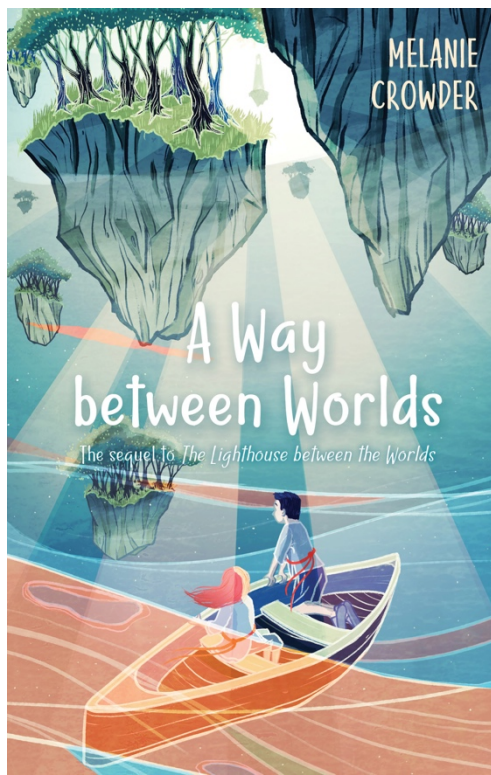


# A Way between Worlds

## Educator's Guide

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### About the book:

**A Way between Worlds**

**By Melanie Crowder**

**Published by Atheneum Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Simon & Schuster**

**ISBN-13: 978-1534405189**

**Age Range: 8-12 years**

**Griffin and Fi continue on their quest to save all worlds from invasion in this fantastical follow-up to *The Lighthouse between the Worlds*, which *Kirkus Reviews* called “a fast read that ends too soon.”**

There is more than just one world—and all of them are in grave danger.

After a narrow escape from the battle-torn world of Somni, Griffin and his fierce, newfound ally Fi find themselves at the center of a war that threatens not only the people of Earth, but those of other worlds entirely. Connected by the lighthouse that acts as a portal, each world harbors a unique kind of magic that the greedy rulers of Somni are determined to capture for themselves.

Unless Griffin and Fi can find a way to stop these would-be conquerors, everything they hold dear will be lost. Navigating magical worlds of mist, water, vines, and fire in search of an answer, the two friends will have to discover their own gifts before they can save not only themselves but the worlds—every single one of them.



### About the author:

Melanie Crowder holds an MFA in writing from Vermont College of Fine Arts. She is the author of the young adult novels *Audacity* and *An Uninterrupted View of the Sky* and the middle grade novels *Parched*, *A Nearer Moon*, *Three Pennies*, *The Lighthouse between the Worlds*, and *A Way between Worlds*.

Though she now calls Colorado home, Melanie’s family has lived in Oregon for six generations. For that reason, it was an extra joy for her to write this book featuring that rugged coastline she loves so much. Visit her online at [www.melaniecrowder.com](http://www.melaniecrowder.com).

### Also by Melanie Crowder:



### Common Core English Language Arts Standards supported in this guide:

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.1-7.1
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.4-7.4
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.9-6.9
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3-7.3
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.7

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.3-7.3
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.6-7.6
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.10-7.10
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3-7.4
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.3.1

### Prewriting:

Imagine there's a new kid in class who hasn't read *The Lighthouse between the Worlds* and it's your job to catch them up. What do they need to know? With a partner, list the most important details, then craft a succinct summary that is both informative and intriguing.

### Prediction:

Look closely at the cover. What do you see? What does the art by Kailey Whitman suggest about the story you're about to begin? What can you infer about the title? Can you find a double meaning?

## Chapter 1

### Discussion Prompt:

When Griffin lands on Caligo, he experiences a kind of culture shock. What does that phrase mean? Share experiences and discuss what it feels like to interact with a culture that is different from your own. List all the ways cultures can differ, from religion and language to tradition and environment. Brainstorm ways to help ease the transition for people new to your community. If time allows, create a service project where the class reaches out to support a local immigrant welcome center.

## Chapter 2

### Research Prompt:

Fi is constantly wishing to get back to Vinea; to her beloved wildlands. Look for parallels between the destruction of the Vinean wildlands and wild spaces on our world. Research the different categories of public lands where you live. Are there wilderness areas or nature preserves? What protects them? Are there any current or past threats to those areas? What would happen if Earth's wilderness areas disappeared? If time allows, draft letters to government representatives advocating for preservation or expansion of your local wilderness areas.

## Chapter 3

### Journal Prompt:

Ness asks Fi to do something she's convinced is impossible. Write about a time when you were able to accomplish something that surprised you. What did you learn about yourself through that experience?

## Chapter 4

### Science Connection:

What is an observatory? How are they used by astronomers? Study their unique architecture and history. Which is the oldest? The highest? The most remote? If time allows, create a global observatory tour guide as a class with each student contributing an entry.

## Chapter 5

### Point of View:

This book is told in 3<sup>rd</sup> person, past tense, through alternating point of view. This means that the chapters go back and forth between Fi and Griffin. Why do you think the author made this choice? What are some other books that use the same technique? What do you like about alternating POV? What don't you like about it?

## Chapter 6

### Science Connection:

“The Levitator made a sweeping gesture with his arm, and as it passed beyond the edge of his spun silk garment, his skin shifted to mimic the white of the mists and the steel gray of the ceiling.”

There are animals on earth who have a similar ability to shift their skin in order to blend into their surroundings. What animals have this ability? How and why do they do this?

## Chapter 7

### Geography Connection:

Have students pair up and pick travel destinations out of a hat, then visit your library to research just as the Fenn family does. (Minus the flying bats!) Invite your librarian to prepare a presentation on research tips and best practices. Students can share what they learn with the class via videotaped travel logs, informational brochures, or magazine articles.

## Chapter 8

### Science Connection:

Fi describes honeybees and hummingbirds visiting the vertical gardens. What animals on Earth are pollinators? What is their role? How is their survival precarious? As a class, develop a project to support pollinators in your community, by planting a pollinator-friendly garden, conducting a community education campaign, or by petitioning local elected officials to curb practices that harm pollinators.

## Chapter 9

### Social/Emotional Connection:

In order to understand her new abilities, Fi needs to learn how to control her emotions, specifically frustration and impatience. As a spy, she could stuff those feelings down where no one could see them, but as a greenwitch she needs to master them.

We all feel strong emotions sometimes. What are some tools Fi uses to achieve a sense of calm and quiet within herself? What are some other strategies you can use to help yourself or others grapple with big emotions?

## Chapter 10

### Community Connection:

“Some of the women hadn’t been home to Vinea in decades. Fi had only been away a little more than two years. But what if when she crossed over, the Vinea she remembered was gone?”

The greenwitches are refugees on Caligo. What does that term mean? What are some of the refugee communities in your area? Where did the people in those communities come from? Why did they leave their home countries? How does it make you feel to know your community is a safe haven for people fleeing danger? If time allows, plan a class project to support a local refugee resource center.

## Chapter 11

### Discussion prompt:

Near the end of the chapter, Katherine says that no one is uninvolved, not anymore. Why does she say this? How does a person decide when to step in and get involved, and when to walk away? Can you think of a situation on a global level that requires everyone to come together to work toward a common goal? Can you think of a situation at school when it’s easier to walk away, but speaking up is the right thing to do?

## Chapter 12

### Research prompt:

On Caligo, people wear clothing made from spider silk. Have you ever wondered where the clothing we wear comes from? Research the origins of fabrics across the globe, from plants and animals to laboratories. I don’t know anyone who wears spider silk on Earth—do you? What other interesting and bizarre sources for fabric might we be passing up?



## Chapter 13

### Inference:

Break into groups and look through the book to catalog the animal life on Caligo. Create a species data sheet for each one including a scientific illustration as well as information on habitat, diet, and behavior. Some of the information will be available through a careful reading of the text, but other details will need to be inferred based on what you know about Caligo and similar animals on Earth. If time allows, invent a species not mentioned in the book that would thrive in the city in the sky.

## Chapter 14

### Journal Prompt:

The plants on Vinea are sentient. What does that word mean? How would our world be different if we could communicate with the plant life around us? Would we remain the same? Or would those interactions fundamentally change who we are?

## Chapter 15

### Discussion Prompt:

Discuss the appearance of Aunt Ada. Up to this point in the duology, Fi has been alone, without the love and support of any family members. How might this development change her as a character? Think about who has she been, until now, and who might she become. Discuss different kinds of family structures and the many forms loving, nurturing families can take.

If appropriate for the students in your classroom, discuss support systems available to those who, like Fi, who have been separated from their families. If time allows, develop an outreach project to support local kids in foster care.

## Chapter 16

### Social/Emotional Connection:

Everybody is depending on Fi, but she can't do what they hoped and she feels this failure land heavily on her shoulders. Write about a time when you felt like a failure. What happened? Did you learn anything from that failure? Did you grow or change in any way? How do you feel about it now? If you could go back and live that moment a second time, would you do anything differently?

Examine this quote by author J.K. Rowling: "It is impossible to live without failing at something, unless you live so cautiously that you might as well not have lived at all—in which case, you fail by default."

Does the quote make you view your failure differently? How so?

## Chapter 17

### Research Prompt:

What is a buoy? And a buoy lighthouse? Can you find some examples? How has technology changed the role of lighthouses—stationary and otherwise—in modern times?

## Chapter 18

### Science Connection:

Giant Manta Rays are extraordinary creatures. On this world, they are listed as “threatened” under the Endangered Species Act. Break into groups to study different aspects of this marine animal, then regroup to share learning with the class. Make a plan to support this threatened animal including steps to take on an individual, local, and national level.

## Chapter 19

### Characterization:

Fi describes herself as stubborn and impatient. If she is one of the book’s heroes, why did the author write her with all those apparent flaws? Think of some of your favorite literary characters. What are their strengths and weaknesses? If you were a character, what would your strengths be? And your character flaws? Can you imagine a way those flaws could become strengths? (i.e. when is it good to be stubborn?)

## Chapter 20

### Art Connection:

Vinea is a wondrous world. Imagine the wildlands restored to their natural state, then create artwork individually or as a class inspired by what you have read. (Make sure to check the text for specific plants to incorporate into your artwork.) Collaborative projects could include: chalk art in the school’s outdoor spaces, a temporary mural covering a bulletin board or wall, or a large scale diorama.

## Chapter 21

### Writing Prompt:

Think of an adult in your life who has supported you and earned your trust. Write a letter to that person, recalling a shared memory as Fi does with Aunt Ada, and tell them how much they mean to you.

## Chapter 22

### Science Connection:

What is aquaculture? How is it used today and how might it be used in the future? What impact does overfishing have on the oceans and how does aquaculture affect this problem?

You have probably eaten sea animals, but have you ever eaten sea plants? Some people say seaweed and algae are the food of the future. Why do they say that? What do you think about the idea?

## Chapter 23

### Writing Prompt:

Imagine you were invisible for a day. What would that feel like? What would you do? Where would you go? How would you avoid being found out? And who would you bring along on your adventure?

## Chapter 24

### Discussion Prompt:

Griffin says: “It doesn’t matter what world we’re from. If we don’t stand together, sooner or later they’ll come for us all.”

He said something similar to the Levitator in Chapter 11: “It isn’t enough, just to watch the rest of us struggle. Yeah, we’re grateful that you pull people out of bad situations sometimes. But *sometimes* isn’t good enough.”

What is he trying to communicate here? Why does he believe this so strongly? Have you ever been convinced of something that all the adults around you seemed to ignore? How did that feel? What did you do about it?

If time allows, research Swedish teenager Greta Thunberg and her campaign to bring attention to the need for climate action.

## Chapter 25

### Author’s Purpose:

This book sees Griffin and his parents embarking on a risky quest together to save all the worlds. It’s rare for parents to be so involved in novels for young readers. Why is that, do you think? Why did the author make such an unconventional choice in this book? What are your impressions of the result?



## Chapter 26

### Characterization:

As a character, Fi has been shaped by her relationships—the loss of her family, her kinship with Aunt Ada, her time with Liv and Eb in the previous book, and, of course, her interactions with Griffin and his family.

Imagine that you are the author and want to dig deeper into this character to understand how those relationships have shaped her fears, secret wishes, regrets, and hopes. With a partner, brainstorm a list of character questions or select from an online list of character prewriting prompts and see if you can answer them together, looking to the text for support, then moving deeper than what's on the page to Fi's underlying thoughts, motivations, and emotions.

## Chapter 27

### Journal Prompt:

Two things brought Fi to this point in the story: 1) She refused to give up on her family in the raze crews, and 2) She believed that their potential to contribute to the fight was being overlooked.

Have you ever felt like people didn't appreciate you or value your thoughts or contributions? How did that make you feel? What do you do about it? How would you react differently now if you found yourself in a similar situation?

## Chapter 28

### Science Connection:

When Fi returns to Vinea, “burned ground stretched out before them, clear to the horizon.”

In the natural world, destruction can bring regeneration (some floods or wildfires). Other times, it causes irreparable harm (coral reefs or rainforest eradication). Split into groups to study and share with the class different ecosystems under threat, solutions scientists and innovators are developing, and things we all can do to support the preservation of Earth's ecosystems.

## Chapter 29

### Reflection:

After submitting to control by Somni for so many years, why did the people of Maris choose to revolt now? They risked everything, knowing they wouldn't be able to survive without the support of the other worlds. Did they risk too much? What would have happened if they didn't act?

## Chapter 30

### Discussion Prompt:

The song of the sea lives on Earth now. How do you think it will alter that world? What benefits might arise from its presence? Might there be negative consequences the characters haven't considered yet?

What happens in nature when an organism from one continent is transported to another continent? What are some examples of this throughout history? Does this exchange disrupt or enrich ecosystems? Do you think exchanges from parallel worlds would follow the same principle? Why or why not?

## Chapter 31

### Writing Prompt:

This duology has ended, with plenty of room for readers to imagine a future for these characters and worlds. Imagine that you are asked to join the envoy to free Arida or Glacies, or to reach out to Stella. Write the next chapter(s), with YOU as the main character!

### Reflection:

Consider the two books: *The Lighthouse between the Worlds* and *A Way between Worlds*. How do the two parts of the duology work together? Did things end as you imagined? What surprised you? What ended in just the right way?

### A note from the author:

Hello teachers!

Thank you so much for sharing these books with your young readers.

And truly, thank you for all you do!

When I was young, I loved books that swept me away into other worlds with no limits beyond my own imagination. So writing this duology was like writing a love letter to middle grade me. I hope your students enjoy the adventure and savor the connections between these imagined worlds and our own.

Happy reading!