the headmistress." Emma and Millard realize that the regulars from the bar are searching the houses for Jacob, and Millard plans an escape, consulting a book and discovering that in a couple of minutes, they will have the perfect opportunity. A moment later, the nature of that opportunity is revealed - German airplanes, flying overhead (see "Quotes," p. 133). Emma takes Jacob outside, agreeing to meet Millard later. Millard creates a distraction and Emma takes Jacob back to The Priest's Hole. There, Jacob hides his face to avoid being recognized as Emma taunts the barman into giving her a drink, which she then spills and, by placing her hand palm down over the liquor, causes it to burst into flame. As the barman fights the fire, Emma shoves Jacob down The Priest's Hole and follows him, the two of them crawling through another tunnel and coming out behind the pub, where they rejoin Millard, who leads them to a wagon parked behind a horse. After hiding beneath a tarpaulin, and as the wagon is hauled away by the horse, Jacob asks how they knew what was going to happen. Millard refers to them being in a loop (see "Quotes," p. 33), assuming that Jacob knows what he's talking about. Emma says he doesn't know what a loop is because he's a wight, but Millard comments that a "wight" would never have let him be taken alive. They ride on in silence.

Chapter 5, Part 2 Analysis

This point in the narrative is a good place to briefly discuss the story's basic structure, which will be discussed in greater detail in "Style" but is at this point important because



the events of the latter half of Chapter 5 propel both protagonist Jacob and narrative in a new, and permanently life changing direction.

In the middle decades of the 20th Century a researcher, writer and scholar named Joseph Campbell examined the writings, myths and stories of a worldwide range of cultures and societies, and discovered several commonalities, finding that across a span of centuries and vast tracts of geography, narratives shared some fundamental characteristics. While the breadth and depth of his discoveries is too expansive a topic for this analysis, one universal (archetypal) narrative that he discovered was what has come to be known as The Hero's Journey (see "Themes"). To sum up: Jacob leaves his home, embarks on a simultaneous outer and inner journey, and emerges transformed, with a new world view and perspective.

The reason this particular point in Jacob's story is such a good place to comment on its relationship to The Hero's Journey is that his emergence from darkness into light, his "rebirth" (see the analysis of Chapter 5, Part 1), is an example of a motif or repeated image that very often, almost inescapably, appears in Hero's Journey narratives. An initial stage of transformation, in this case a renewal of Jacob's stubborn faith in his grandfather, has been accomplished. Now, that stage completed, Jacob, like other heroes, is ready to move on to the next phase - further outer and inner challenges. For further consideration of the Hero's Journey and its relationship with Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children, see "Topics for Discussion."



Chapter 6, Part 1

Chapter 6, Part 1 Summary

After the cart carrying Jacob, Emma and Millard leaves the village, the three young people slip out and continue the rest of the way on foot, Emma maintaining a firm grip on Jacob's arm. Once they've made their way through the forest, they come to the clearing with the house, and Jacob is both happy and surprised to see it whole and beautiful. After Emma and Millard take him in, the trio watches from a window as a group of students - including a girl Jacob recognizes from the photo of the levitating girl - retrieve a stuck ball from out of an ornately carved hedge that a wild-haired girl brings to life and which hands the ball down to them. Millard explains that all the children are "peculiar," and asks Jacob if he is as well. Jacob says he doesn't think so, but at that moment is shown in to meet the stern, but friendly Miss Peregrine, whose face Jacob remembers from a photo in the trunk (*photo).

After some small talk, Miss Peregrine dismisses both Emma and Millard and has a lengthy chat with Jacob. Miss Peregrine reveals that she was indeed the bird in Jacob's room earlier (Chapter 4), while Jacob reveals that Abe is dead. He doesn't, however, reveal the true circumstances, or talk about what he saw in the forest afterwards. Miss Peregrine discovers that Emma has been listening at the door and, after she has run off, tells Jacob that Emma has feelings for his grandfather. Miss Peregrine then goes into a long and complicated explanation of who she and the children are - an offshoot of homo sapiens who are simply "peculiar," with extra abilities or characteristics and who, out of fear of persecution, take refuge within "loops," segments of time and space existing outside the normal lines of same. Those loops, she says, replay the same twenty-four hour period endlessly - no-one ever ages. She shows Jacob a photo album with several pictures of other loops and their inhabitants (*photos), explaining that she is an ymbryne, one of a group of mostly women with a variety of abilities and responsibilities. They can each take the form of a different bird, they can create the loops, and they are responsible for finding peculiar children and bringing them into the safety of the loops, as well as ensuring the loops continue to function. Jacob asks whether his grandfather was like the other children. Miss Peregrine nods, and adds that "he was like you, Jacob."

Chapter 6, Part 1 Analysis

Explanations abound in this section - about the nature and purpose of the school, about the nature of the children and of Miss Peregrine, and about what happened to Abe. Here it's important to note that all the characters involved are, at this point, keeping secrets. As Jacob notes in narration, he deliberately withholds information about what happened the night of his grandfather's death. What he finds out later is that both Miss Peregrine and Emma are also withholding knowledge of Abe - what made him peculiar, why he left, and what exactly his relationship was with the Home and its inhabitants.



Here it's interesting to note another similarity between Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children and other narratives. In addition to its previously discussed utilization of elements of The Hero's Journey in which the Hero often finds alternative worlds as appealing as Jacob finds the Home (see "Themes"), there are also echoes of other stories of so-called "special" young people being kept safe and hidden from the world. The "Harry Potter" stories, the "X-Men" narratives, all sorts of other books explore this conceit, that the different or the unusual must be protected from being exploited, attacked, or destroyed by the "outside world," or the "normal." For further consideration of this aspect of the book, see "Topics for Discussion - What do you think is the reason why ..."

Photos in this section: 1 - of a youngish looking woman all in black, wearing spectacles and holding a parasol. 2 - of a middle aged woman with a bird on her finger, and of two other middle aged women and a group of children.



Chapter 6, Part 2

Chapter 6, Part 2 Summary

Miss Peregrine makes Jacob take a bath and dresses him in clothes of the period just before the war. She then takes him down to dinner and introduces him to the other peculiars. One of them, Olive, is the levitating girl. Jacob recognizes another girl, Claire, from one of the trunk photographs, and is surprised to discover that the long curly hair he remembers from that photo conceals an extra mouth in the back of her head (*photo). While they eat, Jacob and Miss Peregrine both are asked a lot of questions, including why Jacob is wearing the clothes of a boy named Victor. Miss Peregrine explains that Victor doesn't need them any more. The sumptuous meal is interrupted by the sound of airplanes overhead. When Jacob reacts in fear, remembering this is the day the Home was destroyed, the other children laugh and joke that it's just the changeover - the restarting of the loop that happens every day at the same instant the bomb explodes. She and the rest of the children rush outside to watch as planes fly overhead, one of them dropping a bomb that is caught by a hedge manipulated by the wild-haired girl. The bomb explodes, and in its light and heat, time resets itself, and Jacob and the others are at a point a few moments before the end of September 2nd.

Jacob realizes he should go back to the inn and keep his father from worrying. Emma volunteers to return with him, and they go back to the Old Man's Cairn. As they walk, Jacob says he'd always wanted to meet the people his grandfather had talked about, adding that he wishes it didn't have to be under these circumstances. Emma impulsively hugs him, and he just as impulsively hugs her back (see "Quotes," p. 173). They arrive at the cairn, go in, turn around, and come back out in Jacob's own time. Emma turns back around and goes back in, leaving Jacob to return to the inn, where he finds his father, who thinks that Jacob spending so much time at the house isn't necessarily good for him. Jacob protests so strongly that his father calls Dr. Golan and explains the situation. Dr. Golan tells Jacob that he told his father that Jacob would probably benefit from some "breathing room," and that his father should back off. Jacob then talks again with his apparently grumpy father, and promises to be back in time for dinner the next day. Jacob then goes to bed, wondering for the first time whether it might be possible for him to stay permanently (see "Quotes," p. 177).

Chapter 6, Part 2 Analysis

While this section contains further explanations of the nature of the Home and how it functions (the demonstration of the loop resetting is, for both Jacob and the reader, an intense moment), this section also contains some important elements of foreshadowing. First, there is the almost passing reference to Victor, a character who appears in Chapter 8 Part 1 and whose "relationship" with the other young people in the home is an important trigger for the movement of the plot. Then there is the reset itself, which foreshadows the failure of the loop to reset in the novel's penultimate chapter, and the

sudden surge of feeling between Emma and Jacob, which foreshadows further, and intensifying, developments in their relationship. Finally, there is the reappearance of Dr. Golan, whose easy acquiescence to Jacob's request is foreshadowing of the later revelation (Chapter 10, Part 1) of his real identity as a peculiar-hunting wight, searching for food for his master, the hollowgast Malthus.

The chapter concludes with another turning point in Jacob's journey of transformation - his Hero's Journey (again, see "Themes"). This is the idea, occurring for the first time, whether it might be possible for him to stay with Miss Peregrine, a foreshadowing of the dilemma he faces, to varying degrees and for varying reasons, in Chapter 10 and beyond. Here again, the choice of whether to stay or go in the strange new world discovered by the Hero on his journey is a common characteristic of many, if not most, such narratives.

Photos in this section: a two-imaged print, one image of a pretty blond girl's face, the other of the back of her head and her long curly hair.



Chapter 7

Chapter 7 Summary

The next day is cold and rainy, and Jacob's father doesn't want him to go off on his own, but Jacob convinces him, saying he's going to go visit new friends on the other side of the island. As he's making his way back to the Home, he worries that when he goes back through the cairn, the house won't be as it was. But when he emerges into 1940, everything is as he remembered it being (see "Quotes," p. 180). Emma is waiting for him, and she hurries him along to the house, where he is seated at a makeshift stage and watches as Miss Peregrine and the children put on a show for him, the kind of show that Emma says they used to do years ago - displaying their "peculiarities" for the public as a sideshow. Jacob learns the names of a few more of the children - strong girl Bronwyn (*photo), tree girl Fiona (*photo), and well dressed Horace (*photo) who, Emma tells him, has visions of the future.

After the show, and after a filling lunch, Emma, Jacob and several of the older children go swimming, passing through the town on their way to the beach. When Jacob worries that the people who came after him the day before will do so again, Emma reminds him that they won't remember - the day resets itself every twenty-four hours. Meanwhile, Millard reveals that he is documenting every incident in the lives of every person and every animal that takes place that day, writing them down in a notebook (see Chapter 5). When they get to the beach, and in between swimming sessions, the children pepper Jacob with questions about the future, which he is happy to answer. On their way back to the house, Emma tries to reach an apple, but can't quite make it. Jacob gives her a boost, and when he lets her down, she gives him both the apple and a kiss. He tries to convince her to come back to the present with him for a visit and meet his father, but she says it's a bad idea. He gets her to agree to come back for a moment and let him take some pictures, and that she does agree to, racing around the cairn as Jacob takes pictures with his cell phone. She then returns to 1940, running back through the Old Man's cairn.

When Jacob gets back to the village, he's met by his anxious father, who in turn takes him to confront a group of villagers, investigating the murderous slaughter of a pen full of sheep. Another suspect is the tearful, vulnerable Worm who, conversation reveals, has a history of abusing animals. When asked about his whereabouts, Jacob realizes he has to come up with another lie, because none of the villagers will believe the lie he told his dad about visiting friends on the other side of the island, and says his friends are imaginary. His father, meanwhile, is trying to get to the truth of what happened to the sheep, and is taken to see the scene of the crime - a pen full of blood, in which sheep have had their guts ripped out of them. Worm's reaction leads the townspeople to think he's guilty, and he's imprisoned. Back at the inn, Jacob convinces his skeptical father that having made-up friends is not as bad as it sounds, and that he really is all right. His father lets him go up to bed, and he gets ready to go to sleep. He wonders who really killed the sheep since he has the sense that neither Worm nor Dylan has that much

violence in them, but later gives in to obsessing about Emma as he looks at the apple she gave him and the pictures he took of her.

Chapter 7 Analysis

This chapter is notable for several reasons. These include the introductions of several characters who later play important roles in the narrative, particularly Bronwyn and Horace, and the introduction of the apple, which plays an important role in cluing Jacob in to one of the downsides of going in and out of the loop. Other interesting ideas are the notion of the peculiars participating in a traveling sideshow, and Millard's idea about documenting every event of their one day (his notebook was the source of his knowledge, in Chapter 6, of when would be a good time to leave the hiding place and jump into a cart). There are also developments in the Emma/Jacob relationship, the feelings that seem to be growing between them serving as an important catalyst for later events.

What's perhaps most interesting about this section, though, is the juxtaposition of joy with violence, of happiness and play with death and destruction. The former can be found in the portrayal of the show the peculiars put on for Jacob, while the latter can be found in the revelation of the slaughter of the sheep. Here it's important to note that the reader would, in all likelihood, be ahead of Jacob here, already believing that the deaths of the sheep have something to do with the death of Abe. But Jacob doesn't make that connection just yet, not doing so until he talks with Miss Peregrine in the following section. In this juxtaposition, meanwhile, the narrative begins to define the set of circumstances that Jacob comes to realize form the two poles of his choice - violence vs. peace. The question he and the reader come to face is which side of the loop, the present day or 1940, represents which.

Photos in this section: 1 - a tomboyish girl, barefoot and uncomfortable in a delicate dress and hat. Photo 2 - a girl in a dark dress with messy hair holding a chicken. Photo 3 - a young boy in full formal evening dress, complete with top hat and monocle.



Chapter 8, Part 1

Chapter 8, Part 1 Summary

Jacob wakes up early the following morning, determined to avoid his father. He notices the apple, given to him by Emma, sitting on the bedside table but now withered and crumbly. Thinking about this peculiarity, he makes his way back to 1940 and the Home, where he is met by an angry Miss Peregrine. She tells him that he shouldn't have told the students all about the future, since it made them long for things they could never have. She explains that the students could never leave the loop, because if they did, time would catch up with them and make them age too quickly. She also says they could leave the home if they wanted to but stay in the period but that, she says, would mean that they would get caught up in the war and, quite possibly, attacked for being peculiar. She hints at other dangers, but dismisses Jacob without telling him what.

Left on his own to wait for Emma who has gone down to the village for supplies, Jacob sits outside and contemplates the simultaneous attraction and danger of life in the Home (see "Quotes," p. 209). His attention is taken by a wandering clay soldier, which he follows as it returns to the boy who made it - the sharp tongued Enoch (*photo), who demonstrates his peculiar ability. He can take life from one being (in this case, the heart of a mouse) and use it to animate a non-living body (the clay soldier). Enoch also refers to a game called Raid the Village and to a friend named Victor, who's in a room upstairs. Jacob goes to Victor's room, recognizes him as the strong boy from one of his grandfather's photos, and realizes he's dead (*photo). He's interrupted by Bronwyn, Victor's sister, and then by Enoch. Bronwyn begs Enoch to animate Victor, but Enoch says he's short on supplies, referring to his store of human organs in the basement. They hear Miss Peregrine coming up the stairs and Bronwyn runs out, but Jacob makes Enoch stay and explain Raid the Village by threatening to tell Miss Peregrine about what Enoch has done. Enoch explains that Raid the Village is a game that Miss Peregrine knows nothing about, in which he and some of the other children sneak into the village and practice their skills in case they're attacked. He says that Emma doesn't believe in it, adding that many of the peculiar children feel they have to be able to protect themselves against "them," leaving before he can tell Jacob who "them" is.

Chapter 8, Part 1 Analysis

The stakes and complications facing Jacob, his hopes for a relationship with Emma and, above all, his hopes for a life within the loop are increasingly challenged in this section, as Miss Peregrine explains the relationship between time inside and time outside the loop, a relationship intriguingly manifest in the withered apple. Meanwhile, Miss Peregrine's reference to their being other dangers in the world is clearly a foreshadowing of later conflicts with wights and hollowgasts, the nature of which Jacob finally discovers in the following section.



Meanwhile, one of the darkest and most unusual non-monster characters in the book appears in this section. This is the strange, darkly violent Enoch, whose ability to give life depends on the taking of it - the taking of a life from a mouse, for example, so that he can take its heart and plug it into a clay doll. He seems to relish both the idea and the practice of Raid the Village, an attitude that can, in turn, be seen as foreshadowing the even darker attitude of the wight as revealed in Chapter 10 Part 2. This is the idea that for the most part, the peculiars are afraid and/or unwilling to use their power to gain safety from, and eventual control over, the non peculiars. The other point to note about Enoch is that his appearance here both explains the jars of decaying organs seen by Jacob in the basement of the ruined Home (Chapter 5 Part 1) and foreshadows events in Chapter 10 Part 1. There he uses his peculiarity to reanimate the torn body of Martin Pagett and gain important information from it. Finally, and once again, the specter of a strange "them" is raised to Jacob, triggering even more uncertainty, confusion, and fear.

Photos in this section: 1 - a strange looking boy showing off a pair of handmade dolls.
Photo 2 - a young man lying in bed, head to one side, as seen in a mirror.



Chapter 8, Part 2

Chapter 8, Part 2 Summary

Jacob leaves Victor's room but before he can get downstairs, he has to evade the returning Miss Peregrine. He ducks into another room which he realizes is Emma's and discovers a box of letters and photos that detail Emma's relationship with Abe. Jacob discovers that Abe eventually ended the correspondence with a photo of him and his baby daughter - Jacob's aunt Susie (*photo). Emma comes in and angrily confronts him, but eventually calms down enough to explain that Abe promised to come back for her but never did so, adding that she never forgot him. Her story makes Jacob believe that she wants him not necessarily for himself, but as a replacement for his grandfather. This makes him evade her increasingly obvious attempts to get him to kiss her with questions about Ethan and "them." She initially refuses to answer him, but when he says his grandfather sent him to find out the truth, she agrees to tell him later - after the sun has set.

Jacob makes his way back to The Priest's Hole, where he discovers his father well on the way to getting drunk. It turns out that another professional ornithologist has arrived, and Jacob's father is getting discouraged. Jacob comments in narration on how this was his father's usual pattern of behavior (see "Quotes," p. 232-3), watching in curiosity as the second ornithologist (identified as such by a whispered comment from his father) comes in, orders two steaks, accepts them blue-rare, and goes. Jacob finds this suspicious, but his father tells him not to worry.

Later, once his drunken father has gone to sleep, Jacob sneaks out and makes his way to the cairn. On the other side of time, he meets Emma, who takes him to a safe place for conversation - the hull of one of the shipwrecks around the island. Along the way, she takes him for a sub-surface swim, showing him a school of secretive fish that light up the below-the-surface world of the sea in the same way as the stars light up the night (see "Quotes," p. 239). The intimacy of the situation leads Jacob, in spite of his best intentions, into kissing her. This, in turn, leads Emma to ask him to stay with them. He tells her he can't be a substitute for his grandfather, protesting that he's just ordinary. Emma reveals that it's not every person who can come through the cairn - Jacob is "peculiar" too. She then tells him he has the same rare talent that Abe had - they can both "see the monsters."

Chapter 8, Part 2 Analysis

Important elements in this section include Jacob's discovery of just how intense the relationship between his father and Emma actually was, his resultant determination to keep his distance from her (which ultimately fails him), and his convincing her to reveal the truth about the hollowgast. Perhaps more important is Jacob's discovery of the arrival of the second ornithologist, which doesn't seem particularly important now but



becomes so later, when it starts to become clearly possible that the ornithologist is, in fact, a wight. Then there is what appears to be a narrative diversion into the life failings of Jacob's father who, interestingly and perhaps tellingly, is not even identified by name (Franklin) until the last chapter. While at first it may seem that Jacob's lengthy commentary on his father doesn't have much to do with the rest of the story, it's important to remember not only that Jacob is on some level desperate to carve out his own individual identity, but is also determined, as is later revealed, to not be ineffectual or weak. The commentary here about his father, therefore, can be seen as a manifestation of that determination, an expression of the sort of person he doesn't want to be. It must be noted that the narrative doesn't make this point explicitly, but there is nevertheless the sense that in the intensity of his unhappiness with his father, Jacob is subconsciously revealing an unhappiness, or at least a potential unhappiness, with himself.

Finally, there is the reference to the stars, which foreshadows a similar insight in Chapter 11. Both references suggest that Jacob has a sense of transcendence about him, that there is meaning to existence beyond what is merely being lived. It is, perhaps, this additional level of awareness that provides the ultimate motivation for the decision he makes in the final chapter - to leave what he sees as an empty present behind, and continue living his life in the more fulfilling past.

Photos in this section: - a young man, his back to the camera, holds a little girl over his shoulder.



Chapter 9

Chapter 9 Summary

In the moment that Emma mentions the monsters, Jacob realizes what she says is true, that he and his grandfather did share the same "peculiarity" - to see the monsters (the hollowgast). Further conversation reveals that the hollowgast can't enter the loops, but the wights can, and that that Victor, desperate to leave the loop, was killed by one. Jacob reveals that Abe was killed by a hollowgast, and Emma confesses that she knew they'd get him eventually.

When they get back to the beach, Hugh and Fiona are waiting for them with news that one of Miss Peregrine's fellow ymbrynes has arrived with desperate news, but fainted before anyone could find out what. After Emma reveals that Jacob is "peculiar", the peculiars run back to the house, where they are shown into Miss Peregrine's room. There, she tends an elderly woman, Miss Avocet, while explaining to the angry Jacob why she didn't at first tell him everything she knew about his grandfather - she wasn't sure, she says, he could be trusted. She also says that out of all the peculiars in her care, Abe was particularly troubled (see "Quotes," p. 248), and that he left the loop to hunt both Nazis and the hollowgast (the peculiar-hunting monsters). This, in turn, leads Jacob to a respectful realization about his grandfather - that he wasn't a bad father or a philanderer, but a warrior (see "Quotes," p. 249). Miss Avocet, meanwhile, has recovered enough to explain what happened - she and another ymbryne, Miss Bunting, were lured out of their loop by a pair of disguised wights who had kidnapped a pair of their peculiars. Miss Bunting was kidnapped, but Miss Avocet escaped to warn Miss Peregrine. As Miss Avocet weeps for her peculiars, now alone, Miss Peregrine leaves, taking Jacob and Emma with her.

Miss Peregrine sends the other children to bed and asks Jacob to stay the night. He says he can't, because he has to consider his father, but demands to know more about the hollowgast. Miss Peregrine takes him to a private greenhouse, where she explains that the hollowgast is a group of rebel ymbrynes who, in their attempt to discover a way to immortality through adaptation of the loops, created a massive explosion that changed their natures entirely - into immortal monsters needing the blood of peculiars in order to live. If, she says, a "hollow" consumes enough peculiars it becomes a wight, still having no memory of their ymbryne past and still hungering for peculiars (some of which they feed to the hollows), but able to pass as human in spite of having no pupils in their eyes. This makes Jacob think of the old man he saw on the day he and Ricky searched for his grandfather (see Chapter 1), and to react with profound fear when Miss Peregrine shows him several photos of wights (*photos). Miss Peregrine then reveals that she needs Jacob to keep passing back and forth through the loop and keep watch for wights in the village. He says he thinks there's one already there, referring to the second ornithologist. He also asks whether he'll ever be safe anywhere again. She says he probably won't and then invites him to stay. He says he can't leave his parents. She says "They may love you ... but they'll never understand."



Back at The Priest's Hole, Jacob crawls into bed just as his father is waking up. The next day, while his dad is out looking for birds, Jacob searches the island for the second ornithologist, but finds no sign. That evening, he again finds his father drinking heavily in the bar, and warns him away from the strange ornithologist, saying he has a bad feeling about him. He's tempted to explain everything, but realizes it would be pointless, and goes upstairs (see "Quotes," p. 264).

Chapter 9 Analysis

While developments in the plot (i.e. the increasingly threatening presence of the wights) and revelations of identity (i.e. Jacob's affinity with his grandfather) tend to dominate this chapter, there are also important revelations of information (i.e. Miss Peregrine's relaying the origin story of the hollowgast and the wights to Jacob). Ultimately, though, all these elements are essentially just stepping stones on the path of Jacob's Hero's Journey (see "Themes"), all contributing to the emotional and moral weight of the decision that's already starting to prey on his mind - whether to stay or to go. The stakes associated with that decision are tersely summed up for him by Miss Peregrine in her comments on his lack of safety in the real world (i.e. always being pursued by wights and hollowgasts) and, most importantly, on the nature of his parents. There is the sense here that Jacob already has a good idea of just how much, or how little, he can rely on his parents, a sense reinforced by the image of his father he seems to be encountering more frequently - absent, drunk, wallowing in self-pity. In other words, Jacob is putting together the pieces of the puzzle in his outer world/life, but also the pieces of his inner world/life - what life requires of him and what, for him, life actually is, and means. He faces down the former starting in the following section, and faces down the latter in the aftermath of the events of Chapter 10, the novel's climactic chapter.

Photos - a Santa Claus with a pair of children and a tall thin man holding a skull, neither of whom has pupils; and a little girl, kneeling on the ground, with the shadow of a man in the foreground.



Chapter 10, Part 1

Chapter 10, Part 1 Summary

Jacob finds himself in a painful dilemma. On the one hand, he would like to stay with Miss Peregrine and the other peculiars, protecting them from attacks by wights and hollows but in the process traumatizing his family. On the other hand, he could return to his old life in Florida but leave his new friends at the mercy of the monsters and live the rest of his life in constant fear. He is also convinced he doesn't have the strength or the courage to fight back the monsters the way his grandfather did. His frequently drunk father is no help, sunk in his own self doubt. Neither is Miss Peregrine, who keeps all the children locked up and creating tension among them, tension that leads Horace to have a horrifying prophetic dream (*photo).

Meanwhile, Cairnholm is rocked by a sudden death - the murder of Martin Pagett, whose body was fished out of the ocean. Jacob realizes almost immediately that it's the work of a wight, and in the midst of a torrential storm, makes his way to the Home, where he reveals what's happened. Miss Peregrine puts the entire house, including Jacob, into lockdown, threatening to banish anyone who tries to leave. This doesn't stop Jacob, Emma, Enoch and Bronwyn from formulating a plan to escape and find out the truth of what happened to Martin - Enoch will reanimate him and ask him. With the help of Olive, Fiona and some of the other peculiars, the quartet emerges into the stormy present, taking with them some of Enoch's preserved hearts from the basement. They make their way into town and end up at the fishmongers, where Martin's body is being kept on ice. Enoch's first three attempts at reanimation fail, but the fourth succeeds. Only Jacob can hear and understand Martin as he speaks in language that is at first poetic and confusing, but which eventually reveals that he was killed by a wight.

That wight then interrupts them, in the form of the second ornithologist, who reveals that he knows each of the quartet and who, in various guises (including Dr. Golan, the blind old man, and Jacob's old bus driver - *photo), has kept a close, and hungry, eye on Jacob and his grandfather over the years. The wight then offers Jacob a deal - work with him and his hollowgast, and he will be safe. For a moment Jacob is tempted, but then refuses. The wight then leaves, allowing his hollowgast (Malthus) to come in. The monster approaches the quartet, unafraid of the fire Emma flashes at him from her hands. Suddenly Bronwyn rushes forward, heaves up the trough filled with ice and Martin's body, and throws it over Malthus, knocking it to the ground. While the other three escape, Bronwyn pulls the shop down on Malthus. Enoch loses his temper with Jacob, accusing him of betraying them all by telling his grandfather's stories to the Golan wight. Jacob apologizes, but then they realize that Malthus is starting to crawl free of the wreckage, and take off for the cairn.

Their escape is slowed by the still pelting rain, and Jacob, the only one of them who can actually see Malthus, notices it gaining. He tells the others to head for the cairn while he and Emma take off in another direction. Malthus follows as they race through the



countryside, eventually ending up at the building where Dylan and Worm tricked Jacob into walking in sheep shit (Chapter 3). There, they catch their breath, Jacob promises Emma that once this fight is over he'll stay in 1940, and then he arms himself with a pair of sheep shears. Malthus finds them, hacking his way through a herd of frightened sheep. Jacob lures him away from Emma, running through the bog towards the cairn. When he dives in, Malthus follows him, grabs him with one of his snakelike tongues, and starts hauling him out. Jacob holds out the shears in front of him and, as he emerges into the stormy night, the shears pierce one of Malthus' eyes and penetrate its brain. The hollowgast sinks into the bog, dead. Emma pulls Jacob out, and they celebrate his having killed Malthus, Emma saying Abe would have been proud. Their happiness is short lived, however, as Jacob remembers they still have to find Golan.

Chapter 10, Part 1 Analysis

The lengthy, action packed Chapter 10 is the book's climactic chapter, its point of highest emotional and narrative intensity. That intensity is grounded in Jacob's dilemma as defined at the beginning of the chapter, although if the reader considers the options carefully and objectively (in a way that Jacob apparently can't do), there really isn't much of a choice. As the narrative has made clear, he doesn't care much for either his parents or the life he lives with them in Florida. His fear of hurting them is, based on his own previous narration, defined more by what he should feel than what he actually does feel. Here we have another manifestation of the Hero's Journey (see "Themes"), the Hero facing challenging, sometimes painful truths about himself and his situation, but finding himself reluctant to act upon them. In other words, the hero, like Jacob, is being forced into a position of courage and definitive choice, a position / conflict from which Jacob emerges, in the same metaphorically significant way that he emerges from the cairn. His killing of the hollowgast can, in this context, be seen as a symbolic killing of doubt and fear. Here it's important to note that in this action, which is essentially an externalization of an internal conflict, the narrative enacts one of the major narrative techniques of the Hero's Journey.

Among the other important elements in this section are the surprising revelation that Dr. Golan was the wight in disguise (his non-existent pupils, the wight explains, hidden by colored contact lenses), the somewhat grotesque use to which Enoch puts the preserved hearts, and the touching cry by the revived Martin Pagett that being alive again hurts. This is quite logical, in fact, since his physical wounds would not have been treated - in other words, he's still physically ripped apart, and suffering. Then there is Horace's prophetic dream that foreshadows his revelation in Chapter 11 that he has envisioned where Miss Avocet has been taken, and the teamwork displayed by Jacob and the other three peculiars. They are clearly a community.

Finally, there is the photograph of the school bus driver - a shocking and grotesque image that is, in some ways, more emotionally powerful (i.e. scary) than just about any other visual in the book.

Photos in this section: 1 - of a well dressed young man shielding his hand from the light.
Photo 2 - an elderly man in sunglasses, his features obscured by staples.



Chapter 10, Part 2

Chapter 10, Part 2 Summary

Jacob and Emma climb through the cairn and re-emerge in 1940 as the bombing raid that destroyed the house is beginning. They are met by Hugh, Enoch and Bronwyn, who reveal that the wight came into the loop, locked all the peculiars in the cellar, forced Miss Peregrine and Miss Avocet to transform, caged them, and disappeared with them. The group reasons that the wight (referred to by Jacob as Golan) must be trying to leave the island from the 1940 side of the loop, since the weather is too stormy on the present side. As they're trying to work out how to track him, Fiona runs up with news that Millard hid when Golan invaded, followed him when he left, and has returned with news that the boat he was trying to leave in was too small to negotiate the stormy sea, and he's trapped on the lighthouse island. Emma comments that because there are no other boats available, the only way to get to the lighthouse is to swim, and she, Jacob, Bronwyn and Millard head for shore.

As the four peculiars are swimming out, Golan shoots at them. They regroup on the hull of a wreck (the same one where Emma showed Jacob the stars - see Chapter 8, Part 2) and try to come up with a new plan. The invisible Millard decides he's best equipped for a sneak attack. He makes the attempt, but Golan sees the water his body is displacing and fires, wounding him. As Jacob and Emma tend to his wound, Bronwyn dives into the wreck and returns with a metal door she's wrenched from its hinges. With Millard on her back and holding the door like a shield, Bronwyn leads the quartet across the wreck, through Golan's gunfire, and through the water to the lighthouse. When Golan threatens to shoot the birds (he's still holding their cage), Bronwyn throws the door at him, wounding him and sending him climbing up the stairs to the top of the lighthouse. She tends to the still bleeding Millard, sending Jacob and Emma after Golan.

Jacob tries shaking Golan loose from the rickety stairs so he'll tumble down and confront them there, but succeeds only in shaking loose the gun. He and Emma climb the stairs and, at the top of the staircase, split up, Emma circling one way, Jacob the other - Emma armed with her flames, Jacob with the gun. Jacob sees Golan first, illuminated by a blinking red beacon at the top of the birdcage. Golan sees him, threatens to toss the cage, and then runs, but a flare from Emma stops him in his tracks. He dares Jacob to fire the gun, taunting him about his fearfulness. This leads Jacob to wonder why he hasn't yet fired (see "Quotes," p. 320). Emma, meanwhile, is drawing closer, threatening Golan with increasingly angry flame. Her taunts lead Golan to reveal that he and the other wights need the ymbrynes' power in order to create an even bigger reaction and increase the likelihood of their immortality. As Jacob imagines how horrible life on earth would be if the wights and hollowgasts gained power (a life he realizes was the vision that traumatized Horace - see Chapter 10, part 1), Golan accuses them and all peculiars of being afraid of using their power properly. He then swings the birdcage at Emma. As she ducks, he lets it go and it flies into the night, then attacks Jacob, fighting for the gun. Emma chokes him, her hands flaring. Golan turns



his attention to her, and Jacob focuses on the gun, steadying himself, firing and shooting Golan in the throat.

A moment later, Jacob and Emma hurtle down the lighthouse stairs and into the ocean, desperate to save the birdcage and its contents. They come close, but it sinks before they can grasp it. It quickly returns to the surface, however, rising on the hull of a Nazi U-boat, itself climbing to the surface. As Jacob realizes it must have been waiting for Golan, Emma tries to retrieve the cage, unaware that a Nazi officer (who, Jacob notices, has no pupils and is therefore a wight) is aiming a gun at her. Jacob knocks her off the U-boat just as the officer is taking one of the birds inside. As the boat returns below the surface, Jacob and Emma become aware of Miss Peregrine, floating in the water with them, one wing broken. Emma retrieves her and the three of them return to shore, Bronwyn and the other children coming out to help them.

As everyone catches their breath, they become aware that Miss Peregrine cannot transform back into her human self and that the loop has not reset as it was supposed to, meaning that the Home has been destroyed.

Chapter 10, Part 2 Analysis

Narrative momentum continues to build throughout this section to the climax of climaxes, the confrontation between Golan and the two peculiars (Jacob and Emma) at the top of the lighthouse. The first thing to note here is how the building tension in the story is so thoroughly tied and/or motivated by Jacob's personal dilemma - specifically, his belief that he hasn't got his grandfather's courage. He's proven himself to a degree by killing the hollowgast in the first part of this chapter, but faces an even stronger challenge to his emerging courage when he actually has to do what he believes his more courageous grandfather to have done - pull the trigger on a gun with intent to kill. His successful choice at this point is a key turning point in his life, one that cements even more thoroughly his decision to stay in the past with the other peculiars and continue to fight for the safety of them all.

Other important elements in this section include the courage displayed by the other peculiars - in particular Emma, Bronwyn and Millard. The narrative never explicitly says so, but it's reasonable to assume that on some level, their example is either an inspiration to Jacob, or something that shames him into showing the same sort of courage and loyalty (an example of how shame can be a positive thing). In any case, there is the clear sense that in joining them, Jacob will fit right in, for reasons other than simply being peculiar. Then there is the image of the wight/Nazi, a very interesting one when the reader remembers that the Nazis have, in the decades since they came to power, been regarded as among the most monstrous, inhuman human beings in history. The image here builds on that historical impression and, at the same time, ties the two monsters faced by Abe Portman (Nazis and hollowgast) into one corrupt entity - pure, acquisitive, destructive evil.



Finally, there are the last moments of the chapter, in which the peculiars realize that their home has, in all likelihood, been destroyed. This is important for two reasons. On a narrative level, it draws the reader further into their story, engaging them in the peculiars' struggle to face down one last challenge. On a metaphoric level, and in relation to the archetypal Hero's Journey (see "Themes"), the loss of the Home means that Jacob and the other peculiars, his fellow courageous adventurers, have stepped through a door that has closed behind them. The event has created a Before and After for Jacob and the other peculiars of the sort to which Jacob himself referred at the beginning of the narrative. The shape and meaning of After, its purpose and nature, become clear in the book's upcoming, final chapter.



Chapter 11

Chapter 11 Summary

When they return to the house, Jacob, Emma and the others discover that it has been blown apart. Miss Peregrine, still trapped in her bird form, is unable to explain. When conversation returns to the wights' plan to create a bigger entry to the ymbryne's time process, Horace reveals that he's had a vision of where the wights are gathering. At Jacob's suggestion, he draws it with ashes and dust (*photo), a picture that Bronwyn suggests looks like a jail. An argument ensues over whether it would be best to try to track down the wights and stop them, or whether to just stay put and fight, as best as possible, whatever trouble comes. Eventually, those arguing for taking the fight to the wights win, and preparations are made for the community of peculiars to leave.

Those preparations involve retrieving a special book from the wreckage of the house - the Map of Days, which Emma says contains information about every loop ever created. Conversation about the information it contains reveals that the wights are skilled at leapfrogging from loop to loop, and whatever loop the peculiars find, there will probably be wights guarding it. Jacob comments that it's a good thing he's coming with them, since he's the only one among them who can see wights and hollows. When Emma asks him if he's sure, he takes a walk by himself and looks at the stars (see "Quotes," p. 338), realizing that back in his own time, there's nothing left for him.

Before he leaves with the other peculiars, Jacob returns one last time to The Priest's Hole, where he writes a letter to his father explaining that everything Grandpa Portman said about his past was true, and that he is leaving for what might be a long time to follow in his grandfather's footsteps. He realizes that his father won't believe any of it and is throwing the letter away when his father comes in, demanding an explanation. When Jacob tells him the truth, that he was with his friends, his father loses his temper, shouting that the "friends" are imaginary and that he and Jacob are leaving right away. At that moment Emma, Olive (the levitator) and Millard arrive, manifesting their abilities and saying they're Jacob's friends. Jacob's father convinces himself he's dreaming and heads back to bed, but not before he tells Jacob to be careful. Jacob retrieves his note, and Emma adds a photo of her and Abe taken on Abe's last visit (*) and a letter as proof that what Jacob has said is true. Jacob leaves the note and the photo and leaves.

Jacob, Emma and the others go through the cairn, carving the date of its establishment and their departure at the bottom of a list of similar dates and expressing the hope that someday, another loop will be established at this location. Back at what's left of the house, they bury Victor, Fiona raising plants over the grave. They then leave forever, some taking a few souvenirs, all happy (see "Quotes," p. 347). As they cast off in their boats, Jacob reflects on the heaviness of the memory of his past life, and how happy he is to be moving on. "Ten peculiar children and one peculiar bird were made to fit in just three stout rowboats" and they all set off. Emma suggests that someone commemorate the moment with a speech, but no one can find the words. Enoch raises Miss



Peregrine's cage, and she cries out. The children echo her with "both an echo and a lament, for everything lost and yet to be gained." Bronwyn snaps a photo with Miss Peregrine's camera (*photo) and then points to the warships she sees in the distance.

The children row faster.

Chapter 11 Analysis

As the novel draws to its conclusion, Jacob closes another door behind him, moving forward more definitively than ever into a future that in some ways is profoundly unsure, but in other ways is more secure than his previous life ever was - he has friends, he has self-knowledge, and he has a purpose. This is a fundamental component of the Hero's Journey, what might in fact be described as its essential narrative goal - the portrayal of a Hero challenged by monsters both inner and outer but emerging stronger, more mature, more self-aware, and armed to face the next challenges thrown at him by the simple experience of being alive in the world. Here it's important to note the contrast between Jacob's decisiveness and excitement and his father's lack of engagement with his son, as manifest in his anger, his conviction that nothing happening is real, and his simply withdrawing into sleep. In other words, the old world, the unhappy past, is slipping away from Jacob and while a part of him is sad to see it go and regretful that it was so unfulfilled, he is excited to be moving into a new future in which, he feels, he has a real place.

Other important points in this section include the sketch "drawn" by Horace which, with its vertical lines and jagged x's, looks like a representation of a barbed wire fence which, in turn and in the context of World War II in which part of the narrative is set (see "Style - Setting") clearly and almost unavoidably suggests a concentration camp. These were places where the Nazis sent Jews and other so-called "undesirables" to be detained, experimented upon, tortured, and often killed. In other words, the picture strongly indicates, to the reader at least, that Miss Avocet has been taken to someplace like Auschwitz.

Finally, there is the final image of both the narrative and the collection of photographs upon which it is based - that of a canoe or rowboat in the foreground with a row of battleships silhouetted against a background sunset. The image evokes several contrasts -smallness and largeness, peace and war, freedom and discipline, hope and fear (battleships, after all, only go into battle if there is something to be fought, i.e. something to be frightened of). These contrasts, when taken into consideration along with narrative contrast, suggest that Jacob and his friends/allies have an almost overwhelming task ahead of them (i.e. the size of the ocean, the smallness of the boat, the number of battleships), but that there is beauty and peace (i.e. the sunset) beyond the conflict they face. On a deeper level, these implications in turn evoke an important message of the Hero's Journey - armed with new confidence, new strength, new knowledge and new experience, the voyager in life can transcend any challenge and, ultimately, can look forward to fulfillment, integrity, and grace.



Photo 1 - a rough ink sketch of trees, posts, and what looks like barbed wire (perhaps a prison camp). Photo 2 - a young man and woman lying on the grass looking at each other. Photo 3 - in the foreground: a rowboat with four passengers. In the background: battleships, silhouetted against a sunset.



Characters

Jacob Portman

Jacob is the book's central character, its protagonist and narrator. In the book's initial chapters, he portrays himself as having been unhappily born into a family of inherited wealth on his mother's side and of both self-delusion and helpless ineffectuality on his father's. Both of these latter traits, Jacob believes, he shares with both his father and once-revered grandfather, who used to be a hero to him but who, the older they both get, seems to be becoming more and more of a crackpot. Over the course of the narrative, however, Jacob comes to understand more about both himself and his grandfather, realizing that they both had more courage than they at first realized and also share a specific enemy against which to focus that courage. In short, Jacob's is a typical Hero's Journey (see "Themes") which features, among several other archetypal or universal experiences, movement from unhappiness to fulfillment, from fear to courage, from ignorance to wisdom, and from doubt to certainty. Granted, none of these transformations is either complete or absolute. There are, for example, degrees of courage, wisdom, and certainty - some situations are known while others remain mysterious. Even the end of a Hero's Journey is but a beginning of another. Nevertheless, by the end of his Hero's Journey, Jacob, like so many other narrative heroes before him, knows more than he did, about himself and about the world. He has discovered more courage than he thought he had, and he is prepared to face the challenges of the outside world more effectively than he could before the journey began.

Grandpa Portman (Abe)

Abraham Portman is Jacob's grandfather, a man who, as is eventually revealed, was a Jew in Poland at the beginning of World War II (see "Setting"). He was also, again as the narrative eventually reveals, a "peculiar" (see below), a young person with an unusual ability - in Abe's case, the ability, which he shares with Jacob, to see the hollowgast (again see below), a monster that feeds on peculiars. Abe's stories of his unusual childhood at first entertain the young Jacob who, as he grows older and somewhat more worldly, comes to regard them as fairy tales. Interestingly, Abe never confronts Jacob about his disbelief, choosing to let him simply mature at his own rate and form his own opinions. The narrative never makes it explicitly clear why Abe makes this choice. There is, however, the distinct possibility that, as the result of living in Miss Peregrine's home, in which the lives of the children living there are strictly, almost rigidly, controlled, Abe developed a lifelong aversion to being too much of a dictator to the young people in his care, letting them be who and what they wished. This might, in turn, add another layer of explanation about why Abe was such an absent father to his son (Jacob's father) - yes, as the narrative makes clear, Abe was hunting down and killing wights and hollowgast. But it's also very possible that having been controlled as much as he was by Miss Peregrine, and having escaped the control of the Nazis, Abe wanted to give his family as much freedom as possible. In any case, Abe Portman was a



warrior, an aspect of his identity long kept secret but which, when eventually discovered, at first intimidates but then inspires his grandson.

Nazis

The Nazis were a group of violent, ultra-nationalistic, military-supported, politically motivated citizens of Germany who came to power in the early 1930's. Their socio-political platform espoused, among other things, white superiority and a hatred of Jews, intellectuals, artists, religion - in other words, anything that did not regard the power and authority of the country, and of its leader, Adolf Hitler, as supreme. As their power increased, they invaded the nearby country of Poland, Abe Portman's homeland, triggering Abe's escape along with that of hundreds, perhaps thousands of others who feared the tortures, imprisonment, and deaths handed out by the Nazi regime. The narrative draws a clear parallel between the Nazis and the wights, a parallel particularly evident in the apparent wight-ness of a Nazi submarine officer in Chapter 10, Part 2. Both Nazis and wights are, at least in the view of the narrative, embodiments of complete evil.

Jacob's Father

Jacob's father is an ornithologist, a scientist and researcher with a particular interest in birds and their habits. He is portrayed throughout the narrative as essentially weak and ineffectual, lacking in personal identity. This last aspect of his character is underscored by the fact that, until the narrative's very final moments, the author does not reveal his name. He is, in short, a nonentity, a nothing. As such, he is a powerful and motivating contrast to his son who, at the beginning of the narrative, doesn't necessarily know who he wants to be, but has a very clear sense of who and what he doesn't want to be - a nothing like his father, or a superficial, money sucking sponge like his mother.

Jacob's Mother

Jacob's mother appears only glancingly in the book's first few chapters but is nevertheless a vividly drawn character - superficial, selfish, materialistic, and far more interested in promoting a self-image of success than she is in her son's genuine well being. She, like Jacob's father, is a vivid contrast to both Jacob and to Abe who can be seen as manifesting and/or embodying a selflessness, a devotion to the well being of perhaps more vulnerable others.

Dr. Golan (The Blind Neighbor, the Second Ornithologist)

When he first appears, Dr. Golan is Jacob's sensitive, responsible psychiatrist, brought into his life by his parents, determined that Jacob recover from the trauma of



discovering his grandfather's body. Insistent upon knowing every detail of the stories told to Jacob by Abe and enabling of Jacob's eventual desire to research the truth of those stories, Golan is eventually revealed to be a wight (see below). The Golan-wight also reveals during his confrontation with Jacob in Chapter 10, Part 1 that he was also Abe's apparently blind neighbor and the mysterious "second ornithologist" who arrived on Cairnhope Island shortly after Jacob and his father.

Wights, Hollowgasts

A wight is a monster physically evolved into human form but psychotically driven by a desire to serve the hollowgasts, monsters from whom he and other wights evolved after consuming sufficient numbers of "peculiar" (see below). Wights are indistinguishable from humans, with the exception of their pupil-less eyes, while hollowgasts (themselves peculiar who have been corrupted both physically and morally by ambition) are barely human, with smelly saggy skin and three long, snakelike tongues.

Malthus

Malthus is the particular hollowgast attached to the Golan-wight. Malthus attacks Jacob, Emma, Enoch and Bronwyn, an attack initially fought off by Bronwyn and which is eventually ended permanently when Jacob stabs a pair of sheep shears through Malthus' eye and into his brain.

Peculiar

Peculiar are people born with special abilities who are persecuted in the human world for being different, and in the world of hollowgasts and wights, hunted as food. Very young peculiar, children, are taken into care and protected by ymbrynes like Miss Peregrine, who ensure that their lives, hidden away in one time loop or another (see "Objects/Places") are lived in an environment of relative safety and relative fulfillment. It's important to note that the narrative contains images of all the peculiar (including Miss Peregrine herself) who have taken refuge in Miss Peregrine's home - see "Objects/Places - The Photographs".

Miss Peregrine, the Ymbrynes

Miss Alma LeFay Peregrine (her middle name is evocative of the famous female witch Morgan LeFay) is an Ymbryne, a sort of female "peculiar" with a wide range of abilities. These include the power to transform into a bird, to move back and forth through time, and to construct and maintain the "loops" (see "Objects/Places") within which she and the peculiar children in her care can live in relative safety. Elderly and sharp tongued, loving and wise, pipe smoking and eccentric, Miss Peregrine reveals the truth of his and his grandfather's natures to Jacob, welcomes him into her Home and her world, and is



simultaneously both an obstacle and an inspiration to his struggle to realize his own independent identity.

Miss Avocet

Miss Avocet is another ymbryne, one who supervises a loop some distance from that supervised by Miss Peregrine. Miss Avocet evades kidnapping by one wight and makes a desperate effort to warn Miss Peregrine that the wights are on the move, but is later captured, along with Miss Peregrine, by the Golan wight. Miss Avocet is taken hostage by the wight/Nazis, leading Jacob and the other peculiars, along with Miss Peregrine, to take on the mission of rescuing her.

Emma

Emma is one of the peculiars who makes their home with Miss Peregrine. In her late teens and very strong willed, Emma has the "peculiar" ability to create fire, flame, heat and light in her hands. When Abe was young and a refugee from Poland, he and Emma fell in love and had an intense relationship, a relationship that drifted into silence once Abe left Miss Peregrine's home and ventured into the world. When she and Jacob meet, Emma is first convinced that he is a wight, and then starts treating him like a substitute for Abe. Eventually, the two come to see each other as who they truly are, and begin to fall in love themselves.

Millard, Bronwyn, Enoch

These three peculiars, along with Emma, live in Miss Peregrine's home. Clever, witty Millard is invisible; taciturn Bronwyn doesn't say much, but is phenomenally strong; and the peculiar, bitter Enoch has the ability to animate the non-living with the help of a once-living heart. Each of these peculiars, at one point or another, assists Jacob and Emma during their confrontations with the wights and hollowgasts, all displaying significant courage of the sort that, essentially, calls upon Jacob to act in a similarly courageous manner.

Olive, Claire, Fiona, Hugh, Horace

These five characters are also peculiars and also live in Miss Peregrine's home, but play a less significant role in the overall action. Playful Olive defies gravity, and has to be held to the ground with either rope or specially heavy boots. Claire has an extra, very sharp toothed mouth in the back of her head which is concealed by long curls. Wild haired Fiona can control both the growth and behavior of plants. Excitable Hugh has bees growing in his stomach, and unleashes them during violent bouts of emotion. Horace is always overdressed in formal clothes, and has the ability to envision the future. All five of these peculiars, along with Emma and the other three, join Jacob and



Miss Peregrine at the end of the novel in their quest for both Miss Avocet and a new loop within which they can realize safety from wights and hollowgasts.

Victor

Victor is Bronwyn's deceased brother and, like her, a peculiar with super strength. Narration reveals that several times, Enoch has used his "peculiar" ability to bring Victor back to life, said revelation foreshadowing the revival of the slaughtered Martin Pagett.

Martin Pagett, Uncle Oggie

Martin Pagett is the curator of the small museum in Cairnholm (see "Objects/Places"). He provides Jacob with important information about the island and about Miss Peregrine's home. Even after he is slaughtered by what is eventually revealed to be the Golan-wight, Pagett continues to provide information when he is reanimated by Enoch. Oggie is Martin's uncle, an elderly man who also gives Jacob information - specifically, the story of how the home was bombed in the early days of 1940 (information that helps Jacob understand his grandfather's mysterious last words) and how Abe Portman was the only resident of the Home to emerge from the destruction.

Ricky

Ricky is Jacob's one friend from his old Florida life. Determinedly eccentric in clothing choice and hair color, Ricky is also an outsider, but one with fickle feelings; he is initially supportive of Jacob in the aftermath of Abe's death, but eventually sides with Jacob's parents and their disbelief of Jacob's stories. For further consideration of Ricky, see "Topics for Discussion - Discuss the similarities and differences between Ricky ..."



Objects/Places

Florida

America's so-called "Sunshine State," Florida is where the Portman family (Jacob, his parents and his grandfather) make their home.

The Portman House

Jacob and his parents live in a large, expensively furnished and decorated home paid for by money from the pharmacy business owned by the family of Jacob's mother. The house is a manifestation of the essential superficiality and selfishness of Jacob's mother, with both house and attitude becoming aspects of his life that Jacob realizes he is not afraid to leave behind.

Abe's House

Abe's home, also in Florida, is where Jacob hears most of the stories his grandfather tells, and where his grandfather is killed. The woods in back of the house is where Jacob sees the monster (a hollowgast - see "Characters") that killed his grandfather, a sighting that sets him off on his journey of transformation.

The Emerson Book

A book by American poet Ralph Waldo Emerson, left to Jacob by his grandfather, contains important concealed information about Abe's past and Jacob's future.

Miss Peregrine's Letter

Concealed within the pages of the Emerson Book is a letter written by Miss Peregrine (see "Characters") from her home on Cairnholm Island (see below) inquiring about Abe's well being and sending regards from the mysterious "E," later revealed to be Abe's former girlfriend Emma (see "Characters").

Photographs

Throughout the narrative, Jacob refers to photographs shown to him by his grandfather (which, Abe says, are of people and situations from his mysterious childhood) and by other characters, as well as to others he discovers as the result of his own investigations. These curious photographs, many of which feature strange images, function on several levels - they intrigue Jake, they draw him further into the truths in the



lives of both his grandfather and the children with whom Abe lived in Miss Peregrine's home and, on a more objective level, intrigue the reader as well, since they're not just described, they're reproduced. Here's the interesting thing - as the author notes in an epilogue, all the photos published in the book and referred to in the narrative are actual photos taken and/or altered (in the days before Photoshop) by actual people. In other words, what the author has done is taken found photos and built a story, characters and plot and situations and meaning, around them. For further consideration of this aspect of the book, see "Topics for Discussion - Search out unusual photographs ..."

Cairholm Island

Miss Peregrine's home, where Abe apparently spent his childhood, is on Cairholm Island. Miss Peregrine's letter, apparently written several years after the home is destroyed and Miss Peregrine is supposedly killed, gives Cairholm Island as part of its return address. Jacob journeys to Cairholm, in the company of his father, with the intent of investigating and resolving his many questions about the life and death of his grandfather.

Cairholm Village

The sole inhabited village on the small island of Cairholm is rather primitive, its inhabitants rather coarse and uneducated, and its attitudes rather suspicious of outsiders. This is true of both the periods in which the narrative portrays it - the present day (when Jacob visits it) and the past (specifically, the day in 1940 in which Miss Peregrine has established her time loop - see below)

The Priest's Hole Inn

The Priest's Hole Inn is the only place for travelers to stay in Cairholm Village, and where Jacob and his father stay when they arrive. A priest's hole is a place where, in the time of the Protestant Revolution in England, Roman Catholic priests could conceal themselves from the soldiers pursuing them. Life, including violent searches, went on around and above them as the priests remained hidden in their small, isolated place of concealment. For further consideration of priest's holes in the rest of the narrative, see "Topics for Discussion - What do you see as the relationship ..."

Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children

This is essentially an orphanage, a home provided for "peculiars" (see "Characters") within a time loop (see below) where they can be safe from both regular humans and the monsters (wights and the hollowgast) that pursue them.



Time Loops

Time loops are essentially hiding places in the fabric of time created by Miss Peregrine and other ymbrynes (see "Characters") in order to keep themselves and other "peculiars," particularly children, safe. The loop repeats the same twenty-four hour period over and over, its essential circumstances never changing but the life within those circumstances continuing as normal, except, of course, the people living in the loop never age.

The Old Man's Cairn

Each time loop can only be entered through a particular opening in the real world and can only be accessed by peculiars. In the case of Miss Peregrine's time loop, and the home within, it can only be accessed through a tunnel leading into and out of a stone cairn, or burial mound, in which a prehistoric man was buried following his willing participation in a ceremony of human sacrifice. When the mummified body of the man is found centuries later, he is nicknamed "The Old Man" and the cairn where he is found "The Old Man's Cairn."

The Trunk

While exploring the present day ruins of Miss Peregrine's Home, Jacob discovers an old trunk, heavy and locked. Once he breaks it open, he discovers that it's full of old photographs, several of which he later discovers are pictures of the peculiars living in Miss Peregrine's home.

Millard's Book

One of the peculiars, the invisible Millard, has taken it upon himself to fill the monotony of his days in Miss Peregrine's Home to document the second-by-second life of every person and animal in the Cairnholm Village of that day. Information in that book eventually proves invaluable during the village adventures of Jacob and the other peculiars.

The Lighthouse

Off the coast of Cairnholm Island there is a lighthouse, warning visitors to stay away. The lighthouse serves as the setting for the climax of the narrative, during which Jacob and Emma confront the Golan-wight (see "Characters") in their attempt to rescue Miss Peregrine and Miss Avocet (see "Characters") in the lighthouse, eventually causing the Golan-wight to fall off and die.



The Map of Days

Following the destruction of Miss Peregrine's home and the failure of her time loop to reset itself, Emma and Jacob retrieve the Map of Days, which contains information about the location of every time loop in existence. They resolve to follow the map in search of a safe loop, at the same time as they're searching for the kidnapped Miss Avocet.



Themes

The Hero's Journey

As discovered through, and defined by, the work of noted mythologist and researcher Joseph Campbell, The Hero's Journey is a story of a person, young or mature, male or female, who leaves the relative comfort of home and undergoes a physical journey that echoes and/or triggers a simultaneous emotional, spiritual and moral journey. In other words, physical travel / outer adventure causes and/or manifests a journey of inner transformation. Countless stories of this sort can be found in narratives from Ancient Greece (i.e. "The Odyssey") to the Middle Ages (i.e. "Everyman") to contemporary motion pictures (i.e. "The Wizard of Oz", "Star Wars") and literature ("Harry Potter"). Jacob's story, as told in Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children, is another example of this classic genre. Jacob, like so many other heroes throughout the history of narrative, leaves his everyday life/world behind when he is called to adventure, specifically, to the investigation of an experience he once believed was entirely fictitious. It's important to note, however, that the meaning and insights obtained by characters navigating The Hero's Journey are not limited to experiences of the fantastic. They are ultimately metaphors for the day to day confrontations with the monsters (i.e. of self-doubt, fear, intimidation, violence, seduction) faced by everyday human beings on some level, The Hero's Journey is every person's journey. This is why, at least according to Campbell, the narrative is common to so many cultures, has manifested in so many forms, and continues to be a popular narrative form to this day. Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children was published in 2011.

Appearance vs. Reality

All is not necessarily what it appears to be in this book. Disguises, misunderstandings, mistaken identities, and false beliefs are everywhere, a circumstance which, combined with the overall context and purpose of The Hero's Journey, suggests that part of such journeys in general, and of Jacob's particular journey, is learning how to perceive the truth beneath the illusion, the reality beneath the appearance. There are several manifestations of this particular theme - for example, the "peculiar" ability, shared by Jacob and his grandfather Abe, to see the hollowgast when no-one else can. In other words, they have an ability to see a truth that remains hidden to almost everyone else. A related manifestation is how wights (like the Golan-wight - see "Characters") can disguise their profound inhumanity in human form, their appearance of normality concealing the reality of blood lust beneath. The Golan-wight, in fact, is one of the most vivid manifestations of this particular theme, showing up in no less than four disguises (Golan, the blind old man, the bus driver, the second ornithologist) that each/all conceal the horrific, monstrous reality beneath.

Other manifestations include the differences between Emma's first appearance (hostile, angry, violent) and her inner reality (hurt, warm, vulnerable, loving), and between what



Jacob sees in his grandfather (dementia) and what his grandfather truly is (desperately loving and protective). Then there is the differences between what Jacob's father sees of Abe's appearance (a neglectful father) and what he truly is (a committed warrior for good). Perhaps most importantly, though, there are the differences between how Jacob at first appears to himself (as an over-emotional, fearful weakling) and the reality about himself that he discovers (that he is a powerful, strong willed, courageous warrior in the making).

The Nature of Individual Identity

Both previously discussed themes (the Hero's Journey and the differences between appearance and reality) are tied to the third. This is the book's contemplation of the idea of individual identity and independence. A key component of Jacob's particular version of The Hero's Journey is that he moves from having a life defined by his parents (particularly his mother and her wealth) to living a life clearly defined by his own choices. Those choices are themselves defined by a desire to leave his old life behind, start a new one in a world and with companions with whom he feels more himself and, most importantly, by a much stronger sense of who that self really is. Granted, his new Jacob-ness is itself defined, to a substantial degree, by abilities and intentions inherited from his grandfather. But Jacob has accepted those parts of himself as the result of his own experiences, his own coming of age, his own feelings and beliefs. He has come to a sense of his own identity independently. He is inspired, not forced. And, in relation to the book's second previously listed theme, he has come to that understanding of identity through an experience of peeling away illusions about the world and, more importantly, about himself, and both discovering and accepting the reality beneath; his identity defines his reality, while his reality shapes his identity. The value, necessity and importance of this aspect of Jacob's journey of transformation is highlighted, through contrast, by the character of his father. His life, as opposed to Jacob's, is ultimately defined by indecision rather than active choice and determination, by outer circumstances (his wife's wealth) rather than by personal goal, and by belief (the appearance that his father was a failure) rather than the reality (the fact that his father was a hero). Perhaps the most telling point about the lack of identity in Jacob's father is the simple fact, that, as previously discussed, he isn't even referred to by name until the novel's very final moments.

Style

Point of View

The story is told from the first person, past tense point of view, specifically, from the perspective of the book's central character and narrator, Jacob Portman. As is often the case with first person narratives, the authorial choice to write from the protagonist's first person perspective draws the reader fully and immediately into Jacob's experiences. The reader discovers what Jacob discovers when he discovers it, encounters what he encounters when he encounters it, and explores important choices at the same time as Jacob explores them. Such a perspective is often particularly effective in narratives where there are mysteries to be solved, truths to be unveiled, and revelations to both absorb and accommodate. All these circumstances arise throughout Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children, with their impact being heightened and intensified by the inclusion of the photographs (see "Objects/Places - The Photographs") that inspired the author and which he has incorporated into the narrative. This is, in many ways, a good thing, in that several of the photographs, particularly the one of the stapled bus driver, are undeniably powerful and intriguing. On the other hand, the use of the photographs is, at times, somewhat self-conscious, coming across as more of an authorial conceit/contrivance than an actual outflow from story and situation. In other words, there is occasionally the sense that the reader is experiencing the author's intention rather than Jacob's point of view, a situation echoed, at times, in the book's use of language (see "Language and Meaning" below). All in all, though, the book's first person point of view is an important component in its generally engaging sensibility and execution.

Setting

There are two main components of setting to be noted about the book - its setting in the present, and its setting in the past. In terms of the former, the book is clearly set in contemporary times. Characters talk on cell phones, send emails, and work on laptops. That said, there is clear contrast between the two communities/countries in which the present day action is set. Florida, and perhaps by extension America where the first couple of chapters take place, is the fast paced land of high tech communication, while Cairnholm Island in Wales, where three quarters of the action is set, is rustic and almost primitive by comparison. There is the sense that this difference in location is, to some degree, a significant contributor to Jacob's journey of self discovery; unable to distract himself with electronics and the trappings of his mother's family's wealth, Jacob has only himself and his inner resources to rely upon.

In terms of the book's setting in the past, it's first of all important to note that past's real world historical context - specifically, the author's placement of Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children, and the time loop in which it's located, in the early days of World War II. Such a setting provides an important personal, social, and emotional context for the story of Abe Portman (see "Characters - Jacob's Grandfather" and "Nazis"), and



also provides fertile ground for the book's glancing contemplation on the nature of evil (specifically, its tying the pure evil of the Nazis to the even purer evil of the wights and hollowgasts). In terms of how that real-life context affects the narrative, here again the important point is the cross-temporal, decades-don't-matter portrayal of evil. The presence of such evil in both past and present suggests that such life destroying corruption is transcendent of both time (past-present) and space (Florida-Wales).

Language and Meaning

There is a lot of complexity and a lot of variety in the book's use of language, some of which is effective and appropriate and some of which is not. In the latter category, there is its expanse of vocabulary which, to some readers, might seem unlikely for a first person sixteen year old narrator who, in all likelihood, would not be all that interested in school. How many contemporary sixteen year olds would use words like "regale," "encroach," "viscid," "scabrous," or "indigent"? Jacob does indicate, in his narration, that he sees himself as a loner and as something of a geek, but whether that includes expansive, vocabulary-building reading is not clear. On the other hand, and on the effective side of the ledger, the author does seem to have a good handle on how a sixteen year old might feel. The descriptions of Jacob's weeping (Chapter 5) and his obsessive looking at pictures of Emma taken on his cell phone (Chapter 7) are particularly evocative, and give a very clear sense of teenage emotional intensity without self-consciousness or over-reaching. In the middle ground, there are diversions into poeticism and imagery, particularly when it comes to Jacob's contemplations of the stars (see "Quotes," 239 and 338). These do tend to come out of left field, given that for the most part, Jacob's apparent capacity for spiritual contemplation seems somewhat limited. However, given that they show up relatively late in the narrative, relatively late in the process of Jacob's journey of transformation and claiming of his own identity, such poeticism could be perceived as manifestations of that transformation, aspects of that new identity. The bottom line, though, is that despite occasional lapses into self-consciousness, language is used throughout the novel to engage the reader thoroughly and emotionally, effectively drawing the reader into the narrative and keeping him/her engaged.

Structure

The book's narrative structure is essentially linear and straightforward, in spite of the fact that the protagonist's movement through time is anything but. Events move from cause to effect, from action to reaction, in a forward-moving flow of incident to revelation to contemplation to confrontation, all of which build to the climactic events of Chapter 10. It might be argued that the prologue is an exception to this overall sense of flow, in the sense that it exists outside the main narrative drive of the story, its central plot. On the other hand, the events and situations described in the prologue do come at the beginning of Jacob's journey. In fact, they define that beginning, establishing both Jacob's outer and inner circumstances in the order in which they came into being. It's just that the narrative describing the development of those circumstances is more of a

summing up than a detailed explanation; it is, to coin a phrase, the beginnings of the beginning (that's why they call it a prologue).

The key point to note about the narrative's structural foundations, though, is this. Many of its fundamental elements are defined to a significant degree by their close affiliation with The Hero's Journey and its essential structure. The sort of event (not to mention the sort of characters involved in that event), the order in which events happen, and the cumulative effect of those events (narratively and in terms of the protagonist's journey of transformation) are, to one degree or another, indicative of the archetypal structural pattern discerned by Joseph Campbell (see "Themes"). In other words, and in terms of both the archetype and its manifestation here, structure is a function of character, meaning, and theme. The reverse is also true - all three narrative elements are themselves defined and shaped by the centuries-old narrative traditions and functions of The Hero's Journey. See "Topics for Discussion - Research the work ..."



Quotes

"I had just come to accept that my life would be ordinary when extraordinary things began to happen. The first of these came as a terrible shock and, like anything that changes you forever, split my life into halves: Before and After." Prologue, p. 8

"It was an enchanted place [Grandpa Portman] said, designed to keep kids safe from the monsters, on an island where the sun shined every day and nobody ever got sick or died. Everyone lived together in a big house that was protected by a wise old bird - or so the story went." Ibid, p. 9

"The peculiarity for which they'd been hunted was simply their Jewishness. They were orphans of war, washed up on that little island in a tide of blood. What made them amazing wasn't that they had miraculous powers; that they had escaped the ghettos and gas chambers was miracle enough." Ibid, p. 17

"All I could think was that grandfathers were supposed to die in beds, in hushed places humming with machines, not in heaps on the sodden reeking ground with ants marching over them, a brass letter opener clutched in one trembling hand." Chapter 1, p. 32

"Go to the island, Yakob. Here it's not safe ... I thought I could protect you ... I should've told you a long time ago ... find the bird. In the loop. On the other side of the old man's grave. September third, 1940 ... Emerson - the letter. Tell them what happened, Yakob." Ibid, p. 33.

"...a laughable double exposure of a girl 'trapped' in a bottle ... a 'levitating' child, suspended by something hidden in the dark doorway behind her ... a dog with a boy's face pasted crudely onto it ... an unhappy young contortionist doing a frightening backbend ... a pair of freakish twins [dressed] in the weirdest costumes I'd ever seen." Chapter 2, p. 43

"I stood in the sudden breeze wondering what could possibly have done that kind of damage, and began to get the feeling that something terrible had happened here. I couldn't square my grandfather's idyllic stories with this nightmare house, nor the idea that he'd found refuge here with the sense of disaster that pervaded it ... I left the house feeling like I was further than ever from the truth." Chapter 3, p. 81

"...I think your grandpa didn't know how to be a dad, but he felt like he had to be one anyway, because none of his brothers or sisters survived the war. So he dealt with it by being gone all the time - on hunting trips, business trips, you name it. And even when he was around, it was like he wasn't." Chapter 4, p. 85

"When I was a kid, Grandpa Portman's fantastic stories meant it was possible to live a magical life. Even after I stopped believing them, there was still something magical about my grandfather. To have endured all the horrors he did, to have seen the worst of humanity and have your life made unrecognizable by it, to come out of all that the



honorable and good and brave person I knew him to be - THAT was magical ... if Grandpa Portman wasn't honorable and good, I wasn't sure anyone could be." Ibid, p. 88

"There was no escaping the monsters, not even on this island, no bigger on a map than a grain of sand, protected by mountains of fog and sharp rocks and seething tides. Not anywhere. That was the awful truth my grandfather had tried to protect me from." Ibid, p. 96

"...I thought about all the bad things and I fed it and fed it until I was crying so hard I had to gasp for breath ... all because of a seventy year old hurt that had somehow been passed down to me like some poisonous heirloom ... what could I do?" Chapter 5, p. 104

"... a photo of two young women posed before a not-terribly-convincing painted backdrop of the ocean ... a lone girl in a cemetery staring into a reflecting pool - but two girls were reflected back ... a disconcertingly calm young man whose upper body appeared to be swarming with bees ... two masked ruffle-collared kids who seemed to be feeding each other a coil of ribbon ... there was no doubt in my mind that Grandpa Portman had a picture of these same two boys. I'd seen it in his cigar box just a few months ago." Ibid, p. 110-11

"It was baffling to think that people had once believed this foul-smelling wasteland was a gateway to heaven - and believed it with such conviction that a kid my age was willing to give up his life to get there. What a sad, stupid waste." Ibid, p. 121.

"How strange it must be, I thought, to find yourself in the midst of an otherwise unremarkable afternoon, suddenly in the shadow of enemy death machines that could rain fire down upon you at a moment's notice." Ibid, p. 133

"It was exactly the paradise my grandfather had described. This was the enchanted island; these were the magical children. If I was dreaming, I no longer wanted to wake up. Or at least not any time soon." Chapter 6, p. 140-41

"I knew plenty of eighty year olds in Florida, and these kids acted nothing like them. It was as if the constance of their lives here, the unvarying days - this perpetual deathless summer - had arrested their emotions as well as their bodies, sealing them in their youth like Peter Pan and his Lost Boys." Ibid, p. 166

"We stood like that in the darkness for a while, me and this teenaged old woman, this rather beautiful girl who had loved my grandfather when he was the age I am now. There was nothing I could do but put my arms around her, too, so I did, and after a while I guess we were both crying." Ibid, p. 173

"If I never went home, what exactly would I be missing? I pictured my cold cavernous house, my friendless town full of bad memories, the utterly unremarkable life that had been mapped out for me. It had never once occurred to me, I realized, to refuse it." Ibid, p. 177



"Though in a million superficial ways it would be identical to the day before - the same breeze would blow and the same tree limbs would fall - my experience of it would be new. So would the peculiar children's. They were the gods of this strange little heaven, and I was their guest." Chapter 7, p. 180

"It was like someone had hit 'reset' on the whole town ... the same wagon rushing wildly down the path ... the same women lining up outside the well; a man tarring the bottom of a rowboat, no further along in his task than he'd been twenty four hours ago. I almost expected to see my doppelganger sprinting across town pursued by a mob ..." Ibid, p. 192

"Yes, it was beautiful and life was good, but if every day were exactly alike and if the kids really couldn't leave ... then this place wasn't just a heaven but a kind of prison, too. It was just so hypnotizingly pleasant that it might take a person years to notice, and by then it would be too late; leaving would be too dangerous ... so you stay. It's only later - years later - that you begin to wonder what might've happened if you hadn't." Chapter 8, p. 209

"It was part of this pathetic cycle my dad was caught in. He'd get really passionate about some project, talk about it nonstop for months ... the next thing you knew, the project would be off and he'd be on to the next one, and the cycle would start again ... he was forty six years old and still trying to find himself, still trying to prove he didn't need my mother's money." Ibid, p. 232-33

"...it occurred to me that together the fish and the stars formed a complete system, coincident parts of some ancient and mysterious whole." Ibid, p. 239

"Ours can be a life of trials and deprivations. Abe's life was doubly so because he was born a Jew in the worst of times. He faced a double genocide, of Jews by the Nazis and of peculiars by the hollowgast. He was tormented by the idea that he was hiding here while his people, both Jews and peculiars, were being slaughtered." Chapter 9, p. 248

"I was moved by this new idea of my grandfather ... a wandering knight who risked his life for others, living out of cars and cheap motels, stalking lethal shadows, coming home shy a few bullets and marked with bruises he could never quite explain and nightmares he couldn't talk about. For his many sacrifices, he received only scorn and suspicion from those he loved." Ibid, p. 251

"I wanted to explain everything, and for him to tell me he understood and offer some tidbit of parental advice. I wanted, in that moment, for everything to go back to the way it had been before we came here ... back when I was just a sort-of-normal messed up rich kid in the suburbs ... I tried to remember what my life had been like in that unfathomably distant era that was four weeks ago, or imagine what it might be like four weeks from now - but I couldn't." Ibid, p. 264

"All the time I'd spent being afraid, I never dreamed I could actually kill one! It made me feel powerful. Now I could defend myself. I knew I'd never be as strong as my grandfather, but I wasn't a gutless weakling, either. I could kill them." Chapter 10, p. 303



"I tried to imagine it: curling my finger around the trigger and squeezing; the recoil and the awful report. What was so hard about that? Why did my hand shake just thinking about it? How many wights had my grandfather killed? Dozens? Hundreds? If he were here instead of me, Golan would be dead already, laid out while he'd been squatting against the rail in a daze. It was an opportunity I'd already wasted; a split-second of gutless indecision that might've cost the ymbryes their lives." Ibid, p. 320

"Stars, too, were time travelers. How many of those ancient points of light were the last echoes of suns now dead? How many had been born but their light not yet come this far? If all the suns but ours collapsed tonight, how many lifetimes would it take us to realize that we were alone? I had always known the sky was full of mysteries - but not until now I had I realized how full of them the earth was." Chapter 11, p. 338

"We were quiet but excited. The children hadn't slept, but you wouldn't have known it to look at them. It was September fourth, and for the first time in a very long time, the days were moving again. Some of them claimed they could feel the difference; the air in their lungs was fuller, the race of blood through their veins faster. They felt more vital, more real. I did too." Ibid, p. 347



Topics for Discussion

In what way does the story of the Old Man, and his willing submission to being sacrificed for the greater good of his community, relate to the stories and choices made by some of the characters? Consider not only Abe and Jacob, but also Miss Peregrine, as well as Emma and the other peculiars.

Research the work of mythologist Joseph Campbell, paying particular attention to his analysis of The Hero's Journey. Discuss how the structure, events, character and themes of Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children reflect and/or manifest that journey.

As discussed in "Themes," the Hero's Journey is, on some level, a metaphoric representation of the challenges faced by everyday people in their everyday lives. Explore this aspect of the Hero's Journey further - what "monsters," inner and outer, do people encounter in their lives? How do they conquer those monsters? What monsters have you encountered? How do you conquer yours? How are you changed by events on your Hero's Journey?

What do you think is the reason why narratives like Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children, the Harry Potter books, or the X-Men stories (in which young people with special gifts are kept hidden from the world) are both common and popular? What fundamental aspect of humanity is being explored and/or commented on? What other such stories fit into this category, stories not necessarily about teens with super-powers but children with unusual strengths and/or abilities, trained in isolation from the "normal" world?

Search out unusual photographs, printed or electronic. Select a few and make up a story involving and/or inspired by the images in those photographs.

Discuss the similarities and differences between Ricky and the peculiars in Miss Peregrine's home. Pay particular attention to their different experiences of / attitudes towards being outsiders, and to their different relationships with Jacob.

What do you see as the relationship between the idea of the priest's hole (as discussed in "Objects/Places") and the rest of the narrative? Specifically - consider the purpose and function of the Priest's Hole and how its circumstances might echo other circumstances portrayed in the book.

What do you see as key points along your own journey into individual, independent identity? How would you define that identity? What, in your experience, is the relationship between circumstances of the past and intentions for the future in defining that identity?

Describe a situation in which you have believed something, either positive or negative, about someone simply because of their appearance or how they behave, and later



discovered something about their reality that makes you think differently. How did that change you?

Do you have a moment or situation in your life that you see as establishing a line between "Before" and "After"? Describe the moment or situation, and its effect on you.