

SNOW

MEERA TREHAN

ABOUT THE BOOK

Every day, a lonely princess digs through the snow in search of a way to undo the terrible wish she made—one that has left her with an empty kingdom and a heart full of guilt. But one day, a mysterious girl named Ela tumbles through the kingdom's protective mist barrier. The princess is determined to bring Ela to her father, the harsh king, as proof that her wish can be undone, even if it means keeping Ela against her will. Meanwhile, Ela, who has grown up a regular kid in what she thought was a regular Indian American family, is shocked to discover she's stumbled upon the very snow princess whose picture graces the cover of the locked book that Ela's mom won't let her read.

In this elegant and haunting fantasy, author Meera Trehan conjures a story of loneliness, family secrets, science, and remarkable snow as two girls from different worlds come together to set things right—and maybe even become friends.

Common Core Connections

This discussion guide, which can be used with large or small groups, will help students meet several of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English Language Arts. These include the reading literature standards for key ideas and details, craft and structure, and integration of knowledge and ideas (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL), as well as the speaking and listening standards for comprehension and collaboration and for presentation of knowledge and ideas (CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL). Questions can also be used in writing prompts for independent work.



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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. The Princess feels guilty for what her wish has caused. Have you heard the phrase “Be careful what you wish for”? What do you think it means? How does the story explore the consequences of the Princess getting what she wished for?
2. What do you think it would be like to live in a world of snow that never falls but also never melts?
3. On pages 8–9, the Princess recalls Madame Vidya’s “essential knowledge for all royalty.” Do you think these lessons might actually be used by real royalty today? By others? Do any of them seem like strategies used by people you know? What do you think would be advantages and disadvantages to employing them yourself?
4. One of the themes in *Snow* is redemption. What are some examples of the Princess’s commitment to redeeming herself after her unfortunate wish? How does this character trait affect her? How important do you think it is to others in the story? To you in your own life?
5. Ela and the Princess’s worlds are opposite in many ways. What are some of them? How do these differences present challenges to them as they try to understand each other?
6. This story deals with a lot of family secrets. How do you think these secrets shape Ela’s understanding of herself and her family? How do the Princess’s do so?
7. The Princess hides the truth behind her plans and intentions from Ela in order to undo the curse. Do you think this action is justified even if she doesn’t want to hurt Ela in the process?
8. The story has elements of both science and magic in it. Do you think these two themes exist in our day-to-day world too?
9. What was the science Neel, Ela’s father, was working on? What did he hope to accomplish?
10. There are several unintended consequences in this story. What are some examples? Why were the choices made as they were, and what did each person hope would be the result?
11. On page 185, the author writes that Nithya “stiffened at the word ‘Strangers.’” Why do you think that was her reaction? What did the word mean to her? To the Princess?
12. Growing up in an Indian American family, Ela is shocked to discover her connection with the Princess. What role do you think her cultural heritage plays in this story?
13. The kingdom is covered in snow and has a mist barrier. How does this scenario reflect the Princess’s struggles and turmoil?
14. This story deals with a relationship between a royal family member and a commoner. What did you think of the portrayal? What influence did the relationship have on the creation of the curse?
15. On page 280, the author writes, “*You’re forgiven.*” The words ring hollow inside her, like pebbles in an empty jar.” What do think this means? Did the Princess finally get the confrontation she wanted for so long? Was it worth it to keep Ela in the dark for this?



Photo by Curt Holden

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

MEERA TREHAN is the author of *The View from the Very Best House in Town*. She grew up in Virginia, just outside Washington, DC. After attending the University of Virginia and Stanford Law School, she practiced law for over a decade before turning to creative writing. She lives in Maryland with her family.