

# Persuasion

By Martina Boone

## Synopsis

*Romeo and Juliet* meets *The Raven Boys* in the spellbinding second novel in the Heirs of Watson Island trilogy that “skillfully blends rich magic and folklore with adventure, sweeping romance, and hidden treasure.” (*Publishers Weekly*, on *Compulsion*).

Grieving the death of her godfather and haunted by her cousin Cassie’s betrayal, Barrie returns from a trip to San Francisco to find the Watson plantation under siege. Ghost-hunters hope to glimpse the ancient spirit who sets the river on fire each night, and reporters chase rumors of a stolen shipment of Civil War gold that may be hidden at Colesworth Place. The chaos turns dangerous as Cassie hires a team of archeologists to excavate beneath the mansion ruins, because more is buried there than treasure.

A stranger filled with magic arrives at Watson’s Landing claiming that the key to the Watson and Beaufort gifts—and the Colesworth curse—also lies beneath the mansion. With a mix of threats and promises, the man convinces Barrie and Cassie to cast a spell there at midnight. But what he conjures may have deadly consequences.

While Barrie struggles to make sense of the escalating peril and her growing and forbidden feelings for Eight Beaufort, it’s impossible to know whom to trust and what to fight for—Eight or herself. Millions of dollars and the fate of the founding families is at stake. Now Barrie must choose between what she feels deep in her heart and what will keep Watson’s Landing safe in this stunning addition to a series filled with “decadent settings, mysterious magic, and family histories rife with debauchery” (*Kirkus Reviews*, on *Compulsion*).

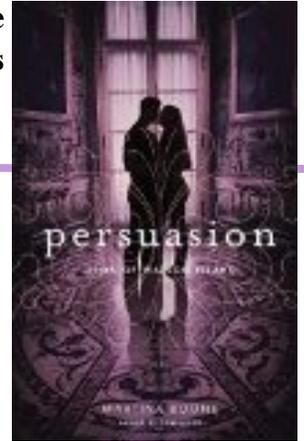
## Prereading Questions

(CCRA.RL.2, 4, CCRA.RI.1)

- ◆ Persuasion means to influence others to do or believe something. What do you think the title, *Persuasion*, might mean? What are some ways that people persuade others? What is the line between asking someone to do something voluntarily and making them do something they’d rather not do? Which of these methods have you used to persuade or have been persuaded by?
- ◆ *Persuasion* is the second book in a series that started with *Compulsion*. Write a brief summary of *Compulsion* including the main events, characters, and ending. What questions do you still have after reading *Compulsion* that you hope will be answered when reading *Persuasion*?
- ◆ How much does what we know about history or current events depend on how various people presented facts? What forms of persuasion do you see on a day-to-day basis that change how you think or feel about something that’s going on in the world?
- ◆ Would knowing that your future opportunities are limited to a particular place or occupation make you less motivated or make you more determined to break away? Why?
- ◆ How do gender roles play into decisions about a couple’s future? Should one person ever give up their personal dreams to be with someone? Why or why not?
- ◆ Do difficult circumstances determine a person’s character or do they reveal it? Give an example that supports your argument.
- ◆ How does what people are fighting for, whether in a family, a social movement, or a war, become more complex once they begin to fight? How does this make it more difficult to stop hostilities?

## A LEARNING GUIDE FOR

Aligned with the  
Common Core Standards



## Praise for *Compulsion*

- Kansas State Reading Circle Selection
- SIBA Okra Pick
- SIBA Book Award Nominee
- Goodreads Best Book of the Month

“Skillfully blends rich magic and folklore with adventure, sweeping romance, and hidden treasure . . . An impressive start to the Heirs of Watson Island series.”

—*Publishers Weekly*

“A little bit *Gone with the Wind*, a little bit *Romeo and Juliet* . . .”

—*School Library Journal*

“Boone’s Southern Gothic certainly delivers a compelling mystery about feuding families and buried secrets, not to mention a steamy romance.”

—*Booklist*

“Darkly romantic and steeped in Southern Gothic charm, you’ll be compelled to get lost in the Heirs of Watson Island series.”

—#1 *New York Times* bestselling author

Jennifer L. Armentrout

“A fresh twist on the Southern Gothic—haunting, atmospheric, and absorbing.”

—Claudia Gray, *NYT* bestselling author of

*A Thousand Pieces of You* and the

Evernight and Spellcaster series

“*Compulsion* is a stunningly magical debut with a delicious slow burn to be savored. I want to live in this story world!”

—Wendy Higgins, *USA Today* and *NYT*

bestselling author of the Sweet Evil Trilogy

“Beautifully written, with vivid characters, a generations-old feud, and romance that leaps off the page, this Southern ghost story left me lingering over every word, and yet wanting to race to the compelling finish. Martina Boone’s *Compulsion* is not to be missed.”

—Megan Shepherd, author of

*The Madman’s Daughter*



## General Reading & Discussion Questions

(CRA.RL.1-3, 5-6, 9; CCRA.SL.1, 3, 4, CCRA.RH.2)

- ◆ The Heirs of Watson Island series fictionalizes several actual events and weaves together mysteries in the present, the Civil War period, and the turn of the eighteenth century. Analyze why the author chose to bring together the different time periods in this way. How does the use of the three-hundred year history of the Watson, Beaufort, and Colesworth plantations change your view of the events in the modern storyline?
- ◆ The events in *Persuasion* reveal that the original story Cassie Colesworth told about the Fire Carrier was even less accurate than Barrie Watson previously suspected. Discuss how our perception of Colonial history and early European interaction with both American Indians and African Americans has changed over time. How do our evolving opinions of society and justice make people more or less likely to suppress, reveal, or reinterpret stories and events from the past? In what ways do people change facts or the presentation of facts to achieve the conclusions that flatter them or go along with their pre-existing ideas? Give an example.
- ◆ As Barrie begins to understand in *Persuasion*, African and Native American people were exploited and abused by colonists in many different ways. Slavery and the exploitation of both African Americans and Native Americans is a terrible and undeniable part of the history of the United States. Do you believe that it is important for current and future generations to learn about this history, even if it makes people uncomfortable? Why or why not? How might this influence our understanding of current events and help us to shape the future? Discuss whether we should alter historical situations, books, or cultural context to reflect modern sensibilities.
- ◆ Like most people today, Eight and Barrie are unaware that at the turn of the eighteenth century, when Thomas Watson, Robert Beaufort, and John Colesworth were settling the fictional island in *Persuasion*, estimates now suggest that as many as 30 to 50 percent of slaves in the Carolinas were American Indians, and that most of these were women and children. Eight discovers this fact as he is seeking a connection between Obadiah and the Cherokee legend of the Raven Mocker. Discuss how knowing this one fact leads to him finding a previously undiscovered problem with Cassie's story. Have you ever encountered situations where finding more information has allowed you to reexamine what you always took for granted?
- ◆ From the moment the first Europeans landed on the east coast of what is now the United States, American Indians were captured and enslaved. Spanish explorers began exporting Native American captives from South Carolina early in the sixteenth century, and when the first African slaves arrived in the 17th century, the terrible foundations of the slave system in the Colonies were already established. European slavers sold American Indians all over the American colonies and exported them to the Caribbean and other countries. For many reasons, including threats to their own safety, the lure of money, and the influence of European slavers, a number of African and Native American tribes owned or captured and sold slaves from other tribes, but they were in turn often captured and sold into slavery themselves. As Eight learns in *Persuasion*, this was the case when the Savannah Indians sold a group of Cherokee captives, who were subsequently sent to the West Indies. Discuss the role that wars and rivalries between ethnic groups or cultures played in slavery and the dehumanization of other groups and individuals. What role does that dynamic still play in the modern world? By some estimates, there are up to thirty million people enslaved in the world today. Where does slavery still exist, and what is being done about it?
- ◆ When American Indians, Europeans, and enslaved Africans encountered each other, they passed along diseases that were unfamiliar to the other groups. As they struggled to keep diseases from claiming lives, American Indians, enslaved Africans, and Europeans shared many medical treatments with each other for mutual survival. The bark of the yellow poplar tree, for example, was an American Indian treatment for malaria that supplemented the lack of available quinine, the medicine derived from the bark of the South American cinchona tree that Europeans had previously been shown by the indigenous people of Peru. That sharing of medical knowledge between cultures gave rise to the practice of "root medicine" or "root" among enslaved people. The Gullah Geechee, descendants of enslaved persons from Western and West-Central Africa, developed a rich and unique African-influenced culture, including language, art, spirituality, and beliefs systems. Root medicine is still practiced by some Gullah Geechee today. Discuss the role that disease had in shaping the history of the colonies and in preserving the African-influenced Gullah Geechee culture. Why did folk medicine or "root" survive so long among the descendants of formerly enslaved Africans? How much did income and distrust play into this?
- ◆ Indigenous people of the Americas, the Caribbean, and Africa practiced traditional healing methods based on an extensive knowledge of plants. Slavers brought enslaved African priestesses and priests, medicine women and men, sorcerers, conjurers, and herbologists to the colonies, and Native American people had medicine people and spiritual mentors who had also spent years studying botany, medicine, psychology, and magic. Discuss the role that spiritual leaders and medicine people, male and female, African American and American Indian, had on plantations in treating disease, wounds, and other ailments as well as in keeping up morale. How did the belief systems of these individual cultures survive and how might they have become incorporated into daily life? Discuss the role that the medicinal and local botanical knowledge of indigenous people played and continues to play in the development of pharmaceuticals and modern medicine. What methods did plantation owners, slavers, and colonists use, whether consciously or unconsciously, to discredit these people and justify their own treatment of them?



## Historical Discussion Questions Continued

(CCRA.RL.1, CCRA.W.2, 7-9)

- ◆ Obadiah is never defined as belonging to any one form of magic in *Persuasion* but is portrayed with a number of possible influences. Likewise, hoodoo, or root work, still practiced in some Gullah Geechee communities where the population is descended from slaves, involves a form of folk spirituality evolved from the coming together of medicinal, mystical, and nature-centric belief systems from West African, Native American, and European influences. Unlike voodoo, hoodoo is not a religion, but has its origins in the necessity of keeping body and spirit alive both during and after slavery. Analyze the ways in which different cultures come together in the character of Obadiah, and consider why the author might have created this character in this way rather than using a single culture. Where do you think he is from? Where might he have learned his magic? What support does the author offer for your opinion?
- ◆ Is Obadiah good? Evil? A mixture of both? How might the interpretation of him and of good and evil in general vary from reader to reader?
- ◆ Obadiah tells Barrie that names have power. The idea that a true name is tied to its reality, its true nature, is ancient and the core of various religious, mystical, and magical belief systems in which knowing a true name conveys a certain amount of power over it. Discuss how knowing the name of a thing or a person, or knowing and understanding who or what it is, is powerful. What myths or religions forbid people to use a name or an image? Consider the use of nicknames in this context. Do people's nicknames protect them or illuminate who they really are? Do you use a nickname for yourself or others? Why or why not?
- ◆ Nicknames are important elements in the Heirs of Watson Island series. In *Compulsion*, we learned that Barrie's real name is Lombard, after the crooked street in San Francisco, because her mother wanted to remind herself and Barrie not to fall in love with crooked men. Naturally, Barrie isn't fond of the name. Eight Beaufort is the eighth Charles Beaufort in his family, and the family has resorted to using numbers as a form of shorthand. Barrie initially uses "baseball guy" as a nickname for Eight because of his baseball scholarship. In *Compulsion*, he says he will convert her to liking baseball, too, and the name sticks. We often have many reasons for calling someone a particular nickname. Do you think that Barrie might be using the name as a defense mechanism, to remind herself that Eight was out of her league and realm of experience? Why or why not? At the end of *Persuasion*, Eight accuses Barrie of calling him "baseball guy" because she doesn't think he is smart. Do you think that was her intention? Does her intention matter? How do names make us feel about ourselves?
- ◆ Bottle trees, like those found in Watson's Point, came to the American Colonies from the Congo with the earliest African slaves, but researchers suggest their origins go back many thousands of years. With the invention of glass, the sound that the wind makes moving over the lip of a bottle may have given rise to the belief that bottles could capture spirits and *djinn*, magical beings who could either be vanquished or forced to obey their captors. Bottles are still threaded on branches or poles in many areas of the South to capture evil or passing spirits. Discuss how new or misunderstood technology, medicine, or customs can make people suspicious and how such things can often be mischaracterized as witchcraft, sorcery, or magic. Can you think of or find any other examples of similar myths, folktales, or of superstitions? What role did nature, spirits, ancestors, and personified elementals, like *djinn*, play in many ancient belief systems?
- ◆ The idea or myth of being tied to the land or a reciprocal relationship with nature is another ancient concept. In the Heirs of Watson Island series, the author takes this to an extreme by giving the heir of each family gift a "binding" that causes physical pain if they try to leave the family plantation. Seven Beaufort, the father of Eight and Kate, deliberately kept the existence of the Beaufort binding secret from his son and daughter. Analyze the reasons he gave for keeping Eight from knowing. How might knowing about the binding have changed Eight's life and altered what he dreamed and hoped for himself? Seven says that dreams shape who we become. Discuss examples from your own life or from current events that support or disprove Seven's statement.
- ◆ Although privateering, state sponsored piracy, was abolished in Europe by the Declaration of Paris in 1856, the Confederate government hoped to entice private vessels around the world to help its cause in the Civil War. With no navy of its own to pit against the 42 vessels of the Federal government, Jefferson Davis hoped to issue "letters of marque" and obtain what would have been essentially a navy of volunteer vessels. The ship named in *Persuasion* as Alcee Colesworth's privateer vessel was the *Jefferson Davis*. This was a real ship who under her previous name, the *Echo*, was operated by her owners in New York City in the illegal slave trade until she was captured in 1858 with 270 African captives on board, providing one of the most public examples of the horrors of the slave trade. She was sold at auction by the U.S. Marshal. As a privateer vessel out of Charleston, the *Jefferson Davis* captured nine ships in two months before being run aground on the coast of Florida. Who were the slave traders and where did they come from? How did the Portuguese and Spanish figure into the North American slave trade? Why were the northern states so heavily invested in slave trading? What was a "letter of marque"?



## Historical Discussion Questions Continued

(CCRA.RL.1, CCRA.W.2, 7-9)

- ◆ Following the secession of seven states from the Union in December of 1860, South Carolina seized all Federal property in the state and laid claim to Fort Moultrie and Fort Sumpter. When Union troops under Major Anderson failed to vacate despite a Confederate siege, General P. G. Beauregard of the new Confederate States Army bombarded Fort Sumpter on April 12, 1861. By the time Federal troops finally evacuated, neither the Union nor the Confederacy was willing to back down. Abraham Lincoln called for 75,000 troops to quell what he saw as a rebellion, and as a result, four more states seceded, and the Confederate army received an additional influx of volunteers. The Union blockaded Charleston harbor and captured Port Royal near Beaufort, SC. This gave them control of the sea islands south of Charleston and the ability to move up the coast to support their blockade of the harbor and lay siege to the city itself, which the Confederates held until the end of the war. Many of the area's plantations, including Magnolia owned by the Draytons, were destroyed or burned. General Sherman's Special Field Order No. 15, which confiscated certain properties within 30 miles of the coast of South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida and redistributed them to freed blacks, also applied to the area from January 16, 1865 to the end of the war. Despite all this, some plantations, including Drayton Hall very close to Magnolia, escaped the devastation. Use your imagination to consider how the Watson and Beaufort gifts might have played into the survival of the Watson and Beaufort plantations during the war and how the Colesworth curse contributed to the ruin of Colesworth Place. Why might some plantations and homes have survived in real life while others were destroyed? What forms of persuasion might this have required?
- ◆ In pursuit of his "total war" policy, General Sherman laid waste to much of Georgia on his famous March to the Sea and arrived with his army in Savannah, GA, in December 1864. From there, he intended to break the backbone and morale of South Carolina, whose capital, Columbia, had a key railroad hub and access to a large agricultural corridor, manufacturing, and printing critical to the Confederate war effort. Sherman and his troops also blamed South Carolina for much of what they had suffered in the war because it had been the first state to secede from the Union. Three forks of Sherman's army cut a "broad swath" through the countryside with his commanders unable to fully control their troops. While occupied homes belonging to peaceable citizens were meant to be spared, unoccupied homes, crops, railroads, and anything potentially useful to the Confederacy were fair game. His troops sometimes forced the occupants of homes out, looted the homes, and then burned them. In Columbia, fires laid waste to the city. Discuss the role of slavery, states rights, tariffs and trade agreements, and other causes of the Civil War. Who or what do you think the politicians and soldiers on both sides were fighting for? Did this change from the beginning of the war to the end? What was the impact of Sherman's march through Georgia and the Carolinas on the war and reconstruction? How do those effects still linger today? Do particularly harsh campaigns or strategies in war solve short term problems at the expense of long-term reconciliation? Where do you see that happening in the news around the world?
- ◆ Berg came back to study archaeology after being a soldier in Afghanistan. After seeing the effects of battle, he was familiar with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), a pattern of symptoms that soldiers, civilians in war zones, sexual assault victims, and others sometimes develop after going through a traumatic event. The symptoms can be very different from person to person, but up to one third of sexual assault victims will develop PTSD shortly after, or sometimes years after, their assault. Discuss how Barrie's perception of Cassie changes as she becomes aware of Cassie's PTSD. Does this excuse what Cassie did in *Compulsion* when she locked Barrie and Eight in the tunnel? In your opinion, should Barrie trust Cassie any more once she suspects what happened to her cousin? Or does the fact that they know each other better and have some basis for mutual understanding give them a way to move forward? Do you know anyone who has experienced PTSD?
- ◆ Cassie was kidnapped by men trying to exert control over her father, and then sexually assaulted by a man for reasons that had nothing to do with sex. Daphne, the young slave related to Obadiah, was threatened with rape by the Union soldiers to get Ann Colesworth to reveal the location of the gold Alcee had hidden. Alcee hid Charlotte Colesworth, a renowned beauty, in his treasure room for safety when word came that the Union troops were coming to protect her from the risk of sexual assault. Barrie is concerned that Eight's compulsion to want what she wants has made him believe he is in love with her in a way that alters decisions he is making about his life. Obadiah uses different threats and forms of magical or psychological aggression to manipulate Barrie into doing what he needs, and Seven uses the withholding of information and funds to coerce or blackmail Eight into complying with his own vision for Eight's future. Discuss the title of the book in context with these storylines. How do these different forms of "persuasion" and violence, along with what she learns about slavery, impact Barrie's awareness of the importance of freedom of body and thought as well as her decisions through the story? Have you seen similar methods of "persuasion" or violation used in real life or on the television news? How can you personally and we as a society change the way we behave to be more respectful of the liberty of others?
- ◆ The lingering and often debilitating effects of violence, especially sexual violence, are major themes throughout the book. Today, someone in the United States is sexually assaulted every 107 seconds, most often by someone they know, and 44 percent of victims are under the age of 18. As in Cassie's case, 68 percent of rapes are never reported. Discuss why Cassie never told her parents or reported the assault to anyone. Why might someone keep silent? Would you keep silent if it happened to you? How do you think this affected Cassie's behavior and view of herself?

# Chapter-by-Chapter Discussion/Journal Questions

## Chapter 1 (CCRA.RL.1, 2)

Watson Island is the setting for this book. From the author's description in this chapter, draw a sketch of the island and the surrounding area.

What is different about Watson Island when Barrie returns from San Francisco and why?

Why does Barrie feel that the plantation belongs more to her than her Aunt Pru?

Who does Barrie see on the six-foot wall beside the gatepost as she enters and what happens to him?

This book is filled with elements of magic and fantasy. What are some elements that are already present in Chapter 1?

## Chapter 2 (CCRA.RL.3, 4)

At the front of the book, there are some genealogy charts showing the Colesworth, Watson, and Beaufort families and heirs. Highlight the names of the people who are still alive and make notes about their relationship to each other.

Why is Barrie is having difficulty deciding what to do with Mark's urn?

Referring to page 16, summarize the experiences that Barrie has had that demonstrates her inner strength.

## Chapters 3--4 (CCRA.RL.1-3)

Eight changes his decision about school because he loves Barrie and wants to do what she desires. If someone loves you, can they really be happy if you aren't?

What conflict is Barrie feeling because of Eight's decision?

Seven says in Chapter 4, "The more you have, the more you want, until before long you've lost touch with what little you really need." Do you think this is true? If so, give an example from your own or another's experience.

What clues are given about Obadiah that lead you to believe his intentions are good? Which clues lead you to believe his intentions are evil? Given those clues, what do you think—is Obadiah a friend or enemy?

## Chapters 5—6 (CCRA.RL.1-3)

After reading Chapter 5, what are some of the fears or dangers for Pru and

Barrie at Watson Island?

Seven believes that the Beaufort gift is a curse because it keeps them from dreaming. He continues that "Dreams shape the kind of human beings we become." Do you agree with Seven's statement? Why or why not? Give an example from your own experience or the experience of someone you know.

## Chapters 7—8 (CCRA.RL.3-4)

Eight comments "There's no such thing as a pure white hat or a pure black one. Everyone comes in different shades of gray." Do you agree with his statement? Why or why not? Give an example that supports your opinion.

Discuss the feud between the Colesworths and the Watsons. Has it been fair to Barrie and Cassie? Why or why not?

### Teaching Tip (CCR.SL.1)

*Have students talk to a partner before writing their responses to the questions or sharing them orally.*

## Chapters 9—10 (CCR RL.1-4)

Why is Barrie sympathetic to Cassie? How does her decision to help Cassie betray Eight? If you were in Barrie's shoes, what amends would Cassie have to make to satisfy your sense of justice? Why?

What explanation does Barrie give for her decision to help Cassie be free? Does it make sense to you?

What is karma? Do you believe in karma? Why or why not?

## Chapter 11 (CCRA.RL.1, 3)

What are the pros and cons for Barrie to have Eight's gift taken away?

Who does Obadiah say he is? How is he connected to the Watson, Beaufort, and/or Colesworth families?

## Chapter 12 (CCRA.RL.1-3)

Reread page 106. Do you believe that Obadiah is telling the truth about his motives? Why or why not? Give examples from the book to support your answer.

If Obadiah gets what he desires—Barrie finds the lodestone and Obadiah removes the Colesworth curse and Barrie gets to keep her Watson gift—what could go wrong?

Barrie makes the bargain with Obadiah's seemingly sincere offer. But he also wants her to leave Eight out of it and tell no one. Why do you think he wants Eight left out of it? Why

does Barrie agree to the bargain? What is in it for her?

## Chapters 13—14 (CCRA.RL.1-4)

On the first page of Chapter 13, Pru uses the word *hubris*. Using the context clues, what do you think this word means and why does Pru use it to describe Wyatt Colesworth?

Barrie reflects that "human memory clung to pain and terror so much harder than it grasped at joy." Do you think this is true? Why or why not? Give an example from your life or the life of someone you know.

Do you think it is appropriate for Barrie to attend Wyatt Colesworth's funeral? Why or why not? Do you think she would go even if she didn't want a chance to talk to Cassie? Why or why not?

## Chapters 15—16 (CCRA.RL.1-3)

Given the history between Cassie and Barrie, do you believe Cassie's behavior in the graveyard is an act or is something else happening?

Compare and contrast the lives of Cassie and Barrie. How are they similar and different?

## Chapters 17—18 (CCRA.RL.3)

Given the animosity between Cassie and Barrie, why do you think Cassie agrees to let Barrie come with Obadiah to find the lodestone?

## Chapters 19—20 (CCRA.RL.1-4)

Every time Obadiah is near, it is clear that the *yunwi* don't like him. Why do you think Barrie seems to be dismissing the *yunwi*'s behavior when considering Obadiah's motives?

On page 179, the word *inertia* is used. Using the context, what does this word mean? Have you ever felt inertia? Describe your experience.

At the end of Chapter 20, it says "she *knew*." What does Barrie know?

## Chapters 21—22 (CCRA.RL.1-3)

How is the relationship between Barrie and Eight similar to the relationship between Pru and Seven? Why does that worry Barrie?

On page 207, Eight accuses Barrie of being similar to Kate in that both girls are good at ignoring the fact that people are up to no good but insist on giving them the benefit of the doubt. When has Barrie done as Eight accuses her?

## Chapters 23—24 (CCRA.RL.1-3)

Barrie thinks that the past can be a "burden that weighed you down, [but] at the same time, it provided ballast." What does Barrie mean by this statement? Think of your own life. Do you agree or disagree? Why?

# Chapter-by-Chapter Discussion/Journal Questions

## Chapters 23--24 continued

Obadiah comments to Barrie that “you want both your Beaufort boy and your magic. You’ll have to figure out for yourself which is more important.” If you were Barrie, which would be more important to you and why?

## Chapters 25—26 (CCRA.RL.1-3, 5)

How did the experience or the people Barrie witnessed in the flashback relate to Cassie? Barrie? Obadiah?

On page 250, when Eight felt something “explode,” what was Eight most likely feeling?

After Barrie is truthful with Eight and tells him about Obadiah and everything that has been happening, Barrie notices a change in Eight and realizes that she “had broken whatever it was that had been trying to grow between them.” She wonders if she can repair the damage she has done. Imagine you are Eight. What are you feeling and what, if anything, could Barrie do to make it right?

## Chapters 27—28 (CCRA.RL.1-3)

At the end of Chapter 27 the text says, “Losing everything made a person recognize the value of what they’d found. It didn’t make them cling to things they didn’t want.” Why do you agree or disagree with this statement?

What do you think of Eight’s suspicions that Obadiah is a Raven Mocker? What is his evidence?

## Chapters 29—30 (CCRA.RL.1-3, 5)

Barrie witnesses a horrific scene from the past. Historical records show similar atrocities were committed on both sides during the Civil War and virtually every war, and it shows neither the Colesworths nor the Union soldiers treated the young slave well. What did the two Colesworth women do that shows their conflicting attitudes toward the child? Did this or the behavior of the Union soldiers surprise you? Why or why not?

Barrie notices the human teeth necklace on Obadiah. Whose teeth do you think they might be? Does it make you more suspicious of Obadiah? Why or why not?

## Chapters 31—32 (CCRA.RL.1-3)

Obadiah tells Barrie, “The spirits here are powerful because they have something important they wish to protect. That same purpose keeps them locked here in this reality.” Many people believe that spirits of the dead do remain because they have left something unfinished. What do you think of this belief?

On page 307, the text says about Barrie, “She had always been inclined to put her trust in what she hoped others would be, and when she found she was wrong, she was bitterly disappointed.” It goes on to say about Eight, “[He] didn’t rely exclusively on his gift. He claimed that he took a lot on faith. He also looked things up, reasoned through them.” Comparing these two characters, who are you most like, Barrie or Eight? Give an example to support your answer.

Eight tells Barrie, “I wouldn’t miss this gift. I’d give anything—*anything*—to be rid of it.” If you had Eight’s gift, would you feel the same way? Why or why not?

### Teaching Tip (CCR.SL.1)

*Have students talk to a partner before writing their responses to the questions or sharing them orally.*

## Chapters 33—34 (CCRA.RL.1)

The bottle tree used to catch evil spirits is a common superstition in the south. What other superstitions are commonly practiced? Why do you think people follow superstitions? Do you follow any superstitions? Why or why not?

## Chapters 35—36 (CCRA.RL.1-3)

At the bottom of page 337, the text says, “It took vulnerability to forge strength, the way true courage required fear.” Can you provide an example of this from real life?

Eight says to Barrie, “You make me think. You make me better. When I’m with you, for the first time in my life, I feel like someone sees *me* and thinks that I’m enough.” Discuss why you do or don’t agree that this defines true love?

In the last paragraph of page 345, the text says, “The past was never over. It cast a shadow over the present and the future.” Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Provide an example to support your reasoning.

## Chapters 37—38 (CCRA.RL.1-3, 5)

Thinking about the scene from the past that Barrie witnessed, the text says, “It was people who made things happen, and their decisions were the sum of a million individual experiences. If a [soldier] chose to follow [orders to burn, kill or rape] it was because of who he was and who his life had made him.” What does this statement mean? Can you think of an example in modern times that proves this is true?

What do you think happened to Cassie after Ernesto and the cartel had ordered her kidnapped? What makes you think so?

## Chapters 39—40—41 (CCRA.RL.1-3)

How can Berg’s experiences from the war help Cassie with her PTSD?

Is it ever okay to keep secrets from people who love and trust you? Why or why not?

## Chapters 42—43 (CCRA.RL.1-3)

What evidence was there that the vandalism done to the excavation site was not the work of teenagers or Cassie herself?

Obadiah says it is the work of the spirits watching over the site. What could they be protecting?

## Chapters 44—45 (CCRA.RL.1-3)

Who do you believe tied up Cassie and Barrie and put them in the slave cabin? Spirits? Obadiah? Someone else? Discuss and support your conclusions.

Cassie starts to show the effects of her PTSD again. When someone affected by PTSD goes into a trance or blackout, how does that help them cope with their pain?

## Chapters 46—47 (CCRA.RL.1-3)

Was Cassie justified in shooting Junior and Ryder? Why or why not? Barrie tells Cassie that “Killing him isn’t going to change [the fact that Cassie was sexually assaulted], but it will change you. . . . Killing him isn’t going to make you doubt yourself any less. It’s only going to push you further away from the person you want to be.” Is Barrie right? Even if a killing seems justified, can it change who you are? Would killing Ryder automatically take away the effects of Cassie’s PTSD?

Barrie tells Cassie, “If you don’t fight to survive, you will never know how strong you are.” Share an example from your life when this was true.

## Concluding Questions (CCRA.RL.1-3)

Eight walks away from Barrie and the relationship seems to be in jeopardy. Which of Barrie’s actions do you think hurt Eight the most? Is he being entirely fair to Barrie? Do you think he is gone for good?

At the end of the book, the raven feather reappears and Barrie feels the tug of her finding gift. What is the unfinished business she needs to complete?

Everyone has a gift, even though it may not be magical like Barrie’s or Eight’s. What do you think your gift is? What purpose does/could your gift have?



# Curriculum Connections

## Teaching Tip

*Students can feel a new connection to Persuasion by doing a project that correlates with the setting, plot, or characters in the book. Have the students pick one or more of the projects below to do either while they are reading the book or as a culminating project after finishing the novel. The idea is to have them choose something that interests them and for having fun! These can be completed at school or at home. When the projects are finished, have the students share them with the class. They could also be shared at a parents' night, open house, or during the bonus activity in the Watson Tearoom (see the last page of this guide).*

## History

(CCRA.RI.1, CCRA.W.2, 7, 8, CCRA.RH.1-3, 7-9, CCRA.SL.4)

Choose One:

- Research and write a report on the ships captured by the *Jefferson Davis* and the lost treasures of the Civil War. Can you find a historical treasure lost somewhere in the South on which the author might have based the treasure in *Persuasion*? Which ship captured by the *Jefferson Davis* was retaken by a former cook and sailed back to New York? Present your findings to the class.
- Research and write a report about the effects of the Civil War upon the state of South Carolina and its residents. How do events recently in the news arise from those historical foundations? Present your findings to the class.

## Genealogy

(CCRA.RI.4, 6, 7, CCRA.W.7, CCRA.SL.4)

As Barrie read Caroline Colesworth's diary, she pieced together the relationships and history of a part of the Colesworth family. Do you have any family records? Why or why not? If possible, take this opportunity to research your own ancestors and their stories from either written personal histories or diaries. If those don't exist, ask your parents or relatives about what they know about family history. What new information did you learn? How does it change your perspective of who you are? Write a summary of what you found and its impact on you. Share your findings with your class.

## Sociology

(CCRA.RH.1, 8, CCRA.SL.4)

Sexual assault is often a "weapon of war." According to a 2008 UN Security Council resolution, "women and girls are particularly targeted by the use of sexual violence, including as a tactic of war to humiliate, dominate, instill fear in, disperse and/or forcibly relocate civilian members of a community or ethnic group." A great many of the crimes against women in the Civil War were perpetuated on both sides against women and young girls of color. The exact number of these crimes is difficult to ascertain because they were treated as crimes against property instead of rape. As today, even women with standing to bring charges for sexual assault did not report the crimes for fear of being stigmatized or further victimized. Discuss the historical and current rape culture. Where do we see sexual assault used as a weapon of war today? Share your findings with the class.

## Art

(CCRA.W.4, CCRA.SL.4)

Barrie made chandeliers out of Mason jars and cordless lights to decorate the garden, and she created a light display beneath the water using light sticks. Make your own version of a chandelier or draw a picture of the light display she made. Share your project with your class.



# Curriculum Connections Continued...

## History and Geography

(CCRA.RL.1, 2, CCRA.RST.7, CCRA.W.2, 7, CCRA.RH.7, CCRA.SL.4)

The two most virulent strains of malaria, introduced to both North and South America with the slave trade from Africa, came in separate routes that can be traced to Spanish slavers and Portuguese slavers. It also came with slaves and colonists from the Caribbean, and from England and what is now Great Britain. Discuss and investigate the role that malaria and agriculture played in the slave trade and in the colonization of the Americas and the Caribbean. Read about the two strains of malaria and the gene that provides immunity to them but is linked to sickle cell anemia. Trace and map the routes used by Portuguese and Spanish slavers as well as American slavers. How many slaves went through South Carolina? How many slaves went through Cuba? What percentage of the slave trade involved what is now the United States? Share your findings with the class.

## Psychology

(CCRA.RI.1, 2, 7, CCRA.RH.9, CCRA.W.7, CCRA.SL.4)

Horses have been used to help those suffering with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Research this form of therapy. One video available to watch is “The Healing Power of Horses” at <http://youtu.be/-bhPuHyi8A0> (the PTSD portion begins at 2:16). Write a report and present your findings about horse therapy to the class.

## Culinary Arts

(CCRA.RI.2, CCRA.W.4, CCRA.SL.4)

Barrie and Eight went to the SeaCow Bakery to enjoy chocolate and coffee. Barrie ordered a Mississippi Mud Brownie and Eight ordered a maple bacon cupcake. Research some recipes for decadent desserts or Southern foods and make one to share with classmates. Create a cookbook of at least six recipes. Be sure to give credit to the recipes’ creators.

## Ancient History

(CCRA.RH.1, 8, 9, CCRA.SL.4)

Slavery is a shameful and complicated practice that began thousands of years ago with the advent of agriculture, and it was practiced by most ancient civilizations including the Sumerians, Egyptians, Chinese, Indians, the Islamic states, Greeks, Romans, Aztecs, Incas, and many others. In more modern times, nations active in the slave trade included Vikings, Ottomans, Spanish, Portuguese, French, British, and Americans. Although slavery is illegal in virtually every country, an estimated 20 to 36 million individuals worldwide are currently enslaved. Discuss the overall history of slavery and its connection to agriculture, imperialism, and the rise and fall of civilizations. Which great ancient civilizations enslaved populations from among the nations they conquered and subsequently became enslaved themselves? Why is there still slavery in modern times and where does it exist? Share your findings with the class.



## Bonus Activity

### Teaching Tip

*Have an elegant southern dinner just like the Watson Tearoom. Invite parents to your final activity. Encourage attendees to wear Civil War period clothing, and everyone can bring a dish to share (see below for ideas). The curriculum connection activities could be presented for entertainment. As Barrie did, decorate with string lights and luminaries (tea lights inside paper bags weighted with sand) to enhance the atmosphere. You could advertise the night by making a banner similar to Daphne's web design and call it a Magical Night. (see page 209)*

## Immerse Yourself in Southern Cuisine

### *Menu Ideas from Persuasion*

Tomato, roasted corn, and boiled peanut salad  
Fried green tomatoes  
Cucumber and assorted tea sandwiches  
Bacon and cheddar hush puppies  
Beef pot roast  
Maple bacon cupcakes  
Mississippi mud brownies  
Chocolate hazelnut truffles

### Mesclun Salad with Goat Cheese and Candied Pecans

*(Recipe courtesy of Kirsten Werk)*

#### **Dressing:**

2/3 cup salad oil  
1/3 cup wine vinegar (red or white)  
1 tsp Dijon or brown mustard  
½ cup sugar  
2 teaspoons chopped onion  
½ tsp. salt, sprinkle of paprika & black pepper to taste

#### **Salad:**

1 bag of baby spinach  
1 bag of spring mix lettuces  
½ cup of dried cranberries  
1 apple or pear chopped (skin on)  
½ cup of goat or feta cheese, crumbled



#### **Candied Pecans**

Put 1/3 cup of sugar and 1 to 1½ cups of pecan pieces in a medium-sized skillet over medium heat. Stir continually until all of the sugar melts and the pecans are coated with the melted sugar. Pour onto a cookie sheet to cool for about 15 minutes. Once cooled, break apart.

#### **Directions**

Make the dressing ahead of time by tossing all of the dressing ingredients together and chill. Make the candied pecans ahead of time and set aside.

Just before serving, toss the salad ingredients together. Add the dressing and toss. Add the candied pecans and toss. Serve.

## About the Author



Martina Boone was born in what is now the Czech Republic and moved to the United States when she was seven. The books she read when she was a teen have stayed with her all of her life. Now she creates new worlds and writes about teen characters who change their worlds.

She is the founder of [AdventuresInYAPublishing.com](http://www.AdventuresInYAPublishing.com), a *Writers Digest* Best Websites for Writers site, and of [YASeriesInsiders.com](http://YASeriesInsiders.com), a site dedicated to sharing news, fun, and the love of the best Young Adult series literature. She is passionate about school safety and literacy, and loves to ski, ride dressage horses, travel, and read beautiful, slightly twisted fiction. She eats Nutella on pretty much anything, adores marzipan, has guilty cravings for stale sugar-free licorice, and drinks chocolate-flavored tea with milk.

Martina and her husband live in Virginia with two kids, a shelter cat, Auggie the Wonder Dog, and a backyard visited by rabbits, groundhogs, foxes, bald eagles, squirrels, deer, and even the occasional curious bear.

Find more information at <http://www.MartinaBoone.com> or <http://www.HeirsOfWatsonIsland.com>

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