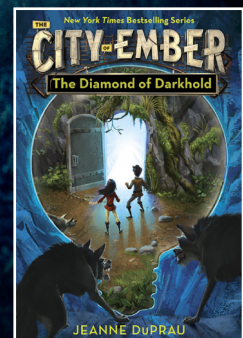
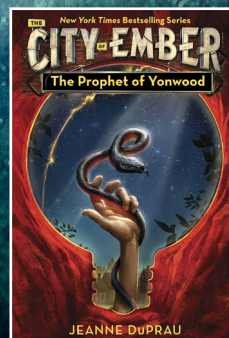
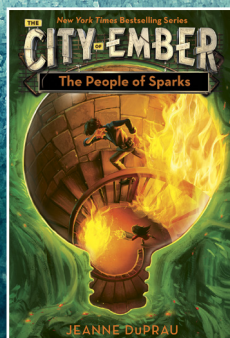
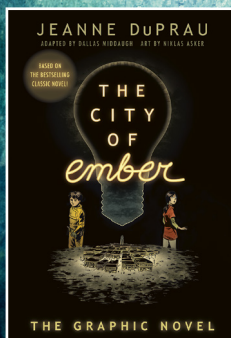
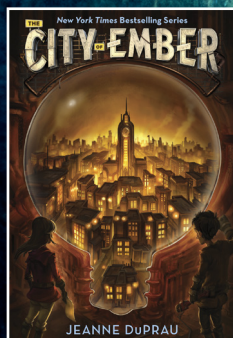


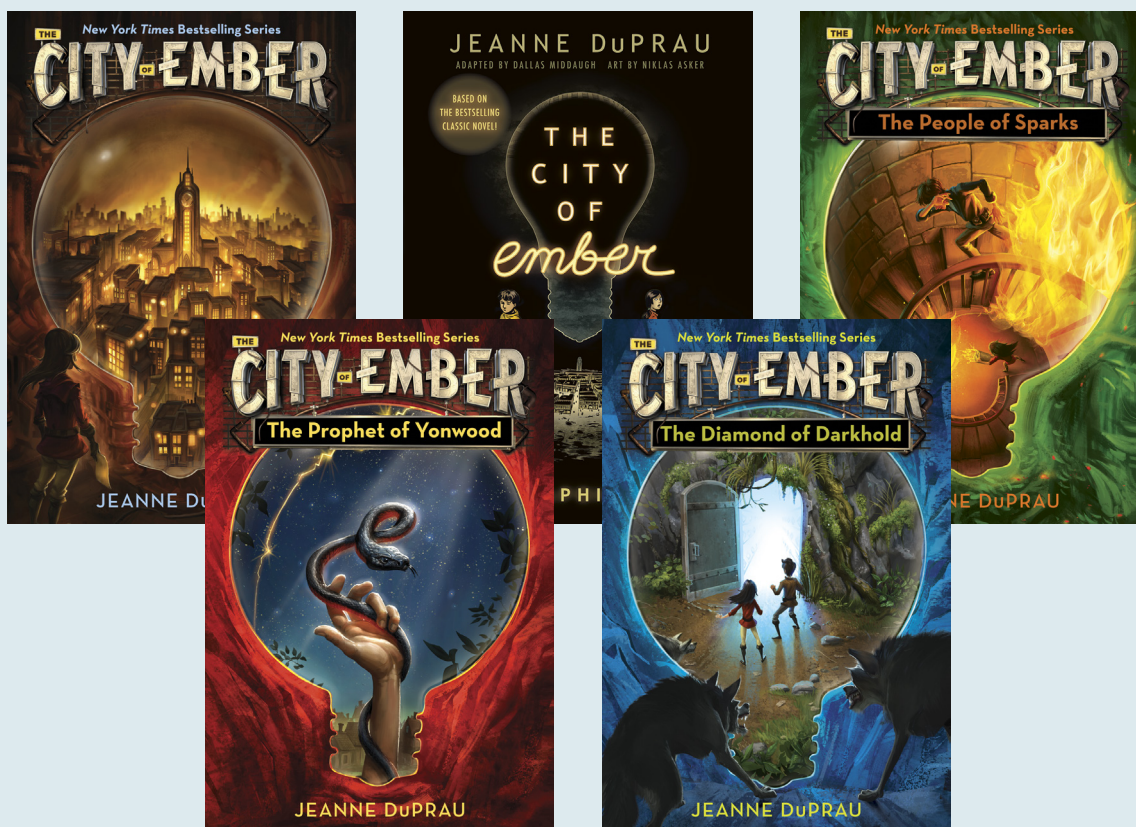
An Educators' Guide to Jeanne DuPrau's Books



About the Author



Jeanne DuPrau is the *New York Times* bestselling author of the Books of Ember series. Her books have garnered numerous awards and have appeared on thirty state lists. *The City of Ember* was made into a movie in 2008. Jeanne lives in Northern California.



Praise For The City Of Ember Books

"A realistic postapocalyptic world. DuPrau's book leaves Doon and Lina on the verge of undiscovered country and readers wanting more." —*USA Today*

★ "An electric debut."

—*Publishers Weekly*, starred review

"While Ember is colorless and dark, the book itself is rich with description."

—*VOYA*, starred review

Nominated to 30 State Award Lists!

- An American Library Association Notable Children's Book
- A New York Public Library 100 Titles for Reading and Sharing Selection
- A *Kirkus Reviews* Editors' Choice
- A *Child Magazine* Best Children's Book
- A Mark Twain Award Winner
- A William Allen White Children's Book Award Winner

About the Book

From the bestselling author of *The City of Ember* comes a postapocalyptic story set hundreds of years in the future, when life is simple and modern conveniences are a thing of the past, until a boy enchanted by technology is forced to choose between doing the right thing for his community and pursuing his dreams of adventure.

WELCOME TO THE FUTURE.

There are no cars, planes, televisions, or smart phones. Climate change wreaked havoc on Earth hundreds of years ago, and now people live a simpler life.

Then thirteen-year-old Keith uncovers a secret. It's a mysterious mission known only as Project F. It's advanced, it's *scientific*, and it's going to change the world. It's exactly the kind of adventure Keith has always longed to be a part of.

And what is adventure without a little danger, right? But how much is Keith willing to risk? For himself? For his family? For his community? *For the entire world . . . ?*

Jeanne DuPrau's *The City of Ember* was an instant hit when it arrived on bookshelves. It has become a modern classic beloved by readers, selling hundreds of thousands of copies a year! In her latest novel, Jeanne explores timely questions about the Earth and our use of its resources. A bold novel, *Project F* asks how much you are willing to risk to save the future.



Praise for the Book

"A **compelling, nostalgic-feeling** story exploring contemporary issues in a futuristic setting." —*Kirkus Reviews*

"DuPrau crafts a **postapocalyptic adventure that reads like a cautionary tale** about climate change, technology, and unchecked progress."—*Publishers Weekly*

Pre-Reading Activities

Utopia

In 1516, Thomas Moore wrote a book called *Utopia*, a word that can mean both “no place” and “perfect place.” In this book, Moore set forth his vision for a perfect society, including details about what system of government his imaginary world would have and how households would be composed. Although there were quite a few fictional books at one time that dealt with the idea of utopia, lately the reading public has been more interested in dystopia, or a society that has had something catastrophic happen to it and is trying in some way to rebuild civilization. In author Jeanne DuPrau’s author letter to the reader, she asks several questions about her created world, including “Is this the sort of world you’d like to see in the future?” Assuming you haven’t yet read the book, write answers to her questions. Include ideas about what type of government you’d like to see, what economic (money) system you’d have, and what rights people would have in your future world.

Positive or Negative

In *Project F*, you will meet Amity, whose name means “friendship”. She is a very positive and hopeful person. Do you know someone who always makes you feel good, or supports what you do, or who will listen when you talk? This could be a parent, relative, friend, coach, teacher, or anyone else. Think of one person and write to explain both HOW they make you feel and WHAT they do to accomplish that. (And then see if you can change someone else’s life by doing these things!)

For Further Discussion

“Things of Great Value”

At times in the book, Keith refers to “Things of Great Value,” which are things the citizens of this world have been taught that they must continue to learn about and preserve from the civilization that came before theirs, the one that was destroyed. Think of knowledge from our world that you would want to hold on to if we had to start over—inventions and ideas that we would want to ALWAYS have even if we had to rebuild our society. Write to explain three things that you think future societies would want to have, and why these things would be important to them.

How Big Is Too Big?

As in her *City of Ember* series, the author writes about a civilization that is trying to build itself back up after some kind of catastrophic event or events which killed millions of people and separated those who remained into small communities. Although there are characters who seem to miss how magnificent these cities were (like Malcolm Quinsmith in this book), an overall message the reader gets is that smaller communities can function better than larger ones. Do you believe this is true? Think about the strengths and weaknesses of large cities and small villages. Write down a list for each. Once you’ve finished your lists, decide which you think is better—large city or small village. Find a partner who has chosen the option you did not. Discuss and debate your choices and reasoning.

Naive Narrator

If someone is said to be *naive*, they could be said to be innocent but also lacking in the wisdom, judgement, and experience that someone of their age should have. In many ways Keith fits this description well. Why do you think the author created Keith as a naive narrator? What in the book would have been spoiled if, for example, Keith had listened better during science class? Write a paragraph to explain your answers.

Keith Is Mr. Adventure

Keith is a very adventurous boy. Not only does he make the decision to sneak back and spy on Malcolm and his associates as they’re working on their Model F device, he also agrees to be a test pilot of sorts and actually fly the Model F. Keith’s penchant for chasing adventure causes several issues in the book. As a class, discuss what these issues are. Pick one consequence of Keith’s actions and write about different choices he could have made and how they would have affected the outcome.

Too Much Too Soon?

When Keith reads from the book he kept from Malcolm, he learns that the past civilization stopped using fossil fuels because of a decree from a king and queen, who ordered the world to stop using fossil fuels immediately, shutting down gas stations and sealing up oil and coal sources. This had a disastrous effect on the world as people were forced to come up with new ways to live that didn’t involve these fuels overnight. Do you think this was the best way to stop people using fossil fuels? Why or why not? Write a page explaining your answer.

Malcolm: Hero or Villain?

Malcolm Quinsmith was determined to give back freedom to the people. He tells Keith that the name Project F stands for Project Freedom, but later in the book we know that he also wants to make a lot of money on his jetpack idea. Do you think that Malcolm is more of a hero or villain? Write a persuasive essay explaining your point of view.

If I Were the Author, I Would ...

In *Project F*, the chapter titles are short and descriptive of what will happen in the coming chapter. Imagine that you are the author of *Project F*. You can rename the chapters anything you want, but you must adhere to these rules: a) chapter titles must be no longer than five words; b) chapter titles CANNOT give away everything that will happen in the coming chapter; and c) chapter titles should make the reader want to read on! Choose five chapters and write your own titles. Challenge a friend or classmate and see who comes up with the best titles! Explain each title to your friend.

Amity's Steering Wheel

At the end of the book the kids dredge up a steering wheel from the bottom of the lake. Rather than throw it away, Amity takes it home and does something very useful with it, turning a piece of junk into something that works in harmony with nature. Explain what Amity does with the steering wheel, how it is being used, and how this shows that through creativity and innovation people can turn trash into something productive.

Extension Activities

Climate Change

The author is very concerned about our changing climate. She's written a book about what happens when greed is more important than the climate and speaks directly to the reader about her concerns. Become more knowledgeable about different parts of climate change by going to this website: climatekids.nasa.gov/kids-guide-to-climate-change. Choose one topic to explore further and write a page about what you have learned and what surprised you.

Sustainable Energy

The book makes it clear that fossil fuels are what lead to the destruction of the previous civilization. Research alternative energy sources, including their limitations. Create a presentation explaining the promise of and problems with one alternative fuels source. kids.britannica.com/kids/article/alternative-energy/476218

Extinction Is Forever

At one point, Keith mentions three animals that are extinct from his world but that still exist in our world: gorilla, panda, and whale. The reader infers here that these animals and many others were wiped out in whatever catastrophe that happened before Keith's time. To learn more about extinction, go to this website, youtu.be/ogLFEq1XORM, and answer the following questions: Why do species go extinct? What happened to the dinosaurs? How can humans cause extinction? Which animals are now in danger of becoming extinct? What are some ways we can prevent extinction?

About the Book

Ember is the only light in a dark world. But when its lamps begin to flicker, two friends must race to escape the dark. This highly acclaimed adventure series is a modern-day classic—with over 4 MILLION copies sold!

The city of Ember was built as a last refuge for the human race. Two hundred years later, the great lamps that light the city are beginning to dim. When Lina finds part of an ancient message, she's sure it holds a secret that will save the city. Now, she and her friend Doon must race to figure out the clues to keep the lights on. If they succeed, they will have to convince everyone to follow them into danger. But if they fail? The lights will burn out and the darkness will close in forever.

Pre-Reading

Unfair treatment

Early in the book, Lina believes that she gets treated unfairly when she is randomly assigned a job that she does not want. Lina believes this to be unfair because some jobs are more desirable than others, and she wishes she would have had an opinion in the job that she received. Write about a time when you were treated unfairly, telling what it was, how it was unfair, whether you spoke out against it, and how you felt because of this decision.

200 or More Years

We are told that the community of Ember was planned for citizens to live in for "at least 200 years." What do you think happened to the world that made 200 years of refuge necessary?

Forgiving Isn't Always Easy

Early in the book, Lina recounts to the reader the story of playing a game where they were bragging about what they could do. Lina tells the other children that she can climb the light pole, and does so. Afterward Doon climbs higher than her but ends up falling, and Lina and some others laugh at him. This hurt Doon's feelings and he got angry, causing a split between Lina and Doon which she tells us went on for years. Explain a time when you and a friend had a small argument that caused the two of you to not be such good friends any more. If you've since made up with that friend, explain what happened to cause the two of you to reconcile.



For Further Discussion

Symbols

A symbol is a thing that stands for something else, like a butterfly can symbolize rebirth since it started as a caterpillar and turned into something completely new. In the book there is a space outside of the City of Ember that its citizens refer to as the "Unknown Regions." What does this place symbolize to the citizens of Ember?

Job Switching

When Lina switches her job for Doon's, what do we learn about each of these characters?

Signs of What's to Come

The biggest issue facing the community is the lack of light and accompanying blackouts. These make life difficult for the citizens in many ways. Beyond light, what are other signs and hints that the author gives us that this community is in desperate need of repair?

What is “life”?

On pages 67 and 68, Lina and her friend Clary discuss a white bean seed and its ability to know how to create a bean plant without electricity. They talk about the builders and question who came before them. Explain how this example and discussion gives Lina confidence to continue to strive for a solution and a way out of the community. (For additional help, see page 169 when the bean sprout actually sprouts!)

Color

Lina buys two colored pencils because she says there is very little color in Ember. Color is something that we take for granted every day. Explain how different our lives would be if everything lacked color. What choices would we not have any more? How would this impact the way we see the world?

Personification

In writing, when you give human attributes or qualities to something nonhuman, it's called personification. For example, “The sun peeked happily around a cloud.” The sun is given the human quality of watching or peeking here as if it wants to see what's on the other side. Find and explain examples where the author Jeanne DuPrau uses personification to make the blackouts feel more than threatening.

Whose Method Is Best?

While Lina is focusing on interpreting the “Instructions” she finds (that Poppy has partially destroyed), Doon is using his job as Pipeworks Laborer to explore the underground area, and the Believers are singing songs and generally being super-positive about the builders coming again to show them the way out of the community. Who do you think will be most helpful to the community and why?

Unintended Consequences

Doon has a problem with his anger, and his father has tried to teach him that anger has unintended consequences, or other possibly negative outcomes that someone can't always foresee. For example, when some of his fellow workers called him “bug boy” and accused him of trying to capture bugs for his lunch, Doon jerked up in anger to confront them and in doing so knocked the black beetle off his arm and accidentally stepped on it. How does Doon learn from this experience? Cite examples from the text.

The “Singing”

Once a year the citizens in the community get together in the center of town and sing three songs (“The Song of the City,” “The Song of the River,” and “The Song of Darkness”). Lina says, “I think it's my favorite day of the year.” Compare and contrast the purpose of those songs in Ember to the purpose of songs like “America (My Country, 'Tis of Thee),” “The Star Spangled Banner,” and “God Bless America” to America.

On the day of the Singing, the long blackout happens, and the author writes, “In the distance, [Doon] heard a dip in the sound of the singing, some startled voices breaking the flow, but then the song rose again, defying the darkness.” What does “defying the darkness” mean? What does their continued singing tell you about the people of Ember?

“The Book”

Page 258 begins with the diary that someone left behind for those who were on their way out of the city. Explain whether you think their plan of 100 older men and women and 100 babies to start a new city was well-thought-out or not.

Extension Activities

Fallout Shelters

During the period of the Cold War, when America was in an undeclared war with the Soviet Union and everyone in America was afraid of nuclear bombs, the United States government told people that it was a good idea to build a fallout shelter, or a place usually underground where a family could stay until it was safe. Watch this video youtu.be/q11c29qdmJ0, and write to explain how the City of Ember might be considered one big fallout shelter.

We Need the Sun!

Not only do Lina, Doon, and the rest of the City of Ember need more light for their world, they need the sun. The sun is crucial for human life in many ways! Watch this video and list WHY we need that big old yellow orb in the sky. youtu.be/RC4pfTQI1Mw

Optimism

Watch this fun video, and write to explain how Lina, Doon, and the Believers show their optimism. youtu.be/qNJQodnrmCs

About the Book

The modern-day classic *The City of Ember* is now a stunning graphic novel! An underground city is doomed to darkness. Then two kids discover a secret note that may have the answer to bringing back the light... but is it too late save their home?

As the lights begin to flicker, Lina finds a message from the past that she's sure holds the secret that will save the city. She and her friend Doon must race against time to decipher the message before the lights in Ember go out forever!

When *The City of Ember* first came out, it took young readers by storm! It was an instant hit and continues to be read by thousands of kids each month. Still relevant and timely, this graphic novel adaptation captures the beauty of Jeanne DuPrau's original vision. Niklas Asker faithfully brings to life the glare of the lamps, the dinginess of the streets, and the brilliance of the first sunrise.

Pre-Reading Activities

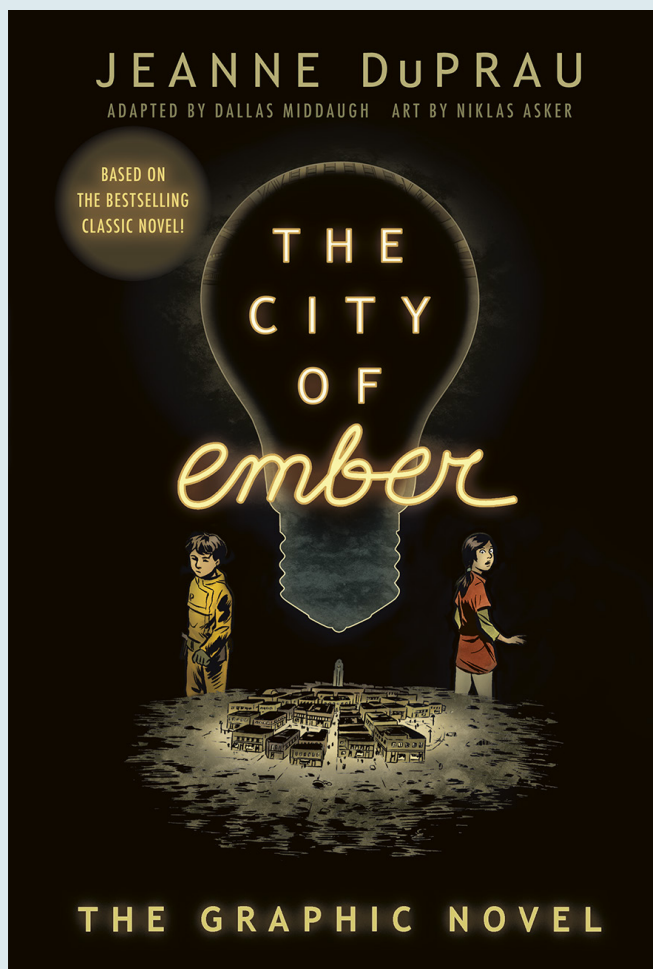
Fear of the "Unknown"

On the first page of the graphic novel, the reader is told that the city of Ember was made a long time ago by the builders, and that "darkness goes on forever in all directions." This is called the "unknown regions." Why are we as humans so afraid of the unknown? What is it about the dark that is scary, no matter your age? Write to explain your answer.

For Further Discussion

Your Job Is...?

In the first scene in the graphic novel, the children are at school and are choosing their jobs. Mayor Cole is there with a bag filled with the names of all the jobs in the city, and the students choose a job at random. However, when a student chooses a job, they CAN switch with another student. Does this seem like the best way to distribute jobs? Write to explain whether you agree with this method of job distribution. If you agree with this method, explain why it makes sense. If you disagree, write to persuade the reader why your method works better.



Doon the Bold

When the mayor tells the students that their city will prosper if "citizens do their best," Doon stands up and tells the mayor and his classmates that their lights go out all the time and there are shortages of everything, and if something isn't done about it, "Something terrible is going to happen." The mayor then asks for his name and remembers him, and this outburst will eventually hurt Lina and Doon later in the book. Rather than say whatever is on his mind in front of the entire class, what could Doon have done to express his views? Think of three ways a student could (more respectfully) express their ideas that might get these ideas taken seriously by an adult. Write your answer.

Lina's Drawings and Visions

Before Doon discovers the door in the Pipeworks that he and Lina eventually use to lead the Emberites out of the city, Lina has been drawing pictures of a city where the sky is light and the buildings sparkle, and she tells her sister Poppy that she keeps thinking there's a door that leads out of Ember and maybe to this city.

Is Lina really seeing these things in her mind or in dreams? Or is she just hoping for a bright city because hers is very dim and there are power outages? Find a partner. Choose a side. Debate whether Lina has some kind of psychic powers.

Choices of an Artist, Part One

On the front cover, Lina, Doon, and Poppy and the city of Ember are contained inside a light bulb. Write to explain why you think there is a light bulb to be the central image on the cover? Now you play the artist! Come up with another cover design for the graphic novel. Write to explain what you would draw and why. Grab some paper and pencils and draw it!

Choices of an Artist, Part Two

A graphic novel has some advantages over a written novel (without pictures) because it can use images, color, and design to make an impression on the reader. Looking at this graphic novel, the cover is mostly black, the page edges are black, and the space between the pictures on each page is black (except a very small white section at the end). Why did Niklas Asker make the choice to have all these areas black? What affect does this have on the reader? Write to answer these two questions.

A Dynamic Duo

Lina and Doon each possess characteristics or attributes that lead to their success. Working together, they use these traits to find a solution, something that would have been unlikely if they had been working on the same thing but apart. First, think of a couple of qualities that Lina has and a couple of qualities that Doon has. Write them down. Now write to explain how these qualities work TOGETHER to make the dynamic duo that finds the way out of Ember.

Unfair Advantages

Lina and Doon discover that a few characters in the book are using their jobs to get unfair advantages over the other citizens. At least two of these are Lizzie, who is a supply depot clerk, and the mayor. Write to explain how each of these characters are doing illegal things, and then explain what could be done in the future to prevent this from happening.

Topic vs. Theme

The TOPIC and THEME of a novel are sometimes confused. The topic can and usually is one word, like "love," but a theme is a statement of something general that a reader learns that explains something that all humans can feel and understand, like "You need to learn to love yourself." What is the theme of this novel? Through what events is it explored?

The Day of Singing

Near the end of the book, the citizens gather in the center of town for the Day of Singing. What purpose do these songs have for the mayor and others who are trying to keep the attitudes of the city's citizens happy (despite there being no sun!)?

Emerging from the Ground

When Lina, Doon, and Poppy come out from underground, the moon is out and all is dark. In the written novel, when they come out it is incredibly bright and they're able to see everything in their new world. Write to persuade whether you would choose for them to come out to light or dark if you were the author, and why you made that choice.

Extension Activities

The Sun and You

Watch this video youtu.be/WZ-M-9JpMn8, and write down the six things that your body gets from just ten minutes of sun. How would the citizens' lives in Ember have been different if they could get just ten minutes of sun a day? Write to explain how their lives would be easier.

Make a Time Capsule

If the world changed abruptly tomorrow, what would you want others to know about the place and time you live in? What would you leave behind to show others how you have lived and what is important to you? Follow the instructions on this website to create a time capsule ([wikihow.com/Create-a-Time-Capsule](https://www.wikihow.com/Create-a-Time-Capsule)).

About the Book

Lina and Doon have led the citizens of Ember to an exciting new world. They've been given a haven in a small village called Sparks, a place filled with color and life. But they're not out of danger yet. Although Sparks seems like the answer the long-suffering Emberites have been hoping for, tempers soon escalate. The villagers have never had to share their world before, and it only takes a tiny spark to ignite a battle between the two struggling groups. Lina and Doon will have to work together to avoid a disaster not only for their people but for the people of Sparks.

Pre-Reading

Culture Clash

When Lina, Doon, and the other people from the city of Ember (Emberites) come upon the City of Sparks, the Emberites outnumber the people of Sparks 417 to 322. The people of Sparks have their own government and ways of doing things that are different and more primitive than what the Emberites are used to. This causes conflict early in the book. What is the best way to handle this kind of situation? What conflicts arise and why? How can conflicts be resolved while still respecting individual's customs and beliefs?

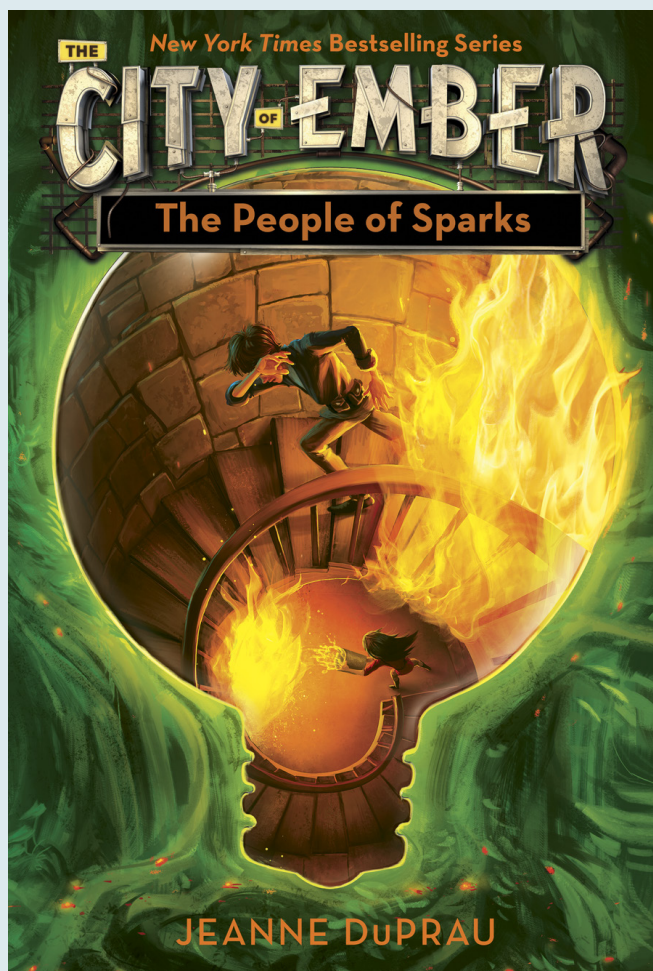
"Sparks" Part 1

Dr. Hester tells Lina that the village got its name from twenty-two founders driving around in a truck. When it ran out of "gasleen" (gasoline), the truck broke down and threw up sparks when its engine gave out. She also says, "A spark is the beginning of a fire," which the reader infers is symbolic of the community growing. Think up a symbolic name for your family, your class, your school, or another group that you are in. Write to explain your choice.

For Further Discussion

Seasons

The seasons we normally have are winter, spring, summer, and fall, but the people of Sparks have SIX seasons shining, burning, browning, cooling, falling, and chilling. Write why they named each part of the year what they did, explaining what physical change would happen in each season.



Helping the Emberites

The three leaders of Sparks (Wilmer Dent, Mary Waters, and Ben Barlow) come together to decide that they will feed, house, and help the Emberites for six months, telling them that they must leave after this period and establish their own village. The Emberites are straining their food supplies. There is no real place to live, so they're staying at the abandoned Pioneer Hotel. Tensions are rising. Write whether you think giving the Emberites six months is the right thing to do for the people of Sparks.

The Outspoken One

Right away Doon and others are drawn to Tick, an outspoken, charismatic boy who quickly intrigues the Emberites in his ideas, including projects such as building a gathering place and a dock over the river. Does Tick have the Emberites best interests at heart? Why do you think this? Explain, citing details in the text.

So Much to Know!

Imagine being Lina or Doon, two kids that have a thirst for knowledge about the world around them, and coming to a new area with so many new things. Choose either Lina or Doon write a diary entry about the new experiences you are having.

The Roamers

We find out that Torren's brother Caspar is a roamer, someone who leaves their community and looks around (scavenges) for useful things that will help their community or that they can trade for other items. When Caspar comes home to Dr. Hester and Torren, we learn he's been gone over a year and a half. Write whether you would like to be a roamer, living a life of discovery and adventure BUT having to leave your family, friends, and community for months at a time.

Similes and Metaphors

A simile is a way of comparing two things use the words "like" or "as." After the tomato incident, when Torren accuses Doon of wasting the tomatoes by hurling them against a wall, the author writes that "the town shimmered like a pot about to boil over." Write to explain this simile. A metaphor is a way of comparing two things by saying one thing is another. Write to explain this metaphor: "This was a terrible place, full of angry ghosts and sad ones."

How Would You Feel?

Later in the book, Tick has convinced the Emberites that they must arm themselves and demand things from the people of Sparks, who feel that these new folks have taken their food and completely changed their way of life. Write a diary entry from the point of view of either a character from Sparks or Ember that explains your feelings about how the other group has changed your life.

"Pay Attention"

After Lina sees the terrible effects of war on her trip with Caspar and Maddy to see the city, she realizes that she must do something to stop the coming conflict between the peoples of Sparks and Ember—but she can't think what it might be. She tells herself to pay attention—that an opportunity might present itself where she can help. How does paying attention help her bring about peace?

Where Do We Go from Here?

At the end of the book, we seen that Doon has used the magnet Lina gave him, his reading about electricity, and the light bulb given to Torren by his brother Caspar to create light. Based on this, what do you think will happen to the people of Sparks in the future?

For Advanced Readers

Foreshadowing

Foreshadowing is when the author drops hints about something to come later in the book. At one point, Doon and Tick are talking and Tick tells Doon that he had taken action when the situation needed it, referring to Doon and Lina getting out of Ember. Doon says they may have to take action again "pretty soon" based on what is happening in Sparks. The boys had been eating berries, and they shake hands. The author writes, "(Doon) glanced down at his hands, he was startled to see them streaked with blood." He quickly realizes it was only berry juice. What is this foreshadowing?

"Sparks" Part 2

Look up and write down the definitions for *ember* and *spark*. Keeping in mind what happened in each book, explain what Ms. DuPrau is trying to achieve or explain by using this imagery.

Extension Activities

The "Disaster"

Early in the book, Lina and Doon start hearing the people of Sparks refer to "the Disaster" as the time when much destruction was done to planet Earth. Three wars and four plagues have killed off most of the people, and the kids understand that this is why the city of Ember was built in the first place—so mankind wouldn't die out. In the spring of 2020, much of the world was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, causing us to change our lives for a period of time. Do you think the experiences would have been similar? Why or why not?

Forced Immigration

When a group of people are forced to leave an area, it is called forced immigration. Describe the forced immigration in this series. What causes people to go underground? What causes them to come out? What is the source of the conflict between the Emberites and the people of Sparks? Do you see any parallels in our world?

About the Book

It's fifty years before the settlement of the city of Ember, and the world is in crisis. War looms on the horizon as eleven-year-old Nickie and her aunt travel to the small town of Yonwood, North Carolina. There, one of the town's respected citizens has had a terrible vision of fire and destruction. Her garbled words are taken as prophetic instruction on how to avoid the coming disaster. If only they can be interpreted correctly. . . .

As the people of Yonwood scramble to make sense of the woman's mysterious utterances, Nickie explores the oddities she finds around town—her great-grandfather's peculiar journals and papers, a reclusive neighbor who studies the heavens, a strange boy who is fascinated with snakes—all while keeping an eye out for ways to help the world. Is this vision her chance? Or is it already too late to avoid a devastating war?

In this prequel to the acclaimed *The City of Ember* and *The People of Sparks*, Jeanne DuPrau investigates how, in a world that seems out of control, hope and comfort can be found in the strangest of places.

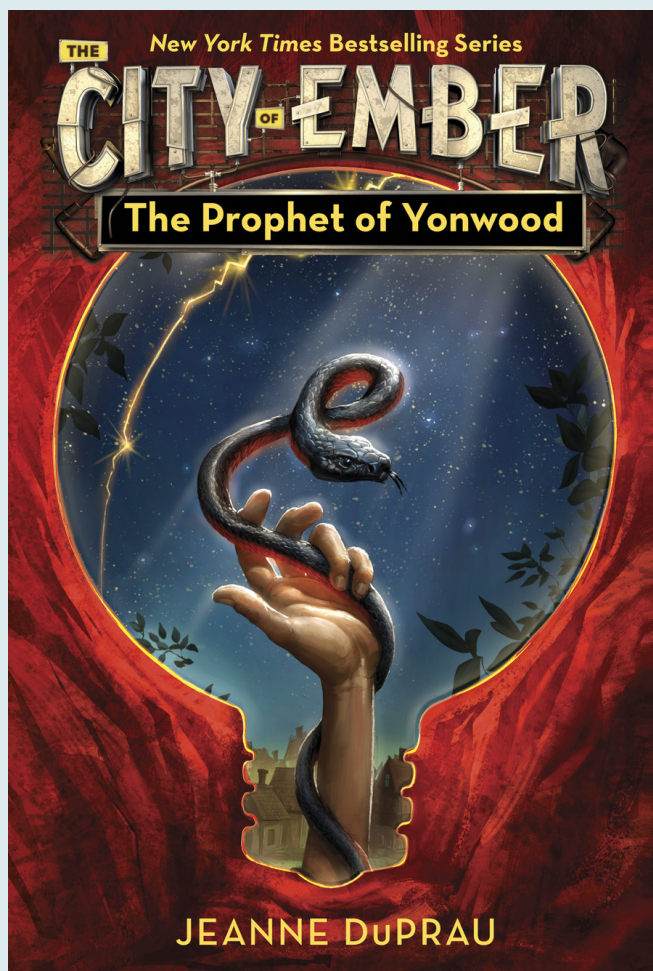
Pre-Reading Activities

The Crisis

The "Crisis" is described as a time of tension between the Phalanx nations and the United States, when war seemed very possible. This is very much like the Cold War between the Soviet Union (USSR) and the United States that ran from the mid 1940s to the late 1980s, a time of great fear amid the buildup of nuclear weapons. Perhaps the closest that these nations ever came to war was the Cuban Missile Crisis in October of 1962. Read through this description of this time, and write in your own words what happened to cause the crisis and what was done to avert it. kids.britannica.com/kids/article/Cuban-missile-crisis/628151

Nickie's Goals

Nickie Randolph accompanies her aunt Crystal to the town of Yonwood, North Carolina. Crystal's goal is to sell the house (Greenhaven) of her recently deceased grandfather. One rainy day, Nickie lists the three things that she wants to accomplish in her life (1) *Keep Greenhaven* (2) *Fall in love* (3) *Help the world*. Think about the goals that you have for your life and write at least three. When you're done, include measurable steps that you can take to progress toward each goal.



For Further Discussion

Fear and What It Brings

Before coming to Yonwood, it seems that Nickie is unaware of the Crisis and how it is affecting people of the world. Look back through the first three chapters of the book and list examples of how the author shows the reader that the citizens of Yonwood are going to extremes to express their fear. After that, choose a partner and take turns discussing these signs of what is to come and what they could mean.

Great-Grandfather's Messages

While at Greenhaven, Nickie finds the journal of her great-grandfather Arthur Green. Reread these entries and write why you think Arthur may have written about each topic. What does the inclusion of these entries add to the novel?

Photos

Our author includes three actual historical photos in the book. Why might an author include historical photos in a novel? What is the importance of the dust mite photo to Nickie? What is the importance of the photo of the conjoined twins? What is the significance of the handwritten letter?

"Gullible"

Someone who is gullible is said to believe things much more easily than others would. For much of this book Nickie is gullible compared to someone like Grover. Write to explain what Nickie does in this book to show that she's gullible and include why Grover is not gullible.

Jeanne DuPrau's Puzzles

In the *City of Ember* series, our author gives the protagonists (and also the reader) word puzzles to solve. In *The City of Ember* we get the "Instructions," in *The Diamond of Darkhold* there is an ancient book, and in this book we have Nickie's father's messages and Arthur Green's journal. Write how each of these word puzzles helps to keep the reader in suspense and how it will help the protagonists on their quest.

Jumping to Conclusions

The best way to think about a problem is to get all the facts before you decide on a solution, and if you don't have all the facts, to postpone that decision until you get more evidence. Is this what Brenda Beeson does when she hears the prophecies? What are the effects of her actions? Do you think this was her intention?

Looks Can Be Deceiving

Hoyt McCoy is an astronomer who lives in Yonwood. Most of the people there think he is strange and either ignore him, spy on him, or try to put him in jail for his beliefs and what he's doing, but Hoyt is important in preventing war. Describe Hoyt and his relationship with the people of the town, as well as how he uses his knowledge of astronomy to help prevent war. With a partner, discuss how the town reacts to Hoyt and whether this is reasonable based on what they know about him.

Questions of Good and Bad

Later in the book, Nickie is struggling with the idea of helping Ms. Beeson and she asks her aunt Crystal about it. Although Crystal is tired and distracted when she answers, she ends up saying, "I'd say that you look to see if what you're doing causes harm. If it hurts anyone. If so, it's probably not good." Then Nickie asks, "What if what you do goes against what God says?" Crystal replies, "You'd have to know what he says, then, wouldn't you? Assuming he's up there saying anything." Write to explain what you think Nickie learns from this exchange? Does this conversation change her mind about helping Ms. Beeson?

The Prophet Herself

Is the fear that people of Yonwood experience is Ms. Tower's fault?

God

What is Nickie's relationship with god like at the end of the book? What about Ms. Beeson's? How are they different?

Extension Activities

What's a "prequel"?

The Prophet of Yonwood is a "prequel" to the *City of Ember* series. A prequel is a book that comes BEFORE the others in the series starts but is (usually) written AFTER those books. Why would an author write a prequel? Does the information provided in this prequel changes your understanding of the other books in the series?

Snakes Are Important How?

Most people in the novel are very resistant to Grover and his love of snakes, but in reality there are millions of snake lovers in the world. Although most people have some fear of snakes, these folks truly enjoy being around these creatures and can explain their benefits. Watch this video and write to explain the three main reasons this reptile handler thinks snakes can be very valuable in our world. youtu.be/3gUoP0n52dc

About the Book

It's been several months since Lina and Doon escaped the dying city of Ember and, along with the rest of their people, joined the town of Sparks. Now, struggling through the harsh winter aboveground, they find an unusual book. Torn up and missing most of its pages, it alludes to a mysterious device from before the Disaster, which they believe is still in Ember. Together, Lina and Doon must go back underground to retrieve what was lost and bring light to a dark world.

Pre-Reading Activities

The Ancient Phoenicians

In this novel and in *The People of Sparks*, roamers are people that leave their communities and roam over the land, finding things that were abandoned in the Disaster. How do the roamers affect their community? Check out this website that talks about perhaps the most famous traders in history, the Phoenicians. Write to explain what goods they traded and what affect they had on the world. [Trade in the Ancient Phoenician World – Brewminate A Bold Blend of News and Ideas](#)

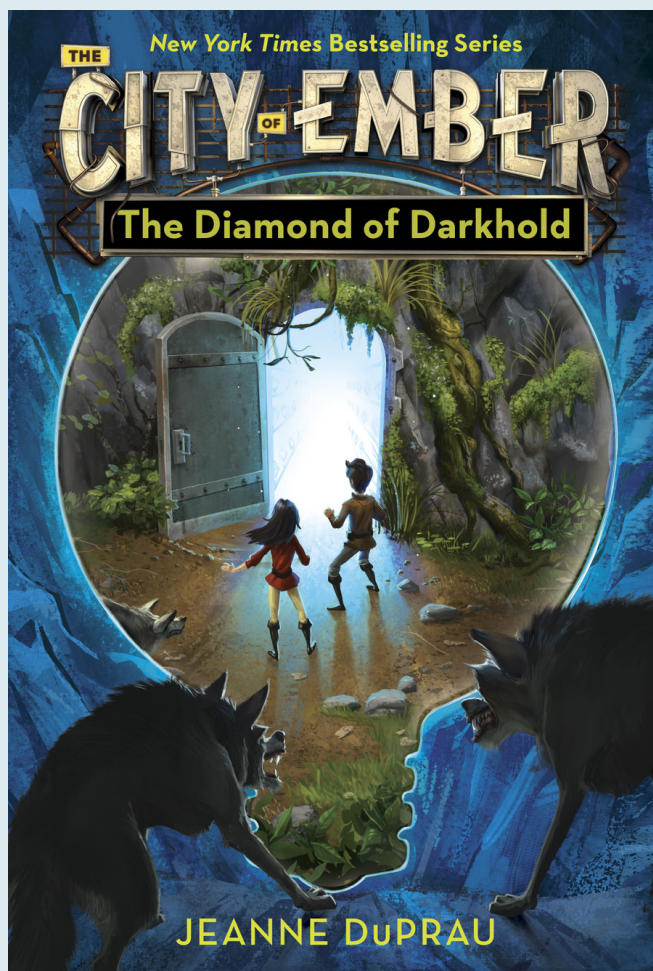
Lightning! Part One

Very early in the novel, Lina, Doon, Poppy, Mrs. Murdo, and others from the city of Ember (which was underground and had no real weather) experience lightning for the first time. They are greatly frightened by the experience until Dr. Hester and others explain to them what is happening. If you've never experienced something, it can be scary and intimidating. Write to explain a time when you were frightened by something you didn't understand, including what it was, why you felt scared, and how you got over that fear.

For Further Discussion

The Power of Reading

Over 200 years after the "Disaster" that wiped out most of humanity, reading is not as important as it used to be. In this book and the two others before it in the series, we meet many people who cannot read because they don't have a use for it in their lives. However, there are a few characters that can read and this helps them survive and thrive. Who are the characters that can read and in what ways does each help Sparks?



The Troggs's, Part One

When Doon arrives back in Ember, he gets captured by the Troggs family, who are all named after cities from the United States' past. The father is Washton (Washington), the mother is Minny (Minneapolis), the son is Yorick (New York), and the daughter is Kanza (Kansas City). They even have a boy with them that is not theirs named Scawgo (Chicago). Why do you think that Mr. Troggs named them all after cities? (Hint: Think about Lina's vision of the glittering city of her dreams that she draws.)

The Troggs's, Part Two

The Troggs family has Ember all to themselves and have made the town square into a living room of sorts, with a sofa, other chairs, and a fire. Washton Troggs is the head of this family, and he tells Doon that he must stay there and live with them because he's afraid others will come and take over Ember. Write to explain whether you think the Troggs family are villains in the story or they are just acting in their own best interests. Is there a difference?

Supporting Characters

Write to explain the role that each of the following characters has in either helping to support the city of Sparks or hurting its chances of survival.

- Torren
- Mrs. Murdo
- Dr. Hester
- Kenny Parton
- Doon's father
- Mary Waters
- Ben Barlow
- Edward Pocket

Doon

Doon's father always told him that anger produces unintended consequences, but the reverse is also true regarding kindness. Unlike more self-centered characters such as Lizzie and Torren, Doon does things just because they're the right thing to do and not to benefit himself. Think of a decision Doon makes just because it's the right thing to do that has positive consequences and write to explain it.

The builders

For the first time in the City of Ember series, we meet the builders and hear them discussing their plans for what will happen to the people in the city of Ember once they emerge from underground. We know that they built the city of Ember to try to save humanity, but we also know there are villages that have been surviving for over 200 years aboveground. Knowing all that you do, do you think the builders made the right choice in building the city of Ember? Why or why not?

The Ending

Unlike the end of the first two books in the series, the author jumps ahead perhaps 100 years to explain to us that although Lina never lives to see it, her granddaughter lived in a sparkling city where trolleys

carried people around and a thriving port took people to other places and brought in goods. Even beyond this, the mystery of the "moving star" that was mentioned a few times in the novel is explained to be a spacecraft from another civilization that has been observing Earth for hundreds of years. Read over this ending again and write the report that these aliens will give to their world about Earth.

Going Back to Ember

Why did Lina and Doon think that they had to sneak out to return to Ember? Did they not think that the people of Sparks would support this trip? Is that why they didn't go earlier?

Extension Activities

Lightning! Part Two

Early in the book, Doon experiences lightning for the first time, and says, "Electricity was nothing that people had made, it was part of the world, and sometimes, in some mysterious way, some people were able to capture it." Later in the book Doon figures out that he can use the power of the elements to create electricity, which helps Sparks and the world. We also understand lightning and its uses (and dangers). Watch this video and write to explain how a bolt of lightning is created (it may be different than you think!). youtu.be/Cz_uYBx1G5s

Greg Shafer has twenty-seven years of experience teaching in Florida middle schools, and holds three degrees from the University of Florida: a bachelor of arts in English, a bachelor of science in journalism, and a master's degree in English education. As a National Board Certified Teacher, Mr. Shafer has taught middle school drama and language arts, and served as a peer evaluator as part of a \$100 Million Grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to Hillsborough County Public Schools. In addition, Mr. Shafer has served as team leader for seventh and eighth grades for the majority of his teaching career, and holds his professional certification to teach middle grades, gifted, English 6–12, and ESOL.



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