



A TEACHER'S GUIDE FOR

Cinder

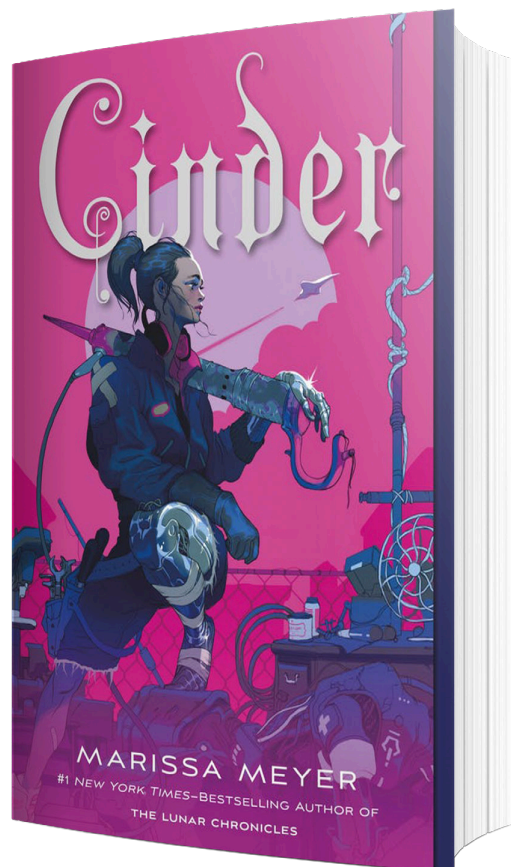
ABOUT THE BOOK

Cinder is the first installment in the #1 *New York Times* and *USA Today* bestselling Lunar Chronicles series by Marissa Meyer, now with new cover art! See where the futuristic YA fairy-tale saga began, with the story of a teenage cyborg who must fight for the survival of Earth against villains from outer space.

Humans and androids crowd the raucous streets of New Beijing. A deadly plague ravages the population. From space, a ruthless Lunar people watch, waiting to make their move. No one knows that Earth's fate hinges on one girl.

Cinder, a gifted mechanic, is a cyborg. She's a second-class citizen with a mysterious past, reviled by her stepmother and blamed for her stepsister's illness. But when her life becomes intertwined with the handsome Prince Kai's, she suddenly finds herself at the center of an intergalactic struggle, and a forbidden attraction. Caught between duty and freedom, loyalty and betrayal, she must uncover secrets about her past in order to protect the future of her world.

With high-stakes action and a smart, resourceful heroine, *Cinder* is a retelling of the Cinderella story that is at once classic and strikingly original.



9781250768889 | Ages 12-18

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



MARISSA MEYER is the #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of the Lunar Chronicles series, the *New York Times* bestselling Renegades trilogy, the graphic novels *Wires and Nerve: Vols. 1 and 2*, and *The Lunar Chronicles Coloring Book*. Her first stand-alone novel, *Heartless*, was also a #1 *New York Times* bestseller, and she has also written a contemporary rom-com, *Instant Karma*. She lives in Tacoma, Washington, with her husband and their two daughters.

PRE-READING QUESTIONS

As a group, recount and compare the versions you know of the Cinderella story, if you know one. Do details vary among the versions that group members know? How do you feel about the story, its traditional gender roles, and its “happily ever after” ending? What would make it a better story?

What do you think the world will be like in hundreds of years? What role will AI (artificial intelligence) and robots play? What kind of transportation will there be? Will there be colonies in space? Will the world still have wars and crime?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. The author effectively creates a future world that in some ways is similar to today’s world and in other ways is different. Identify similarities and differences in terms of countries and politics. What are some differences in technology? Find places in the narrative that are especially vivid descriptions of the different settings—such as the market, the palace, and so on—and identify futuristic aspects.
2. What does it mean to be a cyborg? What happened to Cinder that resulted in surgery when she was younger? What abilities does being a cyborg give her that ordinary humans don’t have? What physical problems does it present for her?
3. Why is there bias against cyborgs? Discuss some examples of the bias in Cinder’s life at home and elsewhere. What makes it possible for her stepmother to take all the money Cinder earns? How else does her stepmother treat her badly?
4. What elements in the novel reflect the traditional Cinderella story? How is Cinder’s living situation similar to Cinderella’s? How is it different? How is the setting different from the traditional story and what effect does that have on the story?
5. Describe Cinder’s personality. What are her strengths and weaknesses? What can you tell about her from her relationships to Iko and Peony? What effect does it have on her to be the object of scorn from others? Why is Cinder kind to Chang Sacha and her son in the hospital?
6. What aspects of her personality make Iko so appealing? What traits and interests does she have that Cinder doesn’t? Why is she so important to Cinder? What does Adri do to Iko, and how does Cinder hope to restore her friend?
7. Kai could attract any girl in New Beijing. Explain why he’s attracted to Cinder. What does he admire about her? What does she like about him? What are some of the obstacles that keep them from starting a romance?
8. What is the role of secrets throughout the novel? What are some of the secrets Cinder keeps from her stepmother? What secrets does Cinder keep from Kai? How does he react when he learns that she’s a cyborg? How do Kai’s secrets lead him to Cinder in the first place?
9. Who is Dr. Erland? What are some of his secrets? Why is his health starting to fail? Why has he been willing to sacrifice so many cyborgs in his medical research? Why is he so excited about Cinder and her reaction to being injected with letumosis?

10. Describe Queen Levana, her appearance, and her entourage. What do you learn about her history as a leader? What do you learn about Lunar society? Why does the queen hate mirrors? Discuss the symbolism of mirrors in the novel. Why does she hate shells?
11. Why is Kai so worried about the political situation when his father dies? Why does Queen Levana arrive so quickly after the old emperor's death? What do her political intentions appear to be beyond marrying Kai? How does she use the antidote to letumosis as a bargaining chip? What does that show about her character?
12. Lunars have a powerful ability to deceive others. Give some examples from the story and explain the purpose of the deceit in each example. What scientific explanation does the doctor give for the power?
13. Why does Dr. Erland say it's so important for the queen not to see Cinder? Describe the queen's reaction to Cinder when she sees her in the crowd in front of the palace. What happens between Cinder and the queen at the ball? What secrets are revealed?
14. Discuss the ending of the novel when Dr. Erland visits Cinder in her prison cell. What is Cinder's reaction to the information Dr. Erland gives her about who she is? What motivates her to fight back against the queen? Why does Cinder remove her own ID chip?
15. The similarities to the traditional Cinderella story might suggest *Cinder* would have a "happily ever after" ending. How would you describe the ending? How does it leave the relationship between Cinder and Kai, and Cinder and her stepmother? What foreshadowing leads the reader to expect an ending that isn't "happily ever after"?

ACTIVITIES

THE ROBOTS ARE COMING!

Inventors are currently working on creating robots and androids that could resemble Iko or have a wide range of other uses. Have students visit the following websites and choose a way to explore the topic of robotics with a science project, research paper, artwork, presentation, or other response to share with the class.

- NASA's Jet Propulsion Lab activities: www.jpl.nasa.gov/edu/teach/tag/search/Robotics
- PBS's NOVA National Robotics Week resources: mass.pbslearningmedia.org/shared/1048350/4361627/
- Robotics activities created by scientists: www.sciencebuddies.org/science-fair-projects/project-ideas/robotics
- Information and projects about robotics, sponsored by IEEE, the largest technical professional organization for the advancement of technology: robots.ieee.org/robots/

FLY, DON'T DRIVE?

In *Cinder*, people get around in hovers, which are flying vehicles. Cinder also discovers and repairs an old car that uses gasoline, even though Iko thought all such cars were in museums. Have students work in pairs to research flying vehicles, either from the past or present. They should prepare a multimedia presentation that shares their findings, including what the flying vehicles use as fuel and how they compare in different ways to today's automobiles.

FUTURISTIC FAIRY TALE

Cinder draws from the fairy tale “Cinderella” but sets it in the future and makes it much more complex. Echoes of other fairy tales also occur in Cinder. Ask students to choose a traditional folktale, fairy tale, legend, or myth from any culture, and use it as the basis of a short story set in the future. Share the stories in small groups and talk about the similarities and differences between the traditional story and the new one.

COMIC STRIP TRANSFORMATION

Cinder has strong elements of dialogue and action that would translate well into a comic strip format. Have students take a scene from the novel, or use the futuristic fairy tale they wrote, and turn it into a comic strip. They can draw freehand or use one of the websites for making online comic strips recommended at <https://edutechspot.com/21-free-online-comic-makers/>. The comic strip should convey emotion as well as information and verbal exchanges.

Kathleen Odean was a school librarian for seventeen years and now gives workshops for educators on new young adult books. She chaired the 2002 Newbery Award Committee and served on earlier Newbery and Caldecott committees. She has an MA in folklore from the University of California at Berkeley.

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