

RANDOM HOUSE TEACHERS' RESOURCE KIT

Resurrection

Mandy Hager

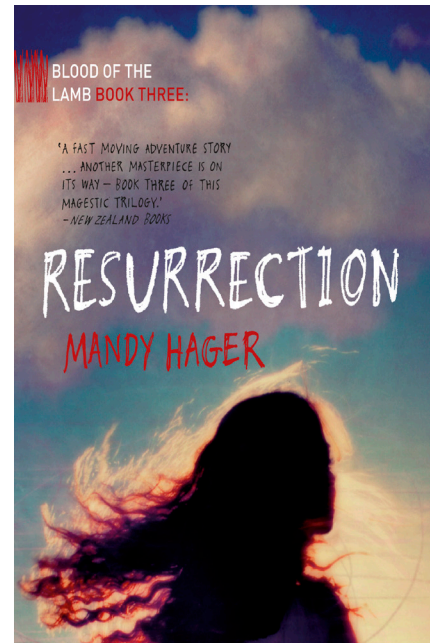
'A fast moving adventure story ... another masterpiece is on its way – Book Three of this majestic trilogy' – *New Zealand Books*

Maryam fights for her life, freedom and love in *Resurrection*, the thrilling finale to the Blood of the Lamb trilogy by award winning author Mandy Hager.

When Maryam arrives back at Onewēre and tries to loosen the Apostles' religious stranglehold by sharing the miraculous remedy for Te Matee lai, she finds herself captured once again – prey to the Apostles' deadly game. The ruling elite manipulate her return by setting in motion a highly orchestrated ritual before a hysterical and brain-washed crowd. Somehow Maryam must get the islanders to listen to her plea that they start thinking for themselves – hoping to stir the independence in their hearts, even as she finds herself on the brink of death...



Mandy Hager is a Wellington writer and educator. She won the Esther Glen Medal for Fiction in 2008 with her novel *Smashed*. The first book in the Blood of the Lamb trilogy, *The Crossing*, has been shortlisted for the 2010 NZ Post Children's Book Awards.



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RESOURCE KIT CONTAINS:

- About the author
- Close reading
- Discussion starters
- Showing understanding
- Essay topics
- Significant annotations across texts

About the author

Mandy Hager is a Wellington author and educator. Mandy's parents were born in Vienna and Zanzibar, meeting in Otaki in the 1950s. Their interest in the arts, social development and politics permeated the raising of their four children – all of whom have gone on to careers that reflect these values (Mandy's brother Nicky is a world renowned investigative journalist and writer, sister Debbie a Master of Public Health with passion for supporting women with domestic violence and mental health issues, and youngest sister Belinda a successful contemporary jeweller.)

Mandy is a trained primary school teacher and specialised in working with people with learning disabilities. She also has an Advanced Diploma in Applied Arts (Writing) from Whitireia Polytechnic and a Master of Arts in Creative Writing from Victoria University. She is married with two adult children.

Her first book, *Tom's Story*, a picture book about the death of a parent, won an Honour Award in the 1996 AIM Children's Book Awards. She has written many titles for Learning Media, and in a three year contract with Global Focus Aotearoa she wrote resources on such global issues as climate change, indigenous issues, violence against women, corporations, illegal trafficking, non-violent resistance, hip hop and fair trade.

She has written a series of programmes for the DARE Foundation of NZ based around her young adult novels *Run for the Trees* and *Smashed* – 'Dare To Be You' and 'Dare To Move On' – aimed at giving teens the skills they need to reach their full potential, by asking the hard questions about the real issues affecting us all today. The programmes are designed to challenge children, parents and their communities to develop skills in DARE – Decision making, Assertiveness, Responsibility and Esteem – and enable them to make informed choices to live a powerful life. Mandy has also been a member of the DARE board and currently helps with the training of facilitators in the two community programmes.

Smashed was named a Notable Book by the Children's Literature Foundation in 2008 and went on to win the Esther Glen Award for the most distinguished book of children's fiction in 2008 (presented by LIANZA). A script adaptation written by Mandy was placed as a finalist in the prestigious Moondance Film Festival in the USA.

In 2008, Mandy collaborated with her sister Debbie to write a 25 minute DVD teaching resource directed by documentary maker Shirley Horricks, titled *He Drove Me Mad*, which helps to explain the situation of women who have mental health and/or substance abuse problems as a result of domestic violence.

Mandy also teaches a novel writing course for Whitireia Community Polytechnic and she writes a monthly column in online newspaper the *Kapiti Independent News*.

Close reading

Chapter One

1. What do we learn about Maryam's past from the information revealed by the author in this first chapter? How does the author 'fill in the gaps' for readers who haven't read the first two books in the series?
2. What do we learn about Maryam's personality from this opening chapter? What do other people say about Maryam? How does Maryam cope with the situation she is in?

Chapter Two

1. What is Maryam's opinion of Sergeant Littlejohn and why has she come to think this? What derogatory words does Littlejohn use later in this chapter to reinforce Maryam's view of the man and his actions?
2. What does Maryam mean by 'without such moral outrage she'd never have the nerve to act'? (page 29)
3. Why has Maryam lost her faith in anybody but herself? How has she been betrayed and by whom?
4. What does Maryam mean by 'Like Saint Peter doing the Lord's reckoning at Heaven's gate, this man had the power to damn them straight to Hell'? (page 32)
5. Why is Lazarus's departure seen by Ruth and Maryam as a betrayal?

Chapter Three

1. Why is Ruth so quick to think that the Lord is punishing her by inflicting some strange illness upon her?
2. How does Maryam react to the news of Ruth's pregnancy?
3. What does Aanjay mean when she says to Maryam "There, you see? The cycle starts again!"? (page 54)

4. Explain what Ruth means what she tells Maryam, "Sometimes you're so caught up in hating what's going on, you forget that we still have some choice" (page 56) To what extent do you think both Ruth and Maryam have choices?

Chapter Four

1. How does Ruth's pregnancy complicate matters for Maryam?
2. In what ways does Filza remind Maryam of her old friend Hushai? What is meant by the saying "Buddha says not speak, unless it improves on silence"? (page 60)
3. Why is Maryam so shocked to discover what the cure for Te Matee lai is?
4. Why is Maryam so determined to bring the cure for Te Matee lai back to Onewere? Why does she think this medication could help her in her battle against the Apostles?
5. Why is Aanjay determined to return to her homeland after the death of her mother?

Chapter Five

1. Why does Ruth decide to stay at the Camp? To what extent do you agree with Ruth's reasoning?
2. Why does Maryam tell Littlejohn that Marawa Island is her rightful home? (page 81)
3. Aanjay tells Maryam "All faith calls for radical trust, Maryam. In the end we cannot rely on others to prove if something is right or wrong, true or false – or even if it exists at all. All we can rely on is the truth that speaks to us through our heart". (page 84) What does she mean by this and why does Maryam initially find it so difficult to believe Aanjay?

4. What is Maryam implying about Littlejohn in the following comparison 'At last he blinked his lizard eyes and smiled the kind of smile she guessed Lucifer would present to some poor sinner as He stole their soul.'? (page 90)

Chapter Six

1. How has Ruth changed since she learnt of her pregnancy? Do you think that Maryam is being overly sensitive in the following lines: 'Ruth stroked her distended belly – a subconscious, insular gesture that had started to make Maryam feel more and more sidelined.'? To what extent do you think that Maryam resents the pregnancy because of how it impacts on the relationship between the two girls? (page 94)
2. What similarities are there between the situation in Aanjay's homeland and the rule of the Apostles over Onewēre? (page 102)
3. Explain what Maryam means by the words, 'Charlie had handed her the gift of greater independence and possibilities, and for this she never would forget him' in relation to the physical gifts he gave her as she was about to depart. (page 105)

Chapter Seven

1. What important lessons does Maryam admit to having learnt since Joseph's death? How are these lessons connected to the themes explored in this novel? (page 107)
2. While Maryam greatly admires Aanjay, she does not agree with all of her beliefs. Which of Aanjay's beliefs does she find most difficult to accept? (page 110)
3. Why do you think the crewmen are so lacking in concern for Maryam when they return her to Marawa Island? (page 113)
4. Why does Maryam choose to sleep in the lap of the Buddha despite the fact

that a massacre had occurred in the temple? (page 122)

Chapter Eight

1. Why does Maryam think of anger as being her secret weapon? (page 134)
2. Why are the two weeks of waiting good for Maryam in both a physical and a spiritual way? (page 136)
3. What important lesson does Maryam learn when she discovers that the raft has been buried? (page 138)

Chapter Nine

1. Why is Maryam so ready to think the worst of Lazarus? (page 143)
2. What shortcoming do Maryam and Lazarus acknowledge that they share? (page 146) To what extent is this 'shortcoming' a reason why they frequently find it difficult to get on with each other? (page 146)
3. Which existing city is Newbrizzy likely to be? What clues are there to make you think this? (page 147)
4. What, according to Lazarus, attracts people to Newbrizzy?

Chapter Ten

1. What similarities does Maryam see between the teachings of the Lord and the Buddha? (page 160)
2. What does Maryam mean when she says 'only nature had prevailed'? Explain in your words the comparison Maryam makes between herself and a seed. Explain why you think this is or isn't a reasonable comparison to make in terms of what has happened so far in the novel.
3. How does Maryam's attitude toward Lazarus change during their boat trip to Onewēre? (page 167–174) Is it a case of Lazarus having changed or of Maryam seeing him in a new light?

Chapter Eleven

1. Why does Lazarus think that the time he spent working in Newbrizy was the best in his life?
2. Why does Maryam want to help her father even though he has rejected and betrayed her in the past?
3. How does Maryam react to the news that she has been compared to Lucifer? How will this affect her own plans to reveal the cure for Te Matee lai?

Chapter Twelve

1. Explain in your own words the different attitudes Maryam and Lazarus have towards drinking intoxicants in order to forget painful experiences.
2. What evidence is there that Maryam's earlier actions (refer to the first two books in the Blood of the Lamb trilogy) have encouraged some of the villagers to question the controls imposed by the Apostles? (page 204)
3. Explain why you think that Maryam should or shouldn't take some responsibility for the deaths of Brother Mark, Sarah, Rebekah, Mother Deborah and Joseph.

Chapter Thirteen

1. Why does Vanesse think that Maryam should make peace with her father? Do you think that Vanesse is being naive? Is there any evidence to suggest that Natau is the type of person who will welcome the opportunity to make peace with his daughter? (page 215)
2. How does the knowledge that her mother loved her help Maryam to consider Lazarus's situation with his own family in a new light? (page 226)

Chapter Fourteen

1. Why do you think Maryam can no longer bear to hear The Rules being recited? (page 247)

2. In her description of Father Joshua on page 248 in what ways does Maryam suggest he has turned traditional Christian symbols such as the colour white and the crucifix into instruments of evil?

Chapter Fifteen

1. In this chapter there are many examples of biblical language used by Father Joshua and the Apostles to keep the people under their control. Choose two of these passages and explain them in your own words, showing how the words have been manipulated by the Apostles.
2. Maryam is horrified when the villagers swarm before her, asking to be cured. Based on their actions in the past, should Maryam have expected the villagers to behave in this way? Do you think Maryam has put enough thought into her plans to reveal the truth to the villagers who have shown themselves to be gullible people, lacking in sophistication. (page 259)
3. In what way are the women in the village shown to have more courage and determination than the men? What motivates them? (page 263)

Chapter Sixteen

1. What does Maryam mean when she says 'Words can kill.'? (page 272)
2. When Maryam says 'They hailed the Lamb before they turned on him and bayed for His blood' what biblical event is she referring to? Do you think it is appropriate that she should compare herself to Jesus Christ? How is this allusion linked to the title of this novel? (page 275)
3. Based on their actions in this chapter, who do you think is the more evil character – Father Joshua or Mother Lilith? Be sure to justify your choice.

Chapter Seventeen

1. To what extent do you agree with Lazarus when he says that the islanders are "stupid and ignorant"? Do you think he is "blaming the victims" as Maryam says? Should the villagers take any responsibility for the actions of Father Joshua and the Apostles? (page 293)
2. Explain what Maryam means what she observes that 'In a sense Mother Elizabeth was just like Ruth'. (page 301) How have these qualities the two women share been used against them by the Apostles?

Chapter Eighteen

1. What do you think motivates someone like Brother Luke to carry out Father Joshua's orders? He is clearly prepared to kill both Maryam and Lazarus if required to do so by Father Joshua. Do you think the Apostles believe in the religious teachings, like the island dwellers or is there some other reason why they follow Father Joshua?
2. Is there any evidence in this chapter to suggest that either Father Joshua or Mother Lilith have any positive feelings towards their son?

Chapter Nineteen

1. Why do you think Maryam continues to express a lack of faith in Lazarus? (page 329)
2. Why are the villagers so quick to change their opinion of Maryam when Father Joshua claims to have proof that she was not a virgin at the time of her marriage? Why is so much importance placed on 'sexual purity' for young women?

Chapter Twenty

1. Why is Maryam forced to wear an old scarlet ball gown with a purple sash? (pages 343–345)

2. Maryam tells Father Joshua and the congregation that 'I am merely myself... And all I've ever done is try to tell the truth'. Do you agree with this statement or do you think Maryam has done much more than just tell the truth? (page 349)
3. At one point Maryam looks up to her father and says to him 'Father, why have you forsaken me?' What event in the New Testament of the Bible is this linked to? Who is Maryam being compared to and is it appropriate?
4. What motivates Mother Lilith to finally speak out against her husband? Why do you think it has taken her so long? Do you think she ever believed in the teachings of her husband or was she more interested in the power? (page 357)

Chapter Twenty-One

1. What does Hushai imply when he tells Maryam "If you do not act quickly all progress will be in vain"? (page 362)
2. To what extent do you agree with the following advice that Hushai gives Maryam? "One step at a time, child. Then, little by little, start to alleviate the wrongs and celebrate the rights." (page 370)
3. Were you satisfied with the ending of this novel? Was it predictable?
4. Mandy Hager concludes the novel with two quotes – one by Dr Martin Luther King Jr and one by Margaret Mead. To what extent do these two quotes sum up the main themes in Resurrection and (for those who have read the two earlier novels) the main themes in the Blood of the Lamb trilogy.

Discussion starters

These questions could also be used as written assignments for students who would like to be extended.

1. Is it possible to fully appreciate the ideas and themes explored in *Resurrection* if you have no prior knowledge of Christianity or the Bible?
2. What are the qualities and skills required of a good leader? Do you think Maryam and/or Lazarus have these attributes and abilities?
3. What do you think will be the main challenges facing Maryam and Lazarus once they assume active leadership of the congregation?
4. In all three books there are characters who show themselves to be wise, caring and compassionate. Why do none of these characters attempt to overthrow the rule of corrupt, evil men?
5. According to Karl Marx, the man who is commonly regarded as the founder of Communism, 'Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people.' Is this how religious belief is portrayed in *Resurrection* and the other books in this trilogy?
6. According to Lord Acton (1834–1902) 'Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Great men are almost always bad men.' Do what extent do you agree that having power over others inevitably corrupts leaders? Use examples from the novel to support your argument.
7. 'All that is necessary for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing.' To what extent do you agree with this quote and how can you apply this quote to both the rule of the Apostles and to the conditions at the refugee camp?
8. In most dystopian novels when disaster devastates the earth it is almost always the result of people's actions e.g. nuclear war, terrorism, laboratory created plagues, manmade global warming. However, in this trilogy the Tribulation referred to appears to be a random natural occurrence. Why do you think Mandy Hager decided to use such a random natural occurrence as her starting point?

Showing understanding

1. Select one of the following themes (refer to the Teachers' Resource Kit for *Into the Wilderness* for more on some of these themes). Trace the way this theme is developed either just within *Resurrection* or through the entire trilogy:

- Religious indoctrination
- Hypocrisy
- Colonisation
- Treatment of refugees
- Grief and loss
- The power of love
- Control
- The meaning of family
- Racial discrimination
- Gender discrimination (particularly in the Bible)

Present your findings as a written report, a video, a poster or a PowerPoint presentation but be sure to refer closely to the novel/s.

2. Trace the spread of Christianity in the South Pacific or the spread of Buddhism in Indonesia and Malaysia. Present your findings as a chart, poster or PowerPoint presentation.
3. Write an action plan for Maryam and Lazarus, outlining what you think they should do now that they are the leaders of the congregation. What major challenges should they be prepared for and how should they deal with them? For example, most of the congregation appear to be addicted to toddy.
4. Imagine that you are Ruth. Write a diary or journal in which you describe life in the camp for her without Maryam or Lazarus. Include the birth of her child. You should write no less than eight entries.
5. In Chapter Ten of *Resurrection* Maryam comes up with her own philosophy of life. Carefully reread the passage below.

Compare it with the poem 'Desiderata' by Max Ehrmann. In essay form, comment on the similarities and differences between these two pieces of writing. Be sure to discuss styles of writing, choice of vocabulary and form as well as ideas. Then write your own philosophy or guide to life.

From *Resurrection*:

Her dear old friend Hushai's words slipped unbidden to her mind. There are many different kinds of faith. Mine, I take not from the Rules that fetter us. I look to the mountains and the sea, the sun and the moon, the distant stars. We are all bonded together with this hallowed earth on which we stand . . . Of all the doctrines and beliefs she had come to know of since her Crossing, this was the one that sat most comfortably with her, she realised now.

She was a girl shaped by the land and sea, no more or less important than any other living thing. Just as Aanjay had explained the cycle of birth, death and re-birth as being like the seasons of a tree, she too felt one with nature. In this crumbling world, where humans had tried to assert their will upon the landscape, only nature had prevailed. A wind-blown seed, patient in its resting place amid the cracks in the stonework, could wait an eternity for human folly to over-reach itself and cause its unnatural structures to tumble down – at which time the patient seed would finally sprout and prosper, subsuming the ruins into the eternal cycles of the growing tree, each part interconnected by the force of nature's inclusive will.

In Onewēre's story she must be the patient seed; ready to sprout amidst the cracks, and grow until the structure the Apostles had built tumbled down and reverted into the essential – natural – goodness of all living things. She must believe it. Had to

*believe it if she was now to reveal the cure –
the miriki-tarai and its bounteous gift of life –
that, thanks to nature’s goodness, was
growing unimpeded on Onewēre’s shores.
(pages 163–164)*

Desiderata

*Go placidly amid the noise and haste,
and remember what peace there may be
in silence.*

*As far as possible without surrender
be on good terms with all persons.
Speak your truth quietly and clearly;
and listen to others,
even the dull and the ignorant;
they too have their story.
Avoid loud and aggressive persons,
they are vexatious to the spirit.*

*If you compare yourself with others,
you may become vain and bitter;
for always there will be greater and lesser
persons than yourself.*

*Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans.
Keep interested in your own career,
however humble;
it is a real possession in the changing
fortunes of time.*

*Exercise caution in your business affairs;
for the world is full of trickery.
But let this not blind you to what virtue
there is;*

*many persons strive for high ideals;
and everywhere life is full of heroism.*

*Be yourself.
Especially, do not feign affection.
Neither be cynical about love;
for in the face of all aridity and
disenchantment
it is as perennial as the grass.*

*Take kindly the counsel of the years,
gracefully surrendering the things of youth.
Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in
sudden misfortune.*

*But do not distress yourself with dark
imaginings.*

*Many fears are born of fatigue and
loneliness.*

*Beyond a wholesome discipline,
be gentle with yourself.
You are a child of the universe,
no less than the trees and the stars;
you have a right to be here.
And whether or not it is clear to you,
no doubt the universe is unfolding as it
should.*

*Therefore be at peace with God,
whatever you conceive Him to be,
and whatever your labors and aspirations,
in the noisy confusion of life keep peace
with your soul.*

*With all its sham, drudgery, and broken
dreams,
it is still a beautiful world.
Be cheerful.
Strive to be happy.*

6. There have been many outstanding women leaders in history who have taken on the role of warrior queen or spiritual teacher in order to highlight injustice, corruption or discrimination. Choose one of the women from the list below. Find out about her life and her achievements. What similarities and differences are there between the woman you have chosen to research and Maryam? Present your findings as a chart or PowerPoint presentation.

- Joan of Arc
- Aung San Suu Kyi
- Sophie Scholl
- Jane Adam
- Rosa Parks
- Dorothy Day
- Emily Hobhouse
- Emily Pankhurst
- Elizabeth Fry
- Kate Sheppard
- Princess Te Puea
- Mother Mary Aubert
- Mother Mary Mackillop

Essay topics

The following essay topics commonly appear in the Level 1 English external exam for Achievement Standard 90849 (1.1): Show understanding of specified aspect(s) of studied written text(s), using supporting evidence.

1. Describe a character or individual you enjoyed reading about in *Resurrection*. Explain why this character helped you understand an important idea in the text.
2. Describe at least one idea or theme in *Resurrection* that you found interesting. Explain why you found the idea/s or theme/s interesting in the text as a whole.
3. Describe at least one important aspect of setting in *Resurrection*. Explain why this aspect helped you understand a key idea or theme in the novel. Setting could include time and/or place.
4. Describe at least one important conflict in *Resurrection*. Explain why the conflict helped you understand the key idea/s in this novel.
5. Describe at least one key event at the beginning of *Resurrection*. Explain why the event/s helped you understand a key idea/s in the novel.
6. Describe at least one language feature that was used to help you understand an important idea in *Resurrection*. Explain why the language feature/s helped you understand a key idea/ideas in this novel. Language features could include imagery, style, vocabulary, or symbolism.

Significant connections across texts

The following texts could be used in association with *Resurrection* and the other titles in the Blood of the Lamb trilogy for those students working on Achievement Standard 1.8: Explain significant connection(s) across texts, using supporting evidence.

Literature:

- *The Chrysalids* by John Wyndham
- *Tomorrow, When the War Began* by John Marsden
- *Noughts and Crosses* by Malorie Blackman
- *Salt* by Maurice Gee
- *Genesis* by Bernard Beckett
- *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood
- *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins
- *Onyx and Crake* by Margaret Atwood
- *The Children of Men* by PD James
- *Feed* by M T Anderson
- *The Road* by Cormac McCarthy
- 'The Lottery' by Shirley Jackson (Short story)

Film:

- *Avatar*
- *Gattaca*
- *Tomorrow, When the War Began*

