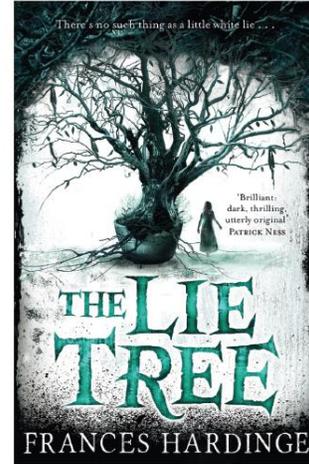


2016 Carnegie Medal shortlist reading resources

Title: **The Lie Tree**
Author: **Frances Hardinge**
Publisher: Macmillan



TALKING POINTS

Faith

Do you think Faith is well-named?

She believes she's seen as "reliable, dull, trustworthy Faith".
Do you think this is an accurate description?

One thing that makes this an unsettled time for Faith is not knowing whether she's meant to be behaving like an adult or a child. How do her parents treat her?

We know that Faith is good at lying. We see her being sometimes cruel, too. But is she a character we are expected to admire all the same?

How does Faith's opinion change about...:

- Uncle Miles
- Paul Clay
- Myrtle

..over the course of the book?

The Reverend

When her father dies, is Faith left with happy memories of him?

Everybody seems to have quite different opinions of the Reverend; what do..

- Myrtle
- Uncle Miles
- the servants and the rest of the town
- the other scientists

..think of him?

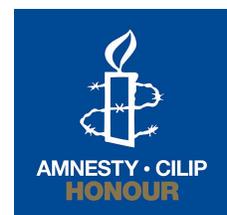
Why is Faith so quick to suspect that he was murdered?

Keeping up appearances

How has Faith been taught that girls are expected to behave? How are these expectations different today? (Are there things we think of as strengths



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in her character that some at the time would have considered weaknesses?)
Society sets out clear roles for each family member
– father, mother, daughter and son. (The mother is responsible for the household, say.) Do the Sunderlys all play their parts properly?

“All that matters is how things appear,” says Myrtle. How important in Faith’s world is the preserving of reputation?

Science and Belief

The society in the book is full of local superstitions, and people believe in ghosts; but there is also a lot of religion, and there are also scientists. Are these ideas ever in conflict with one another?

Why is this exact period a particularly interesting time to be a “natural scientist”?

Vane

How does Vane compare with the life Faith left behind in Kent?

Why do people snub Faith and Myrtle when they go shopping in town?

The Lie Tree

What does Faith learn about the power of lies, and about how lies work?

Why does Faith eventually come to the conclusion that the Lie Tree is not in fact the perfect solution to all her problems?

And finally...

Is *The Lie Tree* a fantasy story?

TALKING ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS

Human rights themes in this story

Right to life; to live in freedom and safety; women’s rights; healthcare; disability rights; freedom from torture; right to a fair trial; right to participate in culture, science Rights belong to everybody; discrimination; free and full development of personality; education; women’s rights; LBGTI rights.

Human rights questions

We have the right to be treated in the same way

What makes Faith angry with herself at the start of the book?

How are Faith and Howard treated differently?



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'Listen, Faith. A girl cannot be brave, or clever, or skilled as a boy can. If she is not good, she is nothing.' How would you feel if you were told this?

How does the book highlight the consequences of a society that believes in inequality?

We have the right to an education, and to participate in science, culture and the arts

Faith's not allowed to go to school or be a scientist, hemmed in by her sex. How does this have a negative impact on how she feels and behaves?

Is Myrtle trying to make life easier for her children by forcing them to conform?

Agatha Lambert and Leda Hunter show it is possible to step out of women's 'perceived' roles – or do they?

We have the right to peace and order so we can enjoy rights and freedoms in our own country and all over the world

Why are truth and justice so important that Faith will risk everything?

What do you think the tree fed by lies represents?

- For a full version of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights go to www.amnesty.org.uk/udhr

For more free teaching resources from Amnesty International go to www.amnesty.org.uk/education



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