

HOLD BACK THE TIDE

MELINDA
SALISBURY

Discussion guide

1. In this book, Alva is convinced that her father is a murderer, and most of her energy goes into keeping herself alive long enough to escape. Do you think she goes about this the right way? What would you do in her position?
2. In Hold Back the Tide, Ren is seen as an outsider and generally shunned by the villagers. Why do you think this is, and what comparisons can be drawn with the way communities act today?
3. The end of the novel has shocking twist. Did you see it coming? What was your reaction?
4. Who was your favourite character and why?
5. Why is the natural scenery so important to this novel? Why do you think Scotland was an ideal setting?

Creative ideas at home

1. In Hold Back the Tide, the horror unleashed on Ormscaula is a result of greed and overuse of the world's natural resources. Plot a story where other nightmares could be awoken by being careless with the world around us. Think about what has a direct impact on the environment. Does the amount of plastic in the sea awaken the kraken? Or the melting ice caps uncover a giant?

Things to consider:

What is the creature?

What is the environmental issue?

What happens when the creature(s) is/are unleashed?

Where is this set?

When is this set?

Who is the hero?

What can be done to solve the crisis?

2. In this book, the creatures are from Melinda's imagination and nightmare, with a few details from common folklore. The book is set in Scotland, which has its own amazing creatures of myth and legend. Do some research online and see which one interests you. Write a short piece from that creature's point of view, about what's happening to the world around them.

3. This novel is inspired by Melinda's own visits to Scotland. Whilst Ormscaula is fictional, the book is located in a real place, by Loch a'Choire. Have a look at this area, and write a piece of narrative non-fiction about what it looks like as sunrise.