

DISCUSSION GUIDE

IT'S TIME FOR SOMETHING **REMARKABLE**



# NIC BLAKE AND THE REMARKABLES

THE MANIFESTOR PROPHECY

ANGIE THOMAS

9781529506549 • PB • £7.99 • Age 9 years +

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## THE MANIFESTOR PROPHECY

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### ABOUT THE BOOK

The first book in the Nic Blake and the Remarkables series, *The Manifestor Prophecy* is a brilliantly engaging adventure for middle-grade readers from bestselling author Angie Thomas. Nic, born a “Manifestor” but still unable to use her powers, has just received a hellhound for her twelfth birthday. After years of moving from place to place with her father, Calvin, Nic is finally beginning to feel at home in Jackson, especially as her best friend JP lives next door. But then, strange things start to happen, and she soon discovers a hidden past and another life she knows nothing about. This book expertly weaves a fantasy world around Black US history and sheds new light on racial power struggles and responsibility in today’s America. With lightning-fast storytelling and ingenious world-building, this explosive introduction to the series is the perfect read for fans of *Nevermoor* and *Amari and the Night Brothers* as well as existing fans of Angie Thomas.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Angie Thomas** is a critically acclaimed and bestselling author. Her debut novel, *The Hate U Give*, has been on the *New York Times* bestseller list ever since publication. It has received numerous accolades, including the Waterstones Children’s Book Prize. Angie was born and raised in Jackson, Mississippi. You can find her on Twitter (@angiecthomas) and Instagram (@angieithomas).

### GENERAL INTRODUCTION:

While a fantasy, there are many elements of this book that are rooted in the real world and American history. Alongside the creativity and imagination that readers can explore, its frank approach to some of the worst episodes of racism in the US offers much for discussion. Furthermore, with themes of abandonment, childhood loneliness, expectation and pressure, there is much in *The Manifestor Prophecy* that may resonate with some readers and their lived experience. Care should be taken when discussing these elements and any appropriate support or signposting prepared.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

#### Getting started:

To begin, ask the group to share something they liked about the book. How did the book make them feel? Why? Can anyone expand on their answer. Has anyone ever read or watched a story like this one? How was it different? What similarities did it have?

#### 1. Nic

“My dad’s gonna teach me how to use the Gift so I can finally be a real Manifestor. First I’ve gotta catch a hellhound.” – p.7 How does Thomas present Nic Blake at first, and how does that change as the book goes on? How is the Nic Blake at the end different from the Nic Blake at the beginning? Why does the author tell the story in the first person [check understanding, here, as required]? Would it be a different reading experience if it were narrated in the third person? Why?



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## 2. JP

"We call him JP. Sometimes Pastor JP because of the bow ties. Plus, JP's dad is a preacher, and JP has a freckled face, round belly, and short brown hair just like him." – p.11

How are JP and Nic alike? How are they different? What does JP offer to Nic, in their friendship? What does it mean to be a "seer" in the book? How does this compare to "seers" in other books, stories, films, etc.?

## 3. Remarkables

"... the Remarkables light the place up a bit thanks to the Glow: different coloured auras that tell you the kinda Remarkable they are." – p.19

What did the group think of the idea of Remarkables, and the fact that many of them live amongst non-Remarkables?

As a group, try to remember all of the different types of Remarkables and their "Glow" colours. Are their colours representative of them? Do any of these types exist in other stories? What about Dee's Glow? What does this suggest?

## 4. Ty

"Calvin? Why would he call my dad that name? And who is Ty?" – p.38

How is Ty introduced to the novel? Why does Thomas choose to introduce him in this way? Why was the prophecy about Ty so hard for him? How does it make you feel about the character? Did anyone feel sorry for him? What about his actions at the end of the novel? Were they justified?

## 5. Prophecy

"Plus, not every prophecy is good, and people get mad at the Prophets as if it's their fault." – p.47

Explore understanding with the group: what is a prophecy? Are they reliable? Ask why, or why not, depending on how the group answer. What would it be like to have a prophecy told about you? Who do the group think the prophecy in this book is about? Was Ty really the chosen one? Is Nic really the Manowari? How does this compare to other stories the group might have heard that involve prophecies?

## 6. Power and Responsibility

"What's the point of having the Gift if we can't help people who need it?" – p.57

What does Nic think about power? How does she feel it should be used? Does everyone agree? What about LORE?

Discuss how this relates to the history explored in the book – why did so many terrible things happen if there were people with power who might have stopped them? What about the Wizards in the novel? Why do they think they should be able to use wands? Does anyone agree with them?

## 7. Uhuru

"'I've seen a lot of stuff in my life,' JP says, 'but this is the coolest.'" – p.285

What did the group think of the depiction of Uhuru in the novel? Who would like to go to somewhere like Uhuru? Why?

What does anyone think of the idea of the most powerful people living in a separate city, away from less powerful people?

## 8. A life rediscovered

"It feels like my world was made of sand and I didn't know it, and a gigantic wave has crashed in, wiped it out, and left me with something that doesn't resemble my life." – p.75

Nic suddenly discovers that she has a whole other life she's never known. What might this be like? How does she react? What would anyone in the group do in her position?



## 9. Giftech

“‘Giftech,’ I gasp. Gift-infused technology. You can only buy Giftech in Remarkable cities...” – p.48

What did anyone think of the Giftech in the novel? Which piece of Giftech would they most like? Why? How would members describe Giftech? Is it magic? Advanced technology? Both? How does Giftech compare to other magic, fantasy or sci-fi that the group might be able to think of?

## 10. Language & history

“‘That’s the Mshindi. I’m talking about the *Miss-a-dee-zee*.’ Uncle Ty sounds it out. ‘It’s Swahili for “helper”.’” – p.77

As a group, list out all the words relating to Remarkables that are unfamiliar (Uhuru, Msaidizi, Manowari, etc.). Did anyone recognize any of these words or know what any of them mean? Look up these words in the session, or prep before the session and have definitions to hand. What do the group notice about these words now? Why is this significant? Why has the author chosen to use real words from other languages?

