



THE  
LOST  
SOUL  
ATLAS

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TEACHERS RESOURCES

# THE LOST SOUL ATLAS

by Zana Frailon

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# INTRODUCTION

*The struggle of man against power is the struggle of memory against forgetting.*  
Milan Kundera, *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting* (p vii)

'Because stories are the maps for how we can be.' (p 345)

This novel is an epic tale, an allegory of power, a fairy tale and a fantasy. It's about the grief of lost children, loyalty and love, the hurt of betrayal, and the journeys we make in order to re-discover our heritage. It spans a city, a decade, and the divide between life and death itself.

Twig has arrived in the Afterlife and his guardian, a bony bird-like skeleton raven creature called Kruk, is hot on his heels. But someone else is also waiting in the shadows and Twig is irresistibly tempted to leave the path laid out by the Gods when he hears his father's old song coming from the forest. Creatures called meeple lead him to a hole in the ground, which he enters and meets the Gatherer, who is one of 'the Olds'. He is told that he is a Keeper (like his Da was), and is given a copy of The Lost Soul Atlas, a skeleton key, six Bones of Lost Wonders, and a series of quests to locate 'Crossings' on the Map of the Wilderforest in order to eventually re-discover memories. In the course of this journey his own memories, which have all but been taken by the Gods, come back to him in snatches which reveal to the reader his past life. He gradually remembers living on the dangerous streets of the city with pickpocket Flea after his Da had disappeared, following their encounter with the frightening Hoblin. Flea is the leader of a gang of Boneyard kids who take from the rich to share amongst themselves and with others. Life is poor but good because they have each other. But when the Hoblin re-discovers Twig and tricks him into betraying his friends he embarks on the perilous road which leads to the Afterlife.

This is a haunting, moving, and sometimes hilarious fantasy adventure peopled by an inventively original cast of fantasy characters such as meeple, devil bears, city bears, the Hoblin, the Gatherer, Gods and their Officials, Twisters, Keepers, Sentries, StreetKings and SandWitches (p 292).

It's a novel about resisting power, pledging fealty, no matter what the cost, and the importance of making a choice in order to act in the name of truth.

# BEFORE AND AFTER READING THE NOVEL

Examine the cover of the novel. What does it suggest about the novel's themes?

After you have read the novel, examine the cover again: what does it suggest to you now?

After you have read the novel, read about it in reviews and articles and use the notes below to examine the text more closely.

## THEMES AND CURRICULUM TOPICS

Several themes relevant to curriculum topics (Studies of Society and Environment and English Language and Literacy) might be identified in this novel:

### STUDIES OF SOCIETY AND ENVIRONMENT (SOSE)

#### MEMORY

**KEY QUOTE:** 'There was just the faintest tune, carrying softly on the wind. It was a tune of yearning, and complete comfort. It held stories and songs and cold winter nights and hot milk with honey, and warm arms wrapping tight. 'I know that song . . .' Twig scabbled to find the memory. 'Krruk? Did you hear that?' (p 15)

**DISCUSSION POINT:** This novel is about the importance of memories in forming the people we become. The Gods have tried to suppress memories but Twig sets out to discover his again. How important are memories in our self-identity?

**DISCUSSION POINT:** The novel also seems to pose an alternative view, for Kruuk warns Twig not to dwell too long at each Crossing for: 'The more time you dwell in your memories the less you are *here*, in *this* moment. You would last for a time in the shadows of your memories, but then,' Kruuk shook his head softly, 'then you simply *unbecome*. Your memories no longer exist and it's like you never, ever were.' (p 61) This quote relates to the magical world of the Afterlife but might it not equally sound a warning to those who live too much in the past?

**ACTIVITY:** Flea gives Twig a memory bracelet (pp 185–6) to remind him of all the things they've shared together. Invite students to create their own memory bracelets containing things which represent important memories to them.

#### FAMILY

**KEY QUOTE:** 'Everyone needs family, right?' (p 96)

**DISCUSSION POINT:** Not only is Twig looking for his lost father (Da) but all the Boneyard kids are orphans as well. This theme of lost children is a common trope in children's

literature and in fantasies. Why is being orphaned such a powerful theme in this and other novels?

*DISCUSSION POINT:* 'People come to her with their problems. She looks after people. Gives money to the church and the schools. That care home didn't exist before she came along. She makes sure the streets are clean and that no sniffers hassle the little kiddies on their way to school and no thieves rob their parents. There's no gang violence in this city any more. Do you know how many lives she's saved by cleaning up the streets and getting rid of those gangs? No one else cared. This city is her family. Don't you ever forget that.' And the look he gives starts me up shaking again because maybe, that Hoblin lady, maybe she does own me now after all.' (p 196) This passage is reminiscent of the mafia (known as 'the family'), or of any corrupt form of power. What parallels can you draw between the Hoblin's actions and those of any contemporary council or government?

*DISCUSSION POINT:* The word 'family' has sinister connotations when the Hoblin uses it (This city is her family'), but when the Boneyard kids use it the meaning is pure: 'Blood Family for ever.' (p 166) How can 'family' have such opposite meanings?

*DISCUSSION POINT:* 'I'm afraid I haven't seen him for quite some time now. Last I heard he was leaving the city. He said it didn't suit him. After you ran away from him, I suppose he figured there wasn't much for him here.' (pp 194–5) The Hoblin knows how much this statement will wound Twig, for his love for his father has been the core of his existence. Later she tells him that Da had caused his wife's death, and that: 'It is no surprise that he has done the same to you. Run away and left you when you needed him the most. It's what he does. He is selfish. It is shame that has stopped him coming back for you.' (pp 271–2) She also reveals that she is his grandmother. Why does the Hoblin wish to hurt Twig? Is she really family or has she made this up?

## POWER

**KEY QUOTE:** 'Oh ho! You think size has anythin' to do with anythin'? The smallest bug can take down the biggest beast if they knows how. But those in power protect themselves. And anywhatsits, the Gods may be pesky little blighters, but they have the Officials on their side, don't they? And those Officials are not to be messed with. They is just plain mean, they is. They enjoy the hunt and the power. How else could they take on such a job? (pp 155–6)

*DISCUSSION POINT:* Border protection is one manifestation of power, with which this novel is concerned. 'Da told me that if Border Protection ever comes looking, I'm to run and hide. Da said I'm to leave a message with Charlie on the corner newspaper stand so he can get the message to Da.' (p 80) Discuss this scene in comparison to recent events in Australia's policies towards asylum seekers and refugees on temporary visas.

*DISCUSSION POINT:* 'StreetKings are worse than any Hoblin. Don't you remember when the Olympics came to the city? Didn't you see how every street sleeper and sniffer and beggar suddenly disappeared and the city looked all nice and clean? What do you reckon happened to all them people? They weren't given a holiday. Not even bussed out. Not one of those people came back to the city. Why do you reckon that

was, hey? Damn, Twiggy. We're the killables.' (p 183) This is a thinly veiled reference to what actually happens when huge events like the Olympics take place. Or when the streets of central New York were suddenly free from street people, drug addicts and beggars back in the early 1990s under Mayor Rudy Giuliani. Read Zana Fraillon's note at the end of the novel and discuss what she says about such treatment of the poor.

**DISCUSSION POINT:** Offering charity can sometimes be a hypocritical act used to mask underlying networks of power. 'Virtue signalling' is all too easy, and in this novel the Hoblin is its arch representative. Twig is suspicious of the busload of ladies who arrive to inspect a school that is simply a sham: 'And her voice is so much like the ladies that come down with the vicar in their bus to the Boneyard and get to work putting up a schoolroom and take photos of all of us smiling kids and read to us and bring us teddy bears and dolls because what do they think – there aren't enough real babies around here that need looking after that we need pretend ones now too? And as soon as they get back on the bus, that school doesn't become a school for us any more because what's a school with no books and pens and paper and no teachers to teach?' (p 190). Compare this scene to the fly-in fly-out visits of government representatives to disaster zones or detention centres; or of international health officials to communities suffering health crises.

## DEATH, DYING AND THE AFTERLIFE

**KEY QUOTE:** 'Important? Don't be rid-i-cul-ous. Dyin' is like an elevator trip. Takin' you from the mortal world to the Afterlife. You don't remember elevator trips, do you? Not even the music. Well, except for that slowed-down popcorn song they sometimes play. That's quite catchy that is. Listen, Presh, the only deaths people remember are the really long, slow, painful ones. I knew a fella once — Well, maybe that's a tale for later.' (p 110).

**DISCUSSION POINT:** Twig's journey is as a dead person entering the Afterlife. In real life he and his friends live in a cemetery or Boneyard. What attitude towards death does this novel present?

**DISCUSSION POINT:** There are quite a lot of jokes about dying in this novel. eg 'What's wrong, Twiggy? You aren't scared of the dead, are you? The dead are no bother . . . mostly. I think they quite like having us stay. I mean, most of the graves were already cracked and broken and growing vines even, so I'm pretty sure the dead would appreciate what we've done with the place. Without us there, it'd be dead boring just lying there all day.' (pp 95–6) Is death a fit subject for humour?

## COMING OF AGE AND RITE OF PASSAGE

**KEY QUOTE:** 'How stupid all his stories are. 'I'm not a *little one* any more. I'm too old for your stupid stories. Why can't you see that?' (p 33).

**DISCUSSION POINT:** 'You'll find *who* you're looking for, when you find yourself,' Flea says softly, looking into the ball, at the *It Is Certain* message bobbing into view. 'It's just a matter of listening to the whisper of your soul.' (p 76) How does Twig find himself? What is the key turning point in his journey?

**DISCUSSION POINT:** The hardest moment in this narrative is when Twig has to leave his father on the shore – to let him go. Must children, in order to grow up, inevitably leave their parents, as he does?

**DISCUSSION POINT:** 'So, are you a boy?' Flea shrugs. 'Sometimes. And sometimes I'm a girl. And sometimes I'm both at the same time or neither. Mostly I'm just somewhere in between.' (p 73) While in traditional western cultures gender has been viewed as a binary, increasingly gender is recognised as a spectrum. Is this a representation you have seen in books or other popular culture before? Why do you think the author thought it important to include a gender diverse character? Flea uses they/them pronouns; many people state their pronouns on their social media profile, email signatures, and when introducing themselves. Why might it be important to state your pronouns?

## INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY AND COMMUNITY CONSEQUENCES

**KEY QUOTE:** 'Da told me once that every little action changes the world. We're all bound together like dominos lined up and ready to topple. Like if a butterfly lands on a flower instead of flying on by, that can set off a whole bunch of events that change everything. I wonder if you can change everything back again. I wonder if once everything is changed, it can ever be fixed.' (p 79).

**DISCUSSION POINT:** His 'connections' are important to Flea: 'It says,' and Flea's nose scrunches trying to twist the words into ones I know, 'we are all connected. To each other. To this world. To everything that ever was, and everything that ever will be. So whoever you are, and wherever you are, you are never alone. Because we are all made of stardust.' (p 86) Does maintaining connections with others entail responsibilities to them as well?

**DISCUSSION POINT:** What actions occur in this novel which have direct consequences for someone else?

## LOSS AND GRIEF

**KEY QUOTE:** 'It'll always ache a little. But every day the ache gets deeper so you don't feel it so much, you know?' (p 86).

**DISCUSSION POINT:** Twig will always grieve for his father but finds a reason to go on? What/who helps him to overcome his grief?

**DISCUSSION POINT:** What strategies can one employ to deal with grief?

## MAPS AND PERSONAL/COMMUNITY HISTORY

**KEY QUOTE:** 'With a map anything is possible. Maps are like a promise, you know?' Flea smooths out a curling corner. 'These are all the places we can go, Twiggy.' Flea smiles. 'One day, hey?' Their fingers run across words burning bright on one of the maps. 'To journey is to follow the promise of footprints down paths not yet taken. That's what we'll do. One day. We'll see all there is to see and smell all there is to smell, and follow the promise of our footprints down every path in the world and—' (p 99).

**DISCUSSION POINT:** 'Flea nods. 'Yeah, Silas. That's right. Like the maps in my shack that tell all those stories. No one forgets those stories because they're on a map. We can put our stories on the map. Like, *The coppers took our money here*, and, *He who killed music lives here*, so everyone knows and can boo that man and throw eggs at his shop and never buy their shoes from him again. Then no matter what happens, hundreds of years from now, people will look at this wall and say, "This used to be a City of Beasts. They existed and were true." ' (p 133) Do maps tell stories? For example, compare a map of a country now, and of the same country in the past, and observe the differences which have been brought about by historical events including changes of government, environmental change, wars and conflicts etc.

**ACTIVITY:** Invite students to draw a map of their own personal history, showing where they live, where they used to live, where other members of their family live, and the places they frequent such as school, park, skate park, and library. Encourage them to mark on the map significant events in their history such as, for example, the place where I fell off my bike, the school I used to go to, etc.

## TRUTH, MORALS, ETHICS AND VALUES

**KEY QUOTE:** 'The truth will be heard, eventually. All it takes is a single voice. A single voice can change the world. He had looked right at me when he said that, like he needed me to do something. To choose to do something. But I didn't do a thing. And suddenly, I understand that there is always something you can do. It's just a matter of choosing whether or not to do it. Not doing is just as big a choice as doing. Flea chose. Flea is doing something.' (pp 185–6).

**DISCUSSION POINT:** Flea and the gang have established their own code of ethics: 'We've rules for liberating though. We only ever go for them that can afford it, and never anyone with kids or who's old or looks like they're having a rough time.' (p 125) Are they justified in their actions?

**DISCUSSION POINT:** Twig learns to value 'making a choice' – one cannot be a member of a community without 'acting' when you feel something is right, even if in acting you endanger yourself.

**DISCUSSION POINT:** Javier the double agent or spy (p 246), who was only after the truth, is accidentally betrayed by Twig. How often is someone who is acting with the best of intentions unwittingly responsible for someone else's endangerment?

## GUILT AND BETRAYAL

**KEY QUOTE:** 'I should have listened to Preacher,' Flea says, their voice thin and breaking. 'She said you'd turn. She said everyone turns once they're owned. She said you wouldn't be able to help it. That it wasn't your fault. I said nothing in the whole of this world could ever turn you. Not even the magic of a Hoblin.' Flea's voice shakes and trembles and all the Gods and angels and stars and wishes and every good thing in the whole world shake and tremble with them. 'Blood Family for ever, remember? Or did you never really mean it? Did you ever really mean any of it?' Flea turns from me.' (p 317).

*DISCUSSION POINT:* Twig is horrified by what he's done... 'I walk slowly, my legs all heavy and shaking. I just want to be curled up in Flea's shack, looking at those maps and imagining I'm someone else and somewhere else and I wish that I could just stop being. I wish that I could unbecome.' (pp 261–2) How should one deal with guilt?  
*DISCUSSION POINT:* Does Twig really deserve to feel guilty?

## **ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

Study the writing style employed in this narrative, and examine the following sub-topics:

### **GENRE**

*DISCUSSION POINT:* This novel creates a **fantasy world** which explores realistic and contemporary issues (p 97). The two worlds of the Afterlife and Twig's 'real' life on earth overlap as they do in all fantasies. For example, Kruk appears in both the Afterlife and in the cemetery (Boneyard); Flea's home there is decorated with maps of fairy tale reminiscent of *The Lost Soul Atlas* (pp 98–9). The elements of fantasy have been outlined in Mobley, Jane, 'Toward a definition of fantasy fiction' in Bator, Robert *Signposts to criticism of children's Literature*, Chicago, ALA, 1983, pp 249–260) as follows:

**a) Poetic Quality:** or 'incantatory power of the words'.

**EXAMPLE:** 'There were seas of Forgotten Words. Archipelagos of Emotion where despair and hope swirled together across the land. There were Dream Maps and Cloud Maps and Star Maps and Bestiary Maps and Time Maps and Mood Maps and a Map of Imagination and a Map of Lost Wonders.' (p 109).

**b) Creation of Secondary Magical Worlds:** the belief in these worlds relies on the absolute integrity and credibility of their creation.

**EXAMPLE:** The secondary world in this novel is explained by Kruk: 'Ah no, Presh. These are not the Keepers from your atlas. You've the Lost Soul Atlas of the Outer Wilderlands. This lot here have the Lost Soul Atlases to the rest of the Afterlife. The Sunken Dessert, the Older Isles, there are eight territories in all – you see, there have only ever been eight Lost Soul Atlases. Since the beginnin' of time. At first, each atlas was kept with the Keeper in that territory who would guide those who needed to get messages through the Crossin's to their loved ones. And then, when the Gods banished memories and the Crossin's were forgotten and started to close, the Gatherer collected the atlases so their knowin's wouldn't be lost for ever. She used the Keepers to open the Crossin's instead.' (pp 296–7).

**c) Multidimensionality:** Worlds, time and space overlap in fantasy.

**EXAMPLE:** 'And then it started. Sand slunk from beneath Twig's feet, sliding out from under him, pushing him down the hill in a golden wave of moving, rushing sand. Twig tried to keep his feet, struggled against the tide of sand, but it was too strong – and then the sand began to rise up around them. Single grains zipping into the sky, like rain falling backwards, higher and higher, until they found themselves at the bottom of the valley, right on the very edge of a standing stone circle, the ground covered in brilliant blue-green moss, and not a speck of sand in sight.' (p 257).

**d) Essential Extravagance:** even 'ordinary' heroes have a wonderfulness.

**EXAMPLE:** 'He will be alive inside every tree and rock and trembling cloud. He will burn with whispers, rustling the air. His blood will twist through veins and roots, and dance in the smoke that falls from the sky. His heart will pound in a thousand chests, thrum in a thousand drums, beat in a thousand waves upon a thousand shores. His eyes will burn with the brightnesses of a hundred suns. His skin will crawl across long-forgotten bones and his breath will fill the emptiest, oldest, most ancient lungs. He will see everything that's ever been, and everything that's still to come, dancing and spinning and humming, paper-thin on the wind. He will see the seas swelling and the rivers rising. He will see the moon crumbling and the stars falling from the sky. He will see the footprints left behind and the footsteps not yet taken. He will be the beginning of time, and the end.

In that one moment, he will understand everything.

And after that, nothing will ever be the same again.' (p 334).

**e) Spirit of Carnival:** play, ritual and dance.

**EXAMPLE:** 'I did tell you. I go to Heaven. I follow the gargoyles. You have to wait for a Gargoyle Moon of course. But if you wait and watch you'll see them crack free from their rock skin, called out by the moon. They dance and spin and hunt in the moonlight, and if you're not careful you'll get caught up in their dance and you might just end up a gargoyle yourself. But . . .' and Da leans in close, his hands weaving the air in front of him, 'if you're careful, if you're mouse-quiet and fox-clever, you can follow them. They know all the ins and outs between the worlds . . .' (p 21).

**f) Mythic Dimension:** traditional and archetypal motifs figure strongly in fantasy.

**EXAMPLE:** 'The city itself was full of old crumbling buildings and signposts leading to places like *Atlantis*; *City Library*; *Babylonian Hanging Gardens*; *Pristine Untouched Wilderness*; *Dragon Nesting Site*; *The Swans Head Pub*; *Unicorn Sanctuary*; *Great Auk Isle*; and *Phoenix Rebirthing Facility*. This last one seemed to be nothing but the remnants of a burnt-out building.' (pp 212–3).

Invite students to identify in *The Lost Soul Atlas* these elements of fantasy, using further quotes as examples.

## NARRATIVE PERSON, NARRATIVE PERSPECTIVE AND TENSE

**DISCUSSION POINT:** Twig's point of view is presented in first person present in his memories and in third person past subjective when he is in the Afterlife. How do these two perspectives emphasise the theme being explored, regarding memory being so potent?

## SYMBOLISM

**DISCUSSION POINT:** 'They're messengers of the Gods, don't you know? If you listen right, they reveal omens and foretell the future.' (p 77) The raven (Kruk) is a symbol of loss, ill omen or death, prophecy and insight, and yet here he is also a guardian. What other symbolism did you notice in this novel?

## LITERARY DEVICES

**DISCUSSION POINT:** Riddles and curious clues are embedded in the language of the atlas eg 'One of the notes written here says *Follow the silver trail to reach the top. Ignore the arrows to get to the stop.*' (p 114) or the 'erase all footsteps...' (p 117) which they resolve (p 119). Have fun with students inventing riddles to locate/identify something in your school or classroom.

**ACTIVITY:** Inventive curses are another aspect of the language used in this novel, eg Flea says to Twig: 'But if the coppers kill me for this, may a million swarming bees make their hive in your brain.' (p 173) 'You're the scum of snail rot, you've got nothing! You can't take me. May a thousand spiders lay eggs in your eyes!' (p 176) Invite students to come up with inventively worded curses.

**DISCUSSION POINT:** Twig is presented with a 'conundrum' or confusing riddle: 'If you lie, the Furred will devour you. If you tell the truth, the Feathered will consume you. What say you?' (pp 258–9). Have fun inventing conundrums with your students.  
**Discussion Point:** Word play is another entertaining aspect of this novel, for example, Flea says 'walk the dead' to which Twig replies: 'And it's wake the dead, not walk the dead,' (p 81). 'Not a soul's song. A sole's song.' (p 118); Chapter 38 is headed 'The Library of Wonderers and Wanderers' (p 216). What other examples of word play did you discover in this novel?

**ACTIVITY:** Find examples of the use of literary devices in this novel, for example, in this passage: 'And all the strut thuds hard from my bones and the sun outside turns black and the world shivers and the grass becomes ice and snaps under my feet and the roads buckle and bend and every voice in the whole world screams.' (p 289) Use the table below to identify examples.

<b>Simile</b>	
<b>Metaphors</b>	All the placenames on the map are intriguingly metaphorical, eg. ' <i>Map of the Puddle of Tranquility, Map of Sands of Time, Map of Gargoyl Rock, Map of the Hill of Depression.</i> ' (p 111).
<b>Personification</b>	'and the trees and bushes start laughing with us and the buildings are all holding their big building bellies and laughing so much the whole world shakes and the leaves shake down harder and faster on top of us and we go deeper deeper deeper under the green.' (pp 143–4).
<b>Satire</b>	Chapters 38–9 contain hilarious satirical passages about librarians.
<b>Other</b>	

## HUMOUR

**ACTIVITY:** The nonsense conversation (pp 153–4) spoken by the officials is reminiscent of Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865). **Discussion Point:** Identify other passages elsewhere in the novel which contain nonsense conversations like this one.

**ACTIVITY:** Identify techniques by which humour is provoked. Add quotes to the following table:

<b>Sarcasm</b>	
<b>Irony</b>	
<b>Exaggeration</b>	
<b>Black Humour</b>	'Without us there, it'd be dead boring just lying there all day.' (pp 95–6)
<b>Other</b>	

## STRUCTURE

The structure of the story can be analysed in terms of key narrative features used to engage the reader's attention and to shape the work:

a) *Strong beginnings and endings to chapters* are one way of structuring a narrative, for example:

Beginning: 'And so, it was. This was it. The end.' (Ch 1, p 3).

Ending: 'Not until it was too late.' (Ch 13, p 71).

**DISCUSSION POINT:** Which other opening or closing sentence was particularly gripping, in your opinion?

b) *Suspense* is the key to any narrative's structure. **Discussion Point:** The disappearance of Twig's Da is one element of suspense in this novel. What other incidents were particularly suspenseful, in your student's opinions?

c) *Using a 'framing story or idea'* makes a narrative more cohesive. Twig's arrival in the Afterlife is the framing story but the back story is what happened on earth, much of which he can't remember. His Crossings during his journey in the Afterlife help him to remember. **Discussion Point:** How does Twig's journey in the Afterlife relate to his real life?

## SETTING

**DISCUSSION POINT:** Description in setting can be evoked via a complex range of literary devices. For example, the map at the beginning of the novel gives the reader an idea of the Afterlife world. The text describing Twig's journey through that terrain informs that interpretation. In Twig's real' world several places are mentioned such as Factory Estates; The Tower; Riverside; the Boneyard (p 97). **Activity:** Invite students to draw a map of the world in which Twig lived, from the hints given in the novel.

## CHARACTERS

**Major Characters:** Twig Galliot; his 'Da' Galliot; Krruk; the Boneyard kids: Flea, Preacher, Squizzy, Silas; and the Hoblin.

**Minor Characters:** Old Man Tipper; Franky Collins and the Collins family; Charlie; the Gatherer; Big Man and Scarface, the Hoblin's henchmen; Jack the Doorman; Mamma Out'é.

**ACTIVITY:** Draw up a character chart and find key quotes which give a clear picture of any of these characters, and isolate events that demonstrate their natures. Then write a brief character study of the person using the quotes and events to illustrate the points made in your summary.

**QUESTION:** Which character was most intriguing and why? Which character would you like to have heard more about?

## WRITING TASKS

**ACTIVITY:** Write a letter as if written by Twig to his Da after he disappears.

**ACTIVITY:** Write a diary entry by Flea describing his first meeting with Twig.

**ACTIVITY:** Write an Acrostic Poem about him using the letters in Twig Galliot.

## VISUAL LITERACY

**ACTIVITY:** Create a graphic novel interpretation of an incident in the novel. [See **Bibliography.**]

**ACTIVITY:** Design a new cover for this book.

**ACTIVITY:** Create a book trailer for this novel. [See **Bibliography.**]

## FURTHER QUOTES FOR DISCUSSION

1. 'Oh now. Don't be daft. That life is done and dusted. No one remembers a thing here. By order of the decreewhatsit. Complete and blissful unknowin' – that's what's waitin' for you once you pass through them Golden Gates. You won't even know you've anythin' to remember in a bit. Isn't that great? Never have to worry about a thing.'

Twig didn't think that sounded great at all. It sounded . . . devastating. The loss tugged at his chest. Knowing that he had once felt something that he would never feel again. All those things that made him who he was . . .

He let out a small sigh, full of longing and sadness and want.' (p 12).

2. 'I remember. I remember Da telling me that fear is the hardest fight, but the most important win, because people will always try to scare you out of doing. 'To know yourself you must be strong,' he said, then threw me in the river to get out on my own.' (p 31)

3. 'To know yourself you must be strong. Fight the forgetting, right the wrong.' (p 50).

4. 'Do you know why you ache for the lost memories? Because memories are never just your own. They are the stories and the knowings of everyone who has come before. It is what you feel without thinking. All those song lines, story lines that run wild and deep between us all – the power of those memories is stronger than any God could ever be.' (p 51).

5. '**Impossible is just what they say when they don't want you to try.**' (p 62).

6. 'I wished it could last for ever, that feeling. I should know by now that wishes are for nothing. I should know by now, that wishing for something just calls attention to it. Makes it an easier target to destroy. I should know by now, that if I really cared for Flea, I should never have wished at all.' (p 94)

7. 'To journey is to follow the promise of footprints down paths not yet taken.' (p 99).

8. 'Flea glares at Squizzy. "It's not only for Twig. It's for all of us. To tell everyone that we are here too. That this is *our* city. City of Beasts!"' (p 132).

9. 'She's no Hoblin. She's a StreetKing is all. Keeping her city in order so the coppers don't have to, and the tourists keep coming and the city keeps looking good in all them photos and TV shows. And in return, the coppers turn their eyes blind and their ears deaf to everything the StreetKing does, and she's left free to run her business just

the way she wants. It works for everyone who's anyone and not for a single person who's not. That's the way of the world. And now she owns you, don't she? She did you some big favour there and now you owe the woman.' (p 182).

**10.** 'That lady burned everything. She brought her crooked police to come and crush our homes. Do you know how many times we have been moved on and moved out so people do not have to look at us? So people can forget we exist? It is so easy for people to forget. Finally, we found somewhere to call home, because even the police know a churchyard is a sacred place. But they do not care for anything. Not even the Gods themselves could rise up against those bulldozers and that fire and those sticks.' (p 264).

## FURTHER ACTIVITIES

- 1. Compare this novel to other young adult fantasy series.** [See **Bibliography.**]
- 2. Design a poster** to advertise this novel.
- 3. Write a review** of this novel.
- 4. Debate any of the topics** covered in these notes, or suggested by the novel.
- 5. Locate and study fairy tales** referred to in this novel.

## CONCLUSION

*The Lost Soul Atlas* is a thoroughly original fantasy embedded in urgent contemporary concerns. Why does truth matter? How do we resist the infringements of power on personal liberty? Why do so many live in poverty when so many are rich? Are cities which appear to be so well-managed, simply more tightly controlled and riddled with corruption? What is border protection really about? Protection or control? How are our lives going to look to us when we look back from the future? Twig is an 'Everyman' in whom every reader can identify themselves. And this novel is a chronicle of the decisions which we each must make in order to live a meaningful life.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Zana Fraillon** was born in Melbourne, but spent her early childhood in San Francisco. Her 2016 novel *The Bone Sparrow* won the ABIA Book of the Year for Older Children, the Readings Young Adult Book Prize and the Amnesty CILIP Honour. It was also shortlisted for the Prime Minister's Literary Awards, the Queensland Literary Awards, the Guardian Children's Fiction Prize, the Gold Inky and the CILIP Carnegie Medal. *The Ones That Disappeared* (2017) and her picture book *Wisp* (2018) illustrated by Graham Baker-Smith were published subsequently.

She spent a year in China teaching English and now lives in Melbourne with her three children, husband and two dogs. When Zana isn't reading or writing, she likes to explore the museums and hidden passageways scattered across Melbourne. They provide the same excitement as that moment before opening a new book – preparing to step into the unknown where a whole world of possibilities awaits.

Further information is available here:  
<<https://www.zanafrailon.com/>>

See also:

'Author QandA: Zana Fraillon' *Better Reading* July 11 2016

<<http://www.betterreading.com.au/kids-ya/author-qa-zana-fraillon/>>

'Zana Fraillon on writing about refugee children: 'Their resilience keeps hope alive'  
*The Guardian* 16 November 2016

<<https://www.theguardian.com/books/booksblog/2016/nov/15/zana-fraillon-writing-about-refugee-children-the-bone-sparrow-guardian-childrens-fiction-award>>

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## **Fiction:**

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Kostakakis, Will *Monuments* (Series) Hachette.  
Lemony Snicket *A Series of Unfortunate Events* (Series) Scholastic.  
Nix, Garth *The Keys to the Kingdom* (Series) Allen and Unwin  
Pullman, Phillip *His Dark Materials* (Series) Penguin Books Australia.  
Townsend, Jessica *Nevermoor* (Series) Hachette.  
Westerfeld, Scott *Leviathan* (Series) Viking.  
Williams, Sean *Her Perilous Mansion* Allen and Unwin, 2020.

## **Other Non-Fiction and Website Teaching Resources:**

'Book Trailers' *Insideadog*  
<<http://www.insideadog.com.au/teachers/book-trailers>>  
'Book Trailers for Readers' by Michelle Harclerode <<http://www.booktrailersforreaders>>  
'Book Trailers – Resources: Ipswich District Teacher Librarian Network'  
<<http://idtl.net.au/book-trailers.php>>  
Chinn, Mike, *Writing and Illustrating the Graphic Novel: Everything You Need to Know to Create Great Graphic Works*, London, New Burlington Books, 2004, 2006.

# ABOUT THE AUTHOR OF THE NOTES

**Dr Robyn Sheahan-Bright** operates *justified text* writing and publishing consultancy services, and is widely published on children's literature, publishing history and Australian fiction. Her publications include *Paper Empires: A History of the Book in Australia 1946–2005* (co-edited with Craig Munro) (UQP, 2006). In 2011 she was recipient of the CBCA (Qld) Dame Annabelle Rankin Award, in 2012, of the CBCA Nan Chauncy Award for Outstanding Services to Children's Literature, and in 2014, the QWC's Johnno Award.