

English 8 Advanced

Summer Assignment



Character/Personality Traits

(Do not describe physical traits.)

Name of Character: Lina Mayfleet

1. responsible

Textual Evidence:

Lina was extremely responsible in both her job as Messenger and as a big sister. She did everything according to her job's rules even if she didn't agree. What surprised me was that she only took two days off after Granny died; after that, she went straight back to work. Also, not only did she take good care of her sister Poppy, but she refused to leave her behind. She knew Poppy was her responsibility.

2. determined

Textual Evidence:

Lina never gave up trying to decipher the torn instructions that Poppy discovered (and chewed). She enlisted Doon's help, and even though she and Doon spent weeks trying to figure out, they still couldn't get it. Eventually the words finally make sense and they learn that the message is actually the instructions for how to get out of Ember.

3. courageous

Textual Evidence:

Lina's courage is evidenced by her actions during their escape. They had to go through many dangerous situations with both the mayor and in the pipeworks, but she didn't let her fear stop her. She stood up to the mayor even though she was just a 12-year-old girl; and despite being terrified on the underground river, Lina showed amazing courage when she got into the boat with Doon and Poppy.

Theme

It is possible to overcome adversity if you work hard and are not afraid to take risks.

Evidence for Theme

Provide three examples from the story that support this theme.

Lina concocts a very risky scheme to get the word out to the citizens of Ember that the mayor is corrupt. She schedules a meeting with him, then disappears up to the roof of the courthouse where she plans to alert the gathered crowds about the truth. If she is caught, she will be imprisoned. The guards come for her, and instead of turning herself in, which would inevitably lead to her arrest, Lina (a 12 year old!), fights back and manages to escape

Their escape plan is for Lina to meet Doon in the pipeworks. This is a risk in itself, but then she adds another risk by deciding to bring her baby sister Poppy with them. Poppy is only a toddler, so Lina is jeopardizing all of their chances to escape because not only do they not know exactly how they'll get out, but she is now bringing an unpredictable toddler into a dangerous situation. Luckily for them, it works!

Lina and Doon take many great risks when they are discovering clues about the mayor. This involves Lina puzzling over private messages she hears between the mayor and Looper, a dangerous individual. It also involves Doon snooping around in the pipeworks, which he could get in a lot of trouble for. He stumbles upon a secret door, and when Lina and Doon enter, they find the mayor has been hoarding food for himself while the people starve. This sets them up to take action against his corruption.

Making Connections

(Link something from the book to yourself, another book, and your world.)

Text to Self:

I'm a lot like Doon because we're both mechanical and like to know how things work. I've often taken electronics apart and put them back together again. I also really connected with him when he wanted to help his city by fixing the generator. He saw a need and wanted to help, and I'm someone who likes to help out when I see something that needs to be done. Doon seems to like fixing the big problems though and I like fixing the little things, usually electronics and gadgets around the house.

Text to Text:

In some ways this book reminds me of *The Giver* by Lois Lowry. Like *The Giver*, *The City of Ember* assigns jobs to young people around 12 or 13 years old. In *Ember* though, these jobs are assigned randomly by drawing occupations out of a hat, whereas in Jonas's community, they watch the young people for years in order to find out what their attitude is. I also recognized the connection in their governments. They both had something to hide, although Jonas's community thought it was in the best interest of their citizens and in Lina's community the Mayor was just selfish and corrupt.

Text to the World:

This makes me think of our environment, and I wonder if we're taking good enough care of it. We "reduce, reuse, and recycle" like the people of *Ember*, just not to the same extreme. It also makes me think of all our end-of-the-world television shows and movies. I wonder if humans will truly do something so radical that it will affect the world in a terrible way, perhaps to the point that we'll need to take the same extreme measures as the people of *Ember*.

Questioning

In your opinion, what was the most important scene in the book? Explain your thinking with examples from the book.

While the ending was exciting, I don't think it was most important. They never would have been able to escape if they hadn't deciphered the coded message, so I think that was the most important. The whole story revolved around their city dying and how important it was to either fix the generator or leave. Doon thought the answer was the generator; that's why I think them figuring it out together was so important; it made Doon realize that leaving was their only option.

How would you rank this book compared to all other books you've read? Explain your thinking with examples from the book.

I would rank this book a 4 out of 5 stars. The book was good in that it was descriptive and had a lot of action and suspense, like when Lina and Doon escaped on the underground river. I could picture it perfectly and it seemed like it would be a terrifying experience. The book also had a great ending. I love that they figured out how *Ember* was founded by reading a journal they found. That way I got the back-story too. The best part was when they saw *Ember* way down below and dropped them a message, so now I know there will be a sequel.

If you could ask the author any questions, what would they be? Explain why the answer to these questions is important to the reader.

I would ask Jeanne DePrau why she decided to tell the story in both Lina and Doon's voices. At times I felt like Lina was the true main character because I knew so much more about her life, so it threw me off sometimes when she wrote from Doon's perspective. I would also ask her about the symbolism of "Ember". I know it relates to fire and light, but could it also mean 'hope' because the city was saving mankind from extinction.