



ANGELAEON CIRCLE  
BOOK ONE

KARYN  
HENLEY

BREATH  
OF  
ANGEL

A NOVEL

*Breath of Angel*

Teacher/Reader Guide

Warning: The following questions may give away some of the story. You may want to read the book before you read the questions.

Many of the questions below deal with themes you might find in *Breath of Angel*.

1. The history of Alterria (the world of *Breath of Angel*)

- What is the legend that Melaia tells as a chantress?
- How does the legend differ from the story that she discovers is true?
- What are some legends we know today that differ from what really happened?  
    Why do you think legend may be different from the historical events?
- How do the ancient wars and events in Alterria affect Melaia's story?
- What does the blight have to do with the events?

2. Family Relationships

- Why was Melaia raised in the temple by the high priestess?
- Why didn't the high priestess tell Melaia where she came from?
- When Livia tells Melaia who her mother is, why doesn't Melaia want to believe her?
- Compare the family relationships of :
  - Livia and Sergai
  - Hanni and Melaia
  - Jarrood and Dreia
- What drives the ancient feud between the immortal brothers?
- What kind of relationship does Melaia have with the novice priestesses?
- What kind of relationship does Trevin have with Dwin?
- Compare what all the above family members do for or against each other and why.
- In real life, what unites family members? What breaks them apart?

3. Choice and Responsibility

- Describe some of the characters' well-intentioned choices that went awry.
- How does Melaia's awareness of her destiny affect her? Does she give herself to it wholeheartedly? Why or why not? Does she have a choice?
- What is the angels' role in human choice? Why?
- What does Livia mean when she says, "the longer you wait to give yourself to the task you were born to, the harder it will be to risk yourself"?
- Do you agree with Livia when she says, "When you're going the right direction, life always looks larger than what you're accustomed to"? Why or why not?

#### 4. Fear and Courage

- Choose three characters and tell what each of them fears and why.
- What might Lord Rejius fear? Why?
- Melaia remembers a saying in her mother's book: "Fear and courage dwell together." Do you agree with that saying? Why or why not?
- Why do some of the angels not join the Angelaeon meeting?
- Why did Jarrod and Livia not want Melaia to know the king's relationship to her? What were they afraid of? Discuss different kinds of fear.
- Discuss ways in which fear and courage motivated the characters' choices. How would situations have changed if they responded differently to their fears?
- What kinds of fear are helpful? What kinds of fear are harmful?

#### 5. Trust and Betrayal

- Discuss how Melaia's trust in Trevin changes throughout the book. Why does it change? Do you think she is right to trust him in the end? Why or why not?
- Hanni doesn't trust angels, but she trusts Benasin even though she thinks he's an angel. Why does she trust him?
- If you have ever been betrayed, tell how it feels. (Instead of naming the feeling – angry, shocked, sad, etc. – describe the way your body felt.)
- Why does Melaia decide to forgive Trevin? Does she fully trust him after that? Should she? Discuss why it might be hard to trust someone you've forgiven.

#### 6. Plot and Theme

- What is the main plot of this story?
- What are some of the sub-plots?
- Freedom is one of the themes of *Breath of Angel*. What does it mean to be free? Discuss how people can be free in some ways and not in other ways. Who is free in *Breath of Angel* and who is not – and why?
- Readers sometimes see themes in a book that the author isn't aware of. What other themes did you see in *Breath of Angel*?

#### 7. Characters

- Melaia often has mixed feelings. Name some of the feelings she struggles with. Why does she sometimes have a hard time sorting out what she feels?
- Writers try to *show* emotion instead of just *telling* it. Choose an intense scene from *Breath of Angel* and discuss how emotion was shown instead of simply named.
- Compare Melaia and Trevin. How are their lives through the novel alike and different? Describe the changes in each of them from the beginning of the novel to the end. What influences bring about the most change in each of them? Which people and events are most important to each of them?

- Compare Rejus and Benasin. Both live in immortal bodies. Would you want to be immortal in that way? Why or why not? What would be the advantages? What would be the disadvantages?
- Which was your favorite “supporting character”? Why?
- In real life, what factors contribute to people becoming friends? What causes friendships to dissolve? Discuss which factors occurred in *Breath of Angel*.

8. "The primary duty of literature is to tell us the truth about ourselves by telling us lies about people who never existed." - Stephen King
- How can readers find truth in fantasy?
  - What truth did you find in *Breath of Angel*?

9. Discuss the similarities and differences between myths, legends, fairy tales, and fables.

Myth: traditional tales of the deeds of gods, spirits, and other supernatural or superhuman beings  
events are grand and could not possibly happen to an ordinary mortal  
the ending is almost always tragic

Fairy tale: events may be unusual or improbable, but they happen to ordinary people  
the ending is happy and hopeful

Fable: cautionary tales, often involving animals

Legend: claims to be based on what's real and historically true.

- Name some stories you've read from each category.
- Which characters were the protagonists, fighting for good?
- Which were antagonists, working evil?
- If magic was used, what kind of magic was it, and how was it used?
- If you have read other angel stories, how is *Breath of Angel* the same or different?
- Do the categories of myth, legend, fairy tale, and fable ever mix?
- Where does the label “fantasy” fit in?