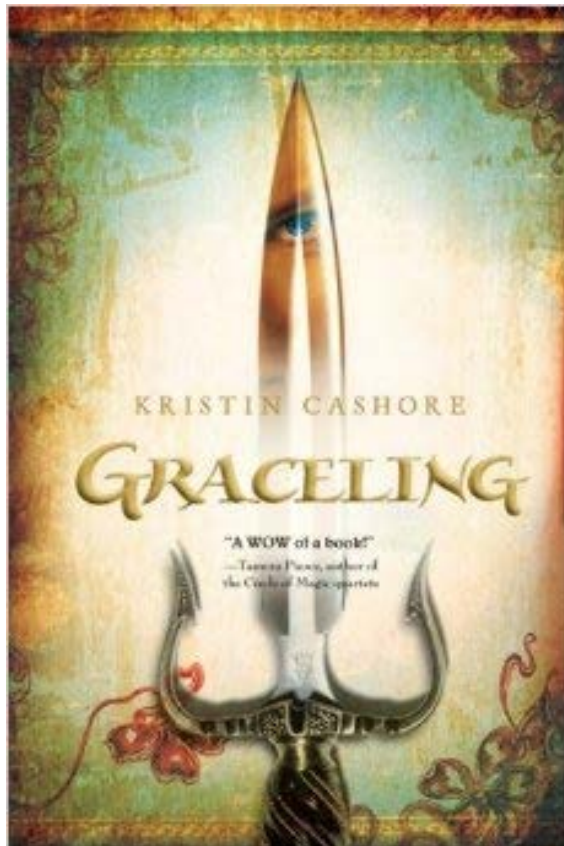


# Independent Study Guide for *Graceling*

Written by: Kristin Cashore



Rachel Pham

Mrs. Smith

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## Part 1:

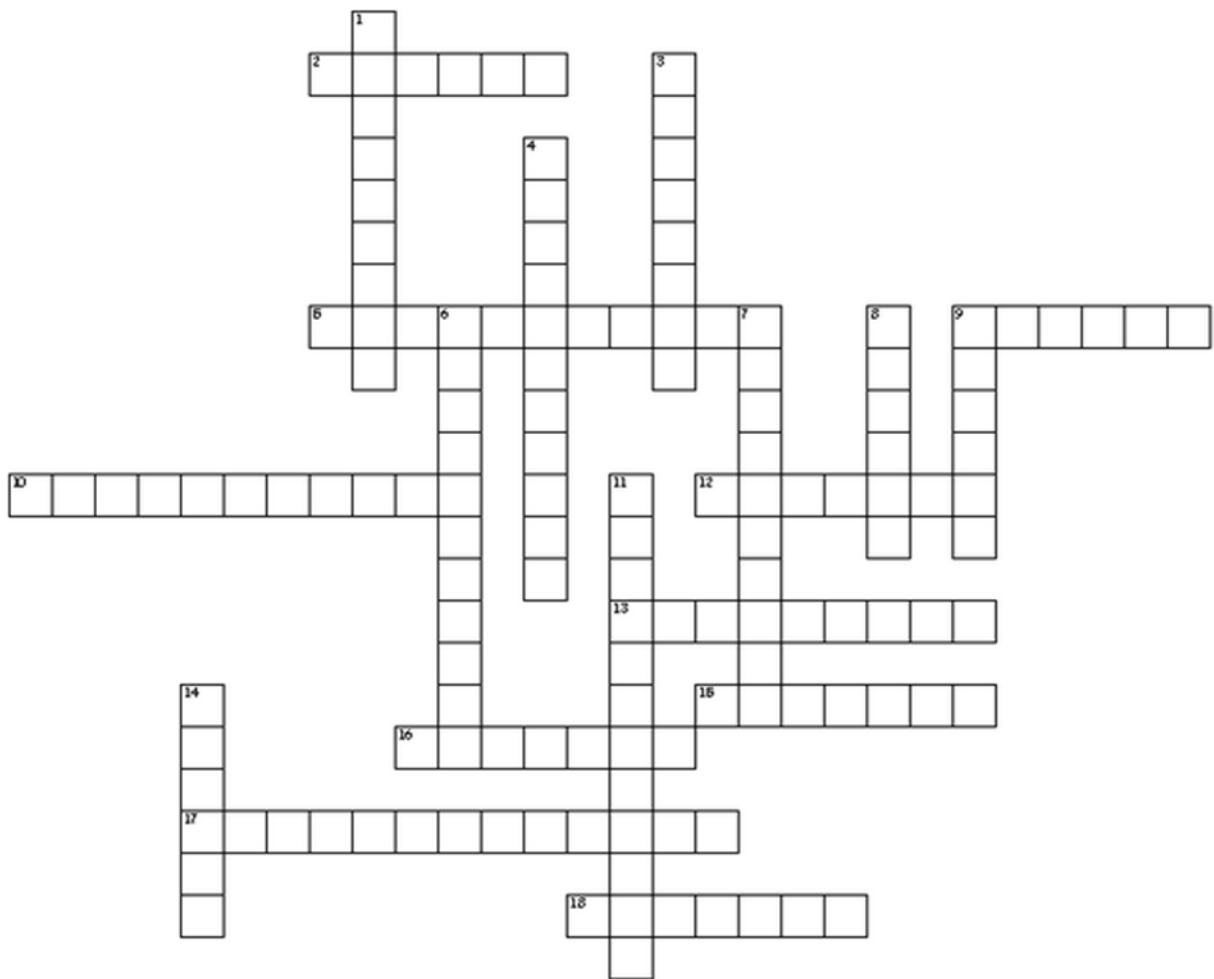
### Critical Element Information:

2. Katsa is in a dungeon, so she might be a prisoner. The fact she has a map in her mind makes me think that she is trying to escape. The reason she is in jail is probably because she is a Graceling.
3. Katsa's Grace (a special ability) is killing. She excels in fighting and disarming. Her uncle, the king of Middluns, uses her to do his dirty work. Currently, she is saving an old Lienid man from the dungeons, and is seen.
4. *Graceling* takes place in a realm with seven kingdoms, Monsea, Sunder, Lienid, Middluns, Wester, Nander, and Estill. Katsa lives in the Middluns, the kingdom in the middle of the other kingdoms. Lienid is an island in the ocean, so it is neutral and not involved in the politics of the continental kingdoms. Monsea is separated from the kingdoms by a mountain range in the east. In the story, they ride horses, use dungeons, and live in castles, so it is medieval-like. Katsa lives in the Middluns, but the story begins in King Murgon of Sunder's court.
5. *Graceling* is written in third person limited point of view. This view helps the reader understand Katsa and her feelings while giving the events in a narrator's point of view. Cashore wrote this as a fantasy novel with kingdoms and Gracelings, people born with an extraordinary ability. This genre makes the book fun and original because it doesn't occur in the real world and has some interesting things in it.
6. After Po and Katsa figure out King Leck of Monsea is behind the kidnapping of Prince Tealiff, they have to defeat him even though he can control people with his words. They have to keep Prince Bitterblue from harm because her father, Leck, wants to torture her. Katsa also has to come to understand herself and her Grace to defeat the king.
7. Katsa has a green and blue eye which marks her as a Graceling. At the beginning of the book, she has shoulder length brown, curly hair that she does not comb. She is very impulsive and ambitious. King Ror reprimands her for rushing to find Po without getting any guards or supplies. "You will listen to sense. It does none of us any good at this juncture for you to barrel through Monsea with the queen of the kingdom on your horse, killing her soldiers left and right. ... You will travel with a guard" (Cashore 431-432). Katsa is also known for her stubbornness. She sticks to her values like they are a sacred law and everything has to go her way because that is what she is used to.
8. At the beginning before the reader learns that Leck is bad, he "had a great reputation for kindness to children, animals, and all helpless creatures." (Cashore 19) The truth about Leck is exposed in the middle of the book when Bitterblue tells Po and Katsa, "He cuts animals, with knives. He tortures them and keeps them alive for a long time, then he kills them.... I don't think it's only animals he does this to." (Cashore 293)



Leck was able to keep the fact that he was Graced secret because “with one eye missing, he could be Graced and no one would ever know. No one would even suspect, for who could suspect a Grace that controlled suspicions?” (Cashore 220) Ashen, Leck’s wife and Bitterblue’s mother, uncovers his secret. “She told me [Bitterblue] he can manipulate people’s minds with his words, so that they believe whatever he says. Even if they hear it from someone else’s mouth; even if it’s a rumor he started that’s spread far beyond him. His power weakens as it spreads, but it does not disappear.” (Cashore 292-293) As amazing as that Grace is, Leck is not the right person to have been given that Grace.

Part 2: *Graceling* Vocabulary Crossword Puzzle



Across

2. understand after much thought
5. clearly visible, attracting notice
9. bring into disorder or a confusing state
10. the doing of good, charity
12. slight, insubstantial, frail
13. the act of feeling sorrow or guilt for a wrong doing, repentance
15. lack of sense, significance, or ideas
16. no longer existing or used
17. to surprise someone greatly
18. lacking interest or excitement, dull

Down

1. a large body of troops ready for battle
3. exercise of the will
4. fear, anxiety, alarm
6. likely or liable to be influenced or harmed by a thing
7. overthrow, overturn, take over
8. a state of near unconsciousness
9. sullen and ill-tempered
11. involved with others in an illegal activity
14. become or make annoyed because a restriction or inconvenience

Answers to *Graceling* Vocabulary Crossword Puzzle

Across

2. fathom (64)
5. conspicuous (287)
9. muddle (469)
10. beneficence (293)
12. tenuous (18)
13. penitence (187)
15. inanity (228)
16. defunct (21)
17. flabbergasted (145)
18. mundane (93)

Down

1. battalion (165)
3. volition (30)
4. trepidation (43)
6. susceptible (186)
7. subversion (31)
8. stupor
9. morose (130)
11. complicitous (180)
14. chafed (312)
19. vigilance (433)

Grade: \_\_\_/20

Part 3:

Journal Entry #1:

May 1, 2015

I enjoy reading fantasy and science fiction novels, and *Graceling* was recommended by a friend. Before reading a book, I look at Goodreads reviews and read the blurb. The cover page is also an important factor; I am attracted to pretty books. Katsa is the main character of the book, but the narrator is telling the story while giving insight to Katsa's thoughts. *Graceling* starts out with Katsa in the dungeons of Sunder to save Prince Tealiff. She sneaks inside and gets him out while knocking out guards left and right, but Katsa is seen by another Graceling, people born with an extreme skill. There are many supporting characters that are both good and bad. Her friends include Oll, Gideon, Raffin, Helda, and Po. Po is also Katsa's character of affection. King Randa of Middluns, her uncle, "was a tall man, taller even than his son, and broader in the shoulders and the neck." He had "eyes that assumed you would do what he told you to do, eyes that threatened to bring you unhappiness if he didn't get want." (Cashore 64) The King uses Katsa, who excelled at killing, to inflict his punishment on people that wronged him. He is very arrogant harsh and even has a statue of himself in his garden. All the kings in *Graceling* are stupid, foolish, and shellfish. The Graceling realm includes 7 kingdoms. One of the first mysteries is which kingdom kidnapped Prince Tealiff and why, so the placement of the kingdoms is crucial to the plot. Katsa's first conflict happens in Chapter 1 "... she was astonished when a man stepped out of the darkness and grabbed her from behind. He wrapped an arm around her chest and held a knife to her throat." (Cashore 12) This is the first time Katsa meets Po. She decides to spare him for reasons she does not know, but Cashore hints to the reader that Katsa thinks he is different than everyone because he trusts her and lets his guard down although she could have killed him. Po is characterized as trusting, humorous, and very open minded. The beginning is very action packed yet explains all the facts and background information. Cashore's writing is very descriptive and Katsa's character is very alluring. The

chapters end so that the idea is complete, but leaves you wanting to know what happens next.

This is aggravating because you want to stop reading, but can't.

Journal Entry #2

May 5, 2015

SO MANY PLOT TWISTS! My mind is blown right now. Po's Grace is actually that he can sense people's thoughts when they're thinking about him! He is naturally good at fighting because he can sense the movement of people's body and can "feel the energy of your intentions toward me." (Cashore 154) Katsa also learns a secret about her Grace. "She knew instinctively how to live and thrive in the wilderness. And she could kill anyone. At the slightest threat to her survival.... Her Grace was not killing. Her Grace was survival." (Cashore 252-253) The theme of staying true to yourself is introduced when Katsa stands up to King Randa and refuses to do his bidding. Go Katsa! It motivates the reader to do things that seem impossible. There are so many secrets and revelations! King Leck is actually really evil and has an extraordinary Grace; he can control people's minds with his words. I wish I could do that!!! Instead of being the sympathetic, caring person everyone thinks he is, Leck actually tortures and harms innocent animals. He is so sadistic and messed up. Bitterblue, his daughter, and Ashen, his wife, ran away from him, but Ashen twists her ankle and is killed by Leck. Bitterblue hides in a tree and is rescued by Po and Katsa. Bitterblue tells Po and Katsa about her father, and they vow to protect Bitterblue from her father. Because of Po's mind reading Grace, Leck's ability does not work on him, so Po attempts to kill the king. He fails and is severely injured when the horse tumbles over the cliff and Po falls facedown into the water. To protect Bitterblue, Katsa is forced to leave Po in the forest. The story line has a lot of new conflicts and events, but it easy to follow because it is written in only one point of view and in chronological order. Cashore writes with tons of descriptive and detailed words. Since we annotated *To Kill A Mockingbird* and *Anthem*, whenever there is figurative language I stop and make a mental note of it. In *Graceling*, figurative language is used frequently. "She forced her mind blank. Blank as a new sheet of paper, blank as a starless sky."

(Cashore 191-192) The language is pretty basic, but Cashore sometimes uses sentence fragments to emphasize or add to another point. There are some more advanced words, but not too hard. *Graceling* is a young adult fantasy book, so it is mainly for students in junior high and high school.

Journal Entry #3

May 13, 2015

This book was so good!!!! Everyone should read this. *Graceling* is realistic, has romance, but not too much, and is really well written. There were more plot twists and was better than I thought it would be. Throughout the book, the unexpected happens. At the end, you find out that Po is now blind!! “Po. Are you blind?” At that, something in him seemed to break. He fell to his knees. A tear made an icy track down his face.” (Cashore 445-446) I almost started crying. I don’t think Cashore should have made Po blind. Though he isn’t completely blind (he can sense things with his Grace), he still can’t see Katsa and colors. The climax occurred when Katsa and Bitterblue finally made it to Lienid to find King Leck there. I screamed when this happened. Katsa kills Leck “Not because she remembered the truth of Po’s Grace. But because she remembered that Po did have a secret, a terrible secret, the revelation of which would hurt him in some horrible way she felt deeply but could not remember- and here this man sat, the secret on the tip of his tongue.” (Cashore 417) King Leck almost told the royal Lienid family about Po’s secret, so she throws a dagger at his mouth. Friendship and loyalty is emphasized here as Katsa protects Po. Near the end of *Graceling*, at Bitterblue’s coronation, she is reunited with Raffin and Oll. The strong ties of true friendship are shown as Katsa rejoined by her friends. Po is going back to Lienid, and Katsa is going to travel around the 7 kingdoms to teach young girls how to fight. One of the main themes in this book is identity and the lack of femininity in Katsa. She finally understands who she wants to be and is content with being just the way she is, not beholden to anyone or anything. The lack of femininity is shown throughout the book as Katsa hunts and fights, showing that women could do things just like men. “It was the least I can do,’ Po said

drily, 'and I see you've already skinned that hare. I'm beginning to think I won't have much responsibility as we travel through the forest together.'" Katsa retorts, "Does it bother you? You're welcome to do the hunting yourself. Perhaps I can stay by the fire and mend your socks, and scream if I hear any strange noises.'" (Cashore 181) The book ends with Po telling Katsa, "I wish you could see this cave.' 'What's it like?' He paused. 'It's ... beautiful really.'" (Cashore 471) This is ironic yet fitting because Po is blind, but with his Grace he can see more than a normal person can. His pause shows that Po has come to peace with his disability and has regained a positive attitude from his previous self-pity. He realizes that you don't need your sight to see the beauty in things.