

## A Unit on *The Friday Society* by Adrienne Kress

### The unit is designed by:

**Flemming Kress**, head of English (ret.), Toronto District School Board;  
Adjunct Professor (ret.), Faculty of Education, Queen's University  
and

**Cynthia Kress**, English teacher (ret.), Toronto District School Board;  
Adjunct Professor (ret.), Faculty of Education, Queen's University

The following is a unit intended for teachers of the novel *The Friday Society*. As the novel is written for the “Young Adult” division of the reading public, we planned the unit for grades 9 or 10. It’s very easy, however, to give the study a bit more “gravitas” and push it into higher grades.

The unit consists of

- suggestions for activities prior to the reading of the book,
- two possible approaches to the day-by-day study of the book,
- and topics for possible culminating activities.

In addition, we have arranged the content in ways that permit a teacher to apply to this unit a number of the principles of “Differentiated Instruction,” as described in various Ontario Ministry and School Boards documents (e.g. <<http://pdtogo.com/di/>>) and in the “Layered Curriculum” work of Kathie F. Nunley (<http://www.help4teachers.com/>) See Appendix 3 for specifics.

### **A. Before reading the book (See Appendix 1 for useful information):**

Look at the time period and the genre of the book. The associated activities can be teacher-led or student-led (as group work, fast research topics assigned to individual students, etc.)

#### **1. Victorian/Edwardian England:**

The teacher does an overview of the time period focusing on class, roles of men/women and the growth of technology with pictures and videos (1-2 classes). Material is provided in Appendix 1.

It gives a “quick-and-dirty” overview of the time period for the teacher and/or students, but also provides sources for further exploration.

## **2. Steampunk:**

First possibility: You can give the students a definition of Steampunk (perhaps adapting the one in Appendix 2 to suit your students) and show some examples of steampunk inventions. There are lots to be found on the Internet, including a blog by Adrienne Kress, the author of *The Friday Society* herself, entitled “So you want to dress Steampunk.”

<<http://ididntchoosethis.blogspot.ca/2012/11/so-you-want-to-dress-steampunk.html>> There are others in her blog about the launch of the book

<<http://ididntchoosethis.blogspot.ca/2012/12/steampunk-tuesday-most-successful-gala.html>>

You may also want to show some excerpts from the Warner Bros. Guy Ritchie film *Sherlock Holmes* (December, 2009, starring Robert Downey Jr. and Jude Law). 1-2 classes

## **OR**

Divide the class into groups and have them research the Victorian Period and Steampunk and then present material (5-10-minute presentations) to give the others an overview of the period (3-4 classes – research, planning, presentation.)

## **3. The author, Adrienne Kress:**

See the biography on her website <http://www.adriennekress.com/about-adrienne.html>

## **B. Two approaches to day-by-day teaching:**

### **Approach 1 – P.A.C.T.S. – a different way of helping students learn to read more closely:**

The acronym P.A.C.T.S. stands for **Plot, Atmosphere, Character, Theme, and Setting** – the five basic components of any work of literature. Essentially, the approach is to have them look at each chapter as it relates to P.A.C.T.S.

First, of course, we make sure that all the students are working with the same definitions of the terms. (See Appendix 2.) Then, instead of giving the students specific questions, tell them that you expect them to read each chapter with P.A.C.T.S in mind. They make notes about what each section adds to the reader’s understanding of each term.

For example, in *The Friday Society*:

Chapter 1 - “Cora Bell”

P. an explosion, Cora goes to find Lord White,

A. confusion (why did the explosion happen?), concern (Mrs. Philips is concerned about Cora), curiosity (where is Cora going and why?)

C. Cora Bell – 17 yrs old, likes explosions, sarcastic, cares about Mrs. Philips’s feelings, efficient, independent

Mrs. Philips – housekeeper, concerned about Cora, caring

T. no theme yet

S. London, 1900, Lord White’s house (has a housekeeper, a butler, a lab – so must be upper class)

. . . and so on, for each chapter. The students will quickly see that not every chapter is the same in the amount of information for each component. Some chapters focus on Character, some on Plot, etc.

How to take up this kind of homework? There are several possibilities, each of which can be turned into a layered activity.

1. Have each student do all 5 components for each chapter and take up their results in the same way that you would take up questions, discussing their answers, having them give quotes to support them, putting relevant material on the board, etc.

OR

2. Put the letters PACTS on the board; have students come to the board and write out their information; hold a classroom discussion, etc.

OR

3. Put the students into groups with each group discussing one component and then reporting to the class. (If you like group work, these could be permanent groups so that they become experts on one area and remain responsible for teaching it to the rest of the class throughout the study.)

OR

4. At appropriate points (or perhaps for culminating projects) have the students figure out and explain the relationships among components. How does Plot help to bring out the personalities of the Characters? How does the Setting help to create the Atmosphere? How do the Characters affect Plot? How does Character help to develop Theme? Etc.

This approach helps the students see the work as an integrated piece. It helps them to see why the author has taken the approach she has. It helps to show patterns. Etc.

**Approach 2 – Chapter questions.** (While there are 53 chapters, many are very short. Some have only one or two questions, so chapters should be grouped together for homework purposes.) Chapter questions help keep students focused on their reading. Many of the questions are devised in such a way as to help students pay attention to themes

and issues that they might otherwise miss, and thus the questions may give some students a little assistance in reading more “mindfully.” Of course, in their time-honoured way, chapter questions can also provide a way to divide the book into sections, keep up a steady stream of homework and/or become quiz questions to help the teacher to gauge whether or not the students have actually read the book.

You will notice that each question (and sometimes a part of the odd question) is marked with the letter (B) or (C). These designations have to do with the “Differentiated Instruction” approach outlined in Appendix 3.

## READING QUESTIONS

### PART 1

#### Chapter 1

1. (B) If you judge by Cora’s thoughts in Chapter 1, in what way is Lord White’s treatment of her very unusual for their time and place?
2. (C) a) Where and when does the story take place? b) Is there anything that shows up that doesn’t seem to fit in with the time period?
3. (C) a) Who is Mrs. Philips and what is her relationship to Cora? b) (B) What does she mean when she says, “A creature of both worlds is a creature of none?” (p. 9)
4. (B) The chapter never explicitly explains, but why do you think it’s important for Cora to carry her small, specially-designed pistol when she goes out by herself?

#### Chapter 2

1. (B) Cora is frustrated by the slow progress of the horse-drawn taxi she is in at the start of the chapter. She vows to take a “steam cab” next time. What do you suppose a steam cab is?
2. (B) The Red Veil is an opium den. What is opium? What is an opium den?
3. (B) Where do you think the “there” is in the statement “She would not go back there. Even if she had to physically, now and then, she would not go back there in her mind.” (p. 15)
4. (B) During her visit to the Red Veil, Cora reveals a good deal of her personality to the reader. Pick out four events and explain what each shows about Cora’s mental and physical skills.
5. (B) What does Cora mean when, giving the Chinese man some money as she and Lord White are leaving, she says, “For your discretion”?

#### Chapter 3

1. (B) Lord White’s house is described as “Tudor.” What does that mean?
2. (B) What does the meeting between Cora and Andrew Harris reveal about a) Cora, and b) Bell?
3. (B) Cora is very upset about the news that Harris has been hired by Lord White. Why is she so upset?
4. (B) Why does Harris’s compliment “a pretty thing like you” (p. 28) bother her so much?
5. (B) Cora is forever thinking that she is “not like other girls.” What signs are there that she may not be as unconventional as she thinks?

#### Chapters 4

1. (B) How are Nellie and Cora similar? How are they different? Give examples.
2. (B) How are Nellie and Sherry similar?
3. (B) We can see already that the author uses humour to undercut the tension. Give some examples of this in this chapter.

#### Chapter 5

1. (C) a) Where do Nellie and The Great Raheem live? b) Why do they live here when they could afford to live elsewhere?
2. (C) What unusual skill does Nellie have that Raheem put to good use in his act?
3. (B) Why is she so surprised when Raheem comments on the quality of her mind? What is she used to instead?
4. (B) The last sentence in Chapter 5 is about Nellie: "She was awfully helpful." Given what you know about her, why is Nellie so helpful?

#### Chapter 6

1. (B) What is a "music hall" or "burlesque house"?
2. (C) What unusual event interrupts the dinner that Raheem and Nellie are having?
3. (C) Why does Raheem break the neck of the man who pounded on the door?

#### Chapter 7

1. (B) Why do you think that the author starts this chapter with "And then there was an explosion" again?
2. (B) The second paragraph begins with "Stupid, blasted Jap!" This is very different from the introductions to the other girls. a) What do we learn about Callum from his first statement? b) What do we know about Michiko and Callum's relationship? c) How is this different from the relationships between Cora and Lord White and Nellie and Raheem's?
3. (B) Describe Michiko's background. How is it similar to and different from Cora's and Nellie's?

#### Chapter 8

1. (B) How is Callum like and unlike Lord White and Raheem?
2. (C) Why does Michiko stay with Sir Callum, even though he abuses her?
3. (B) Michiko understands and speaks very little English. How does the author deal with this problem? How do we know when Michiko is speaking in English or speaking in Japanese? What language does she think in? How do we know this?
4. (B) The discussion with the old samurai allows Michiko to explain her feelings to someone who speaks her language and understands her culture. What do we learn about her past, about her feelings, about her place in English society?
5. (C) Of what does the old armaments dealer accuse Michiko?
6. (C) What does the old samurai in effect give Michiko permission to do at the end of the chapter?

#### Chapter 9

- 1.(B) What evidence is there in the chapter that Michiko values humility?
2. (C) Why does Callum insist that Michiko wear a silk bathrobe during fighting demonstrations?

3. (C) What is the present from the old samurai?
4. (B) Why does Michiko cry at the end of the chapter?

#### Chapter 10

1. (C) At the gala, why is Cora so beautifully dressed?
2. (C) Why is she angry, despite how good she looks?
- 3.(B) What is Cora's main function for Lord White as he greets people around the room? What does her ability to perform this function show about her? What does Lord White's need for her skill show about Lord White?
4. (C) The gala is billed as "an evening of modernity." What kinds of things are on display and what makes them "modern"?
  
- 5.(B) What is the most "science-fiction-y" exhibit of the evening? It's based on Kress's reading of a book from 1901 by one of the pioneers of science fiction. Find the name of the author whose invention Kress borrows here.

#### Chapter 10 ½

- 1.(B) Note the number of this chapter and the next. Why do you think the author numbered them in this way?
2. (C) From Nellie's thoughts we learn two things about the dead body back in her home. First, where have they moved it to? Secondly, what has Raheem discovered about the ring the dead man was wearing?
3. (B)There is a scientific demonstration involving a mechanical bird that flies over the audience. What do you think is making it glow green?
4. (B) Each of the girls observes different things through the show. What are a) Cora's observations, b) Nellie's observations, c) Michiko's observations? What do they show about each girl?
- 5.(B) Cora leaves Lord White to the company of his peers and refers to "the forbidden world of men." What does she mean by this, and why does she sigh?

#### Chapter 10 ¾

1. (B) Nellie starts the chapter by reacting rather violently to the advances of the men at the gala. What do you suppose makes them think they have a right to move in on her like this? Take into account the fact that they laugh when she runs away from them.
- 2.(B) Is the behavior of the lowly footman toward Nellie the same as or different from the behavior of the gentlemen upstairs?
3. (B) Both Cora and Nellie are surprised by the effect of striking back. What are they surprised by? What do they learn?
- 4.(B) Why doesn't Cora share Nellie's excitement about riding in steam cars?

#### Chapter 11

- 1.(B) This chapter is called "The Fog." Why were fogs so thick in London in 1900?
- 2.(B) What does Michiko find ominous about the empty carriage in the fog?
3. (B) What atmosphere does the fog help to create?
4. (C)Michiko is a highly-trained samurai warrior. Why does she lose her fight with the figure in the fog? How does she feel about herself at the end of the fight?

## Chapter 12

1. (C) What insightful question does Nellie ask Cora after Cora tells her about Andrew Harris?
- 2.(B) Why do Nellie and Cora confide in each other even though they've just met?
- 3.(B) Why is it Cora who takes charge, and what instructions does she give to the cabbie?
4. (C) Scheherazade screeches "Death". When did she say this before and to whom?

## **PART 2**

## Chapter 13

- 1.(B) Why is Part Two called "The Beginning"?
- 2.(B)Nellie reveals that a lot of people think she's stupid. Why might many people think she's stupid? Why doesn't she care?
- 3.(C) Whose head turns out to have been lying on the street where the other girls found Michiko? With which presentation at the gala was the person belonging to the head associated?
- 4.(B) How is the problem of Michiko's lack of English dealt with by the girls?

## Chapter 14

- 1.(B) Do you know any games like "Answer the Question or Do the Deed"? What are the rules? Why are games like these popular?
- 2.(B) What are the potential problems with this sort of game, especially when the players have been drinking?
3. (C) What is Cora's explanation for her "very little" crush on Andrew Harris? (B) Is this a reasonable explanation? Why or why not?
- 4.(B) Why is it Michiko who calls off the "kiss a corpse" deed?
- 5.(B) What signs are there that Nellie may be romantically interested in the young police officer who comes to the door?

## Chapter 15

1. (C) How would you describe Cora's reaction upon encountering Raheem in his underwear?
- 2.(B) How does Raheem treat Cora? What does his treatment of Cora show about him?
- 3.(B) Why does Cora think she'll be mocked if she's seen returning to Lord White's house in the morning wearing her gala clothing?
4. (C) Nellie says she's jealous after seeing Cora and Raheem talk. What is she jealous of?
- 5.(B) Describe the welcome Cora gets when she gets home. What does it show about her relationship with Lord White and Mrs. Philips?
- 6.(B) What do you think the last sentence of the chapter means?

## Chapter 16

- 1.(B) What does Michiko think of her two friends of the previous evening?
2. (C) What mission has Michiko assigned herself?
3. (C) What does the old samurai's assistant ask Michiko? Why does she refuse at first?
4. (C)What special skill does the assistant have? (B) What do we call this skill today?
5. (C) What exchange do they agree on?
6. (C) Michiko makes a decision at the end of the chapter. What is it?

## Chapter 17

1. (C) Both Raheem and Nellie are curious about how a scientist like Thompkins could have put himself in danger. What does Raheem suggest that Nellie should do?
- 2.(B) At the Medical and Scientific Institute, Nellie finds the receptionist reading a book called *Personal Aeronautics*. What does the book's title mean? What is it likely to be about?
3. (C) What is Nellie looking for as she walks the Institute's halls? Does she find it?
- 4.(B) What is odd about Dr. Mantis's behavior when Nellie first meets him?
5. (C) How does Nellie get Dr. Mantis to leave the lab so that she may search it?
6. (C) How do her magician's-assistant skills help Nellie when she wants to find the source of the buzzing?
7. (C) What does Nellie find in the locked drawer apart from the checkbook?
8. (C) One of the names in the chequebook is Carter. Who is Carter? What other names are mentioned?
9. (C) When Dr. Mantis returns, Nellie tries several ways to get away. What are they? Which one finally works?
10. (C) Nellie makes a decision at the end of the chapter. What is it?

#### Chapter 18

1. (C) What problem are Harris and Cora presented with before Lord White leaves? According to Cora, how is this assignment different from most of her usual assignments?
2. (C) Why do they stop working on the problem?
3. (C) What is Cora's own personal project about?
4. (C) Why isn't Lord White working on his project along with Cora and Harris?
5. (C) What is Andrew Harris's favourite theory?
- 6.(B) Does Cora agree that his theory applies to her?
- 7.(B) What new development is there in the relationship between Andrew and Cora by the end of the chapter? How does Cora feel about it?
- 8.(B) What signs are there that Andrew still doesn't see Cora as his equal?

#### Chapter 19

1. (C) What is Cora thinking about when her feet carry her to the crime scene of the other night?
2. (C) In what condition does Cora find Alice? Who is Alice?
3. (C) Where has Nellie been going when she comes upon Cora and Alice?
4. (C) Where has Michiko been going when she finds Cora and Nellie?
- 5.(B) Cora feels guilty about what happens to Alice on a couple of levels. Explain.
6. (C) Describe Alice's home – as it really is and as Cora remembers it.
- 7.(B) Alice's mother says, "The police aren't interested in the likes of us.... But they'd listen to you." (page 178) What does she mean by this? What does this show about society at the time?
- 8.(B) Just before the end of the chapter, what does Cora realize about her relationship with Michiko and Nellie? How does she feel about it?

#### Chapter 20

1. (C) After Nellie has told Cora about her visit to the Medical and Scientific Institute and about the contents of the chequebook in the drawer, what does she want Cora to do?
2. (C) Why does Michiko decide not to kill the three threatening men?

### **PART 3**

## Chapter 21

- 1.(B) Why is this a good point in the story to begin Part Three?
2. (C) Why does Hayao wake Michiko up at 5:00 in the morning?
3. (C) Why does she take so much time getting dressed before joining him in the garden?
- 4.(B) Michiko's lesson of the day for Hayao is one that is very difficult for young people who are used to feeling pleasure and immediately smiling or surprise and immediately gasping. What distinction does she want Hayao to make?

## Chapter 22

- 1.(B) What is the Palace of Westminster?
2. (C) How do all the politicians know Cora Bell?
3. (C) What knowledge does Cora reveal to Mr. Carter? How does he react?
4. (C) This is second time that someone has commented on the eyes of one of the girls. When was the first time?

## Chapter 23

1. (C) Why is Raheem at the docks?
2. (B) Describe the scene at the dock. What about it is typical of 1900?
3. (C) Two long-distance modes of transport are described. One is ocean-going ships. What is the other?
4. (C) Raheem has ordered items for other people as well as for himself. What is in the box picked up by the woman?
5. (C) Where exactly did Nellie come upon the names "Proper" and "Staunch" at the Institute?
- 6.(B) Why do Proper and Staunch smell of death? Is theirs a typical occupation in 1900 England?
7. (C) What advice does Raheem give Nellie about Proper and Staunch?

## Chapter 24

- 1.(B) Why is Cora afraid of spending time with Andrew Harris?
2. (C) Where is she going today instead of working with him on her assigned projects?
- 3.(B) Both girls seem confused about Mr. Carter's question, "Who told you?" What do you think Mr. Carter's question meant? (You may have to look back two chapters for this one.)
- 4.(B) Why does the desk sergeant call for Murphy instead of throwing the two girls out? Why does he choose Murphy in particular?
5. (C) Officer Murphy tells the girls that many policemen are investigating the death of Dr. Welland and a robbery. What was stolen? Where was it stolen from?
- 7.(B) Apart from their being occupied with these crimes, why else would the police be reluctant to investigate the murder of a flower girl?
8. (C) What is Cora's theory about the motive for the murder of Dr. Welland?
- 9.(B) The girls are annoyed that they aren't being consulted on the investigation of Dr. Welland since they discovered his body. What information do they give the officer that shows that they ought to be consulted?
- 10.(B) What does Cora mean when she says that Officer Murphy has "come to exemplify all that we have come to expect of the police"?

11.(B) Cora remarks that she will investigate Alice's murder herself. What resolve does this remark inspire in Nellie?

#### Chapter 25

- 1.(B) What is slowing Michiko's progress in learning Hayao's running techniques?
- 2.(B) How does Hayao's skill make him see things differently from other people?
- 3.(B) Why does Michiko find it hard to trust anyone?

#### Chapter 26

1. (C) What is Nellie's plan to find out more about Mr. Carter?
2. (C) Which of Nellie's skills as a magician's assistant come in handy in this chapter and chapter 28?

#### Chapter 27

- 1.(B) Hayao also has personal challenges to his learning. What, according to Michiko, is Hayao's main problem as a learner?
2. (C) Why doesn't Michiko want to work with Hayao this particular night?
3. (C) Where are Callum and Michiko going today, and for what purpose?

#### Chapter 28

1. (C) How does Nellie get into Carter's house?

#### Chapter 29

- 1.(C) What is going wrong with the lesson that Michiko is supposed to teach?
2. (C) Why is she dismissed from the room but ordered to stay in the house?
- 3.(B) Michiko is fascinated (and repelled) by the things she sees in the house. What do her reactions show about the two different cultures?
4. (C) Whom does she meet in the library? What information is she told?
5. (C) What do they find that might be important?
6. (C) They are interrupted by a scream. What has happened? Who are the men in the hallway?
7. (C) Why does Nellie have to escape? How does she do it? Why does Michiko stay?

#### Chapter 30

- 1.(B) Why is Andrew Harris disappointed in Cora at the start of the chapter?
2. (C) According to Andrew, what were the circumstances surrounding Lord White's hiring him? What is his attitude towards work? (B)What does this attitude show about the class system in the British society of the time?
- 3.(B) What does Cora mean by "passion"? What does Andrew mean by it?
- 4.(B) What does Andrew think Lord White's motive was for taking in Cora when she was ten?

#### Chapter 31

1. (C) How does Michiko acquire the silver mask?

#### Chapter 32

1. (C) What are Cora and Andrew doing when the delivery boy comes to get the device they've been building?
- 2.(B) Cora explains (in her thoughts) why it's so important for women in her position to maintain a reputation for purity. Why can't she follow her heart as men do?
- 3.(B) There is one more small but important reason why she doesn't ask Andrew to stay. What is it?
4. (C) After Andrew has left, what does Nellie bring to Cora?
5. (C) Why is Cora so shocked when she has applied the chemical?
6. (C) Why does Cora decide she and Nellie have to go to the Tower of London?
7. (C)Who do they decide is probably responsible for the death of Dr. Welland and the flower girls as well as for the device that Lord White and Cora have built?

### Chapter 33

1. (B) What is the tower of London?
2. (C) What plan do Cora and Nellie devise when they get to the Tower?
3. (C) What does Nellie find on the ground outside the Wakefield Tower?
4. (C) Describe the person she confronts inside the Crown Jewels exhibit. How does he get past her?
- 5.(B) Why does Nellie fire the gun?
6. (C) Who is the masked figure who attacks the thief in the fog?
7. (C) How does the fog man win the fight?
8. (B)What does Cora mean by her question, "Is it you?"
9. (B)What does Cora mean by "You were right, Nellie, your man and mine"
10. (B)Why does Nellie feel that "Maybe the night hadn't been a total loss after all"?
- 11.(B) Make a chart of all the crimes/murders that have been committed so far. Provide the following information:  
 Crime/who was murdered, when, where, by whom  
 Leave room on the chart for more crimes and connections.

### Chapter 34

- 1.(B) Why is Cora a little disappointed in the morning paper's account of the events at the Tower of London?
2. (C) Now that she has finished the work on the big blueprint project, to what project does she once more turn her attention?
3. (C) Where has Sir Callum Fielding-Shaw gone?
4. (C) What skills does Hayao have trouble with?
5. (B)Michiko teaches him one more strategy, but he has trouble swallowing it. What is the strategy that he dislikes so much? Why do you think he dislikes it?

### Chapter 35

1. (C) When Cora is done with her smaller project, what does Andrew suggest that they do?
- 2.(B) What is unusual about the Duke of York?
- 3.(B) What do the boys call Andrew's Jekyll and Hyde theory? They ask, "What does a woman know about two sides?" (page 288) Cora explodes with a heated response. Summarize her position and discuss what the ideas expressed in this section show about the place of women and the poor in society. Do any of her statements apply today?

- 4.(B) What do you think of Andrew's theory about murder?
- 5.(B) Do you think the "tiff" Cora and Andrew have when they leave the pub is serious or just a result of the beer and therefore unimportant?

#### Chapter 36

1. (C) What does Officer Murphy bring to Nellie's dressing room?
- 2.(B) Officer Murphy reports that the few witnesses to the flower girl attacks don't have many details about the killer. The girl that Cora saved outside the Tower does contribute one possibly important fact, though. What is it?
3. (C) Where do Nellie and Officer Murphy go together?
4. (B)What do they learn about each other over the course of their dinner?
- 5.(B) What does Nellie suggest that Murphy use in his investigation of the flower girl attacks? Why does her suggestion sound like a good idea?
6. (C) Why does Officer Murphy wear a moustache?

### **PART 4**

#### Chapter 37

- 1.(B) What is familiar about the opening line of Part Four?
- 2.(B) Why does Michiko have such a good view of the disaster that befalls St. Paul's cathedral?
3. (C)What sort of vehicle does the fire department use?
4. (C) During their conversation about the "tele-audio device," Lord White finally tells Cora what he intended Andrew's job description to be back when he hired him. What was Andrew Harris's job, according to Lord White. (B)Why is this news a complete surprise to Cora?
5. (C) What does the voice in the sky demand?
6. (B)Why does Cora leave the Westminster Palace during the uproar?
- 7.(B) What factors does she think are connected to one another?
- 8.(B) Who gives the clearest description of what happened when St. Paul's was blown up?  
(C)What is that description?
- 9.(B) What conclusion do Cora and Michiko come to about all the crimes they know about?
- 10.(B) Why do they go to Nellie's?

#### Chapter 38

- 1.(B) Why does Michiko find the square that has the old samurai's stall in it "more eerie than passing the demolished St. Paul's"?
- 2.(B) Why doesn't Michiko doesn't want to get involved with Cora and Nellie? Why does she?
- 3.(B) What is the purpose of each of the tasks that the girls have set themselves in "their very first plan together"?

#### Chapter 39

1. (B)Why does Michiko think that the bomb that blew up St. Paul's may have come from under the ground?
2. (C) Where does she go to find out what lies under the city? What does she discover?

3. (B) Why does Michiko ask for paper and ink?

#### Chapter 40

1. (C) Where does the woman at the desk send Nellie when she asks for Staunch and Proper?
- 2.(B) How can you tell that Dr. Mantis remembers Nellie from their last encounter?
- 3.(B) What do you think is in the white cloth that Dr. Mantis places over Nellie's mouth and nose?

#### Chapter 41

1. (C) How is the general public behaving at the post office? Why is the clerk not panicking?  
(B)What is ironic about this?
2. (B)Why is Cora at the post office? (C)What does she learn?
- 3.(B) What do you think is at the top of the piece of paper that Cora is given?
4. (B)How does Cora figure out where Nellie has probably been taken?

#### Chapter 42

1. (B)What have Staunch and Proper done to Nellie?
2. (C) Cora is attacked. By what (or whom)? What does Cora conclude from its presence?
3. (C)What turns out to be the cause of the humming and whirring that Nellie noticed when Mr. Staunch came close to her back at the Institute?
4. (C)When Mr. Proper points out that Cora has only one gun to fire at three men, How does Nellie help Cora? How does Scheherazade help?
5. (C) How did Nellie get out of her situation?
6. (C) Nellie makes a shocking declaration at the end of the chapter. What is it, and how does Cora react?

#### Chapter 43

1. (C) What are Cora's thoughts as she watches the kettle boil? (B)What is her mood?
2. (C) Surprisingly, who encourages Cora to keep going?

#### Chapter 44

1. (B)What arguments does Cora use to try to convince Nellie to help her and Michiko to save the city?
- 2.(B) What is Michiko's contribution to the discussion?
3. (C) What "new tactic" finally changes Nellie's mind?
4. (B) What is the main purpose of their costumes? How does each girl's costume make sense for her personality?

#### Chapter 45

1. (C) What powerful weapon does Cora take along in addition to her usual pistol? Name and describe it.
- 2.(B) How does Michiko feel about being a member of a team?
3. (C) Whom does Michiko send home with great firmness?
4. (C) What new weapon does Raheem give Nellie?

#### Chapter 46

- 1.(B) Why is it Michiko that leads the three girls toward the abandoned underground station near Tower Bridge?
- 2.(B) This is a very complicated chapter. Each of the girls has to use her special skills and knowledge. What skills are used? (A chart might be a good way to keep track of which girl does what.)
3. (C) How does Michiko find the trap door in the tunnel floor, even though she can't see?
4. (B) The author injects humor throughout the book. This is a suspenseful chapter. Where and why does she use humor here?
5. (C) Who is the first of their enemies to confront the team once they get the locked door out of the way? What happens to him?

#### Chapter 47

1. (C) What sort of creature grabs Cora by the throat?
2. (C) Who stops the creature from choking Cora?
3. (C) When the girls see that there are too many creatures, which weapon does Cora use?
4. (C) To whom does she give this weapon at the end of the chapter? (B)Why?

#### Chapter 48

1. (C) Who is the Fog?
2. (C) Why does the Fog want to blow up London?
- 3.(B) Summarize the Fog's reasons for wanting to blow up London. Do you think the reasons justify the behaviour?
4. (B) Cora asks the Fog what all the stolen things (the diamond, the cavorite, etc.) were for. Then she asks why the Fog killed the flower girls. What does the Fog answer?
- 5.(B) What is the flaw in the Fog's escape plan?
- 6.(B) What proposal does the Fog make to the three girls? What is their response? Why?
- 7.(B) How is the bomb going to be detonated?
- 8.(C) What does the Fog do with the Chekhov once Dr. Mantis has passed it to her?

#### Chapter 49

- 1.(C) Who saves Cora? How?
- 2.(B) What happens to the Fog and the assailant? How does the outcome affect Michiko?
3. (B) What does Michiko's statement, "No... You have not." mean?
4. (C) What conclusion does Michiko reach about her desire to be a samurai?

#### Chapter 50

1. (C) Who has ended up in possession of the Chekhov? What task does Cora give this person?
- 2.(B) What is Cora setting off to do?
3. (C) What weapon does Nellie use to stop the scientists who are pursuing her?
4. (C) Whom does she almost kill with this weapon? How does she save him? What does he do in response to her gesture?
5. (C) What offer does Nellie make to the scientists to get them on her side?
- 6.(B) Why does Michiko not kill the Fog when she has the opportunity?
- 7.(B) How does the Fog die? What does the manner of the Fog's death show about Michiko, the Fog and Nellie?

10. (B) Why did the author break the chapter up the way she did? Did you think it was effective?

#### Chapter 51

1. (C) What has Cora done with the bomb?
2. (B) What is the one unresolved puzzle, now that the Fog and her henchmen have been defeated?
3. (C) What does Nellie decide the girls need to do before they solve this last problem?

#### Chapter 52

1. (B) Describe the plan the girls come up with to solve the mystery.
2. (C) Who approaches Cora as she walks up and down the river bank?"
3. (C) Who turns out to be working with the bloodhound?
4. (C) Who finally "arrests" the flower girl killer after the killer stabs the dog?
5. (B) Cora tries to convince him that his actions are evil, but fails. Why does she fail?
6. (C) Why does Cora, uncharacteristically, burst into tears?
7. (B) What do the girls decide to become? While this is a very big step for all of them, it's even bigger for Michiko. In what way does agreeing to be a member of the "society" an essential part of who she thinks she is? (See also the beginning of Chapter 53.)
- 8.(B) Why do they need the word "society" in the name of their organization?

#### Chapter 53

1. (B) What is the "exotic ritual" commemorating, the one that starts the chapter? Whom has Michiko defied in order to attend?
2. (B) What is Raheem's attitude towards the girls' new project? Why does he know about it, when there's no indication that Lord White and Callum know?
3. (C) Who, without knowing it, provides the name for the girls' society?
4. (C) What does the term 'Man Friday' mean and where does it come from?
5. (B) Why do the girls give themselves the name 'The Friday Society'? Do you think it's a good name?

## TOPICS FOR POSSIBLE CULMINATING ACTIVITIES

**These topics can be used for essays, group presentations, etc.**

1. (C) The book *The Friday Society* has been called a "superhero origin story". Compare it to another origin story (e.g. Batman). What characteristics do they have in common?
2. The use of stereotypes/archetypes/tropes in TFS.

a) (A) Tropes (conventional ideas or expressions) “allow you to explore and play against expectations . . .” Adrienne Kress in a guest blog on “Smarty Pants”  
<<http://foreveryoungadult.com/2012/12/13/an-authors-guide-to-subverting-tropes-in-ya/>>  
Discuss what tropes Kress uses in the novel and whether she is successful in using them to create three-dimensional characters.

b) (A) Tropes reveal “not only interesting qualities about the characters themselves, but also about the reader reading about them.” (Adrienne Kress, “Forever Young Adult blog” Dec 13/12)  
How are the reader’s expectations subverted in the novel? What biases/prejudices of the reader are revealed?

3. **Feminism, Racism, Social Class.** *The Friday Society* realistically portrays some of the social attitudes of late-Victorian and early-Edwardian London. There was a great deal of prejudice of various kinds.

#### **Feminism:**

a) (B) “My big idea for my new YA Steampunk mystery adventure *The Friday Society* was ‘Write a story about girls in which they are strong and smart, but, more importantly, well-rounded individuals who are more than just token females (even as the leads of their own work), and, you know, likable characters’ . . .”] <http://whatever.scalzi.com/?s=Adrienne+Kress> (Adrienne Kress, in blog “Whatever” by John Scalzi, Dec 7/13)

In this blog, Kress argues that female characters are rarely well-rounded people even in this day and age. Do you agree with this statement and do you think that she has succeeded in developing well-rounded women in TFS?

b) (B) What is the normal role of women in London in 1900? How does Kress show this in both her female and male characters? How does she undercut the status quo? How does the title of the book fit in?

#### **Racism:**

1. (B) You might assume that the average Londoner in the Victorian Age, living at the centre of a vast empire, would feel quite superior to people of other countries, cultures and races. And you would be right – to a degree. Gilbert and Sullivan’s *The Mikado* (1885), for instance, is indeed full of blatantly racist remarks about Japanese culture. Nevertheless, this comic operetta was written and presented to the English public during the height of the Victorian Age because the English were just becoming aware of the many kinds of very different people there are in the world, and they were fascinated. How does Kress show both the racism and the fascination in her novel? Do any attitudes change over the course of the plot? If you detect changes, what do you think has caused them?

2. (B) a) Michiko is a main character in the novel despite the fact that she speaks and understands very little English at the beginning of the novel. How does Kress handle the issue of Michiko's English difficulties? Do these methods work?

b) (A) Michiko helps to bring out not only the attitudes of the English towards the foreigner, but also the foreigner's attitudes towards English society. What differences between Japan and England, and between the Japanese and the English, does Michiko notice and think about? Of what does she approve in each? Of what does she disapprove in each? In each case, what is the reason for her approval or disapproval?

### **Social Class**

1. (C) What is the normal attitude towards people of different classes in London in 1900? How does Kress show this in the novel?

2. (B) As a warning to Cora, Mrs. Philips declares, "A creature of both worlds is a creature of none." (p.9) What is she warning Cora against? Do you think Mrs. Philips is right? How might her warning apply to all three girls in their Victorian/Edwardian society?

### **Secondary Characters in TFS**

1. (B) Even though the main characters of the book are women, there are some very important male characters. Why do you think each of the following characters is included in the novel? Lord White, the Great Raheem, Callum Fielding-Shaw, Andrew Harris, Officer Murphy, and Hayao.

### **Style/Structure**

1. (B) Each chapter that introduces one of the heroines begins with exactly the same sentence: "And then there was an explosion." Why would Kress begin these important introductions in the same way? Why does she use the same phrase to begin Chapter 37?

2. (B) Discuss the use and effectiveness of the chapter titles in the book.

3. (A) A number of reviewers pointed out that *The Friday Society* is written with a lot of humour. Humour is entertaining, of course, and, since a novel is supposed to entertain its readers, it makes sense for an author to use humour. But many of the things that *The Friday Society* is about are actually quite serious. So chances are that Kress is occasionally being funny for a serious reason, not always "just because she can." Choose any four examples of humour in the book – humorous situations, humorous events, humorous language, humorous observations, etc. Pick anything that made you smile or laugh. The only rule is that each of the four examples must be used for a

purpose that is different from those of the other three. In each case, explain what you think that purpose is.

4. (B) Most novels are told from one point of view. This one is told from three different ones. Why do you think the author chose to do this? Does this approach work?

5. (C) This is a Steampunk adventure. Demonstrate how the novel fits the definition of Steampunk.

6. (A) Even though the novel is set in 1900 London, the “tone of voice” and the vocabulary choices are quite modern. How do these choices add to or detract from the reader’s enjoyment and understanding of the novel?

### **Other**

1. (C) Research Bartitsu and Parkour. How does Kress use these in the novel? Is each effective?

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **THE VICTORIAN AGE**

**The Victorian era of British history was the period of Queen Victoria's reign from 20 June 1837 until her death on 22 January 1901. It was a time when England was at the height of its success and prestige. It was also a time of enormous changes in art, science, technology, medicine, demographics, relations between men and women, law, international relations and education.**

**Here are useful Internet sources that tell much of the Victorian story:**

- 1) [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Victorian\\_era](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Victorian_era)**
- 2) <http://www.victorianweb.org/>**
- 3) <http://www.history.ac.uk/ihr/Focus/Victorians/> From “History In Focus” by the University of London**
- 4) [http://www.mccord-museum.qc.ca/en/keys/games/game\\_0/](http://www.mccord-museum.qc.ca/en/keys/games/game_0/) From the McCord Museum of Montreal (The rest of the site has a great deal of Victoriana as well.)**

### **THE STEAMPUNK LITERARY SUBGENRE**

**The fast explanation is that Steampunk is Victorian/Edwardian-based science-fiction. The objects, inventions and modes of transportation featured in Steampunk narratives are “futuristic” from the point of view of people living in the era, but limited by the human-scale science and technology available to the late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century imagination. So clockwork and steam engines loom large.**

**Here are some good on-line sources for Steampunk:**

<http://www.steampunk.com/what-is-steampunk/>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Steampunk>

<http://www.steampunkcanada.ca/> (See a review of TFS under the News heading)

<http://www.instructables.com/tag/type-id/category-technology/channel-steampunk/> (This is a lot of fun – and, somehow, inspiring. Have look.)

<http://ididntchoosethis.blogspot.ca/>

## APPENDIX 2 – DEFINITIONS FOR USE WITH P.A.C.T.S.

**Plot** – a series of interrelated events devised by an author – components are:

a) introduction

b) inciting event

c) rising action – a series of conflicts (categorized as person v person, person v self, person v nature, person v supernatural, nature v nature, etc.) and including a crisis (turning point) or crises

d) climax

e) denouement or tying up

**Atmosphere** - the pervading tone(s) or mood(s) of a place, situation. It helps to set up the expectations of the reader.

While this most often is used to refer to things like – happy, eerie, mysterious, confused, etc., it can also refer to atmosphere created by moral or ethical restraints, as well. For example, the mood will be very different if the story takes place in a household with very strict standards for teenage behaviour than if it takes place in a household with no standards for teenage behaviour.

**Character** – this refers to both the actual characters the reader is introduced to in the work as well as the development of characteristics/personalities of said characters.

For example, in *Hamlet* some of the characters are: Hamlet, Gertrude, Claudius, Ophelia, etc. In Act 1, scene ii, we meet Hamlet, Gertrude and Claudius for the first time. About Hamlet, we find out that he is unhappy/depressed (because his father has died), angry (because his mother has remarried very quickly and to his uncle), witty (he makes a series of puns when talking to Gertrude and Claudius), etc.

**Theme** – ideas, arguments, concerns, messages, theses that appear in the work.

The theme usually puts forth an opinion, unlike a subject. For example, the subject of the work may be recycling. The theme of the work may be that recycling is good/bad/a waste of time/the only thing that will save the earth.

**Setting** - the place and time at which a play, novel, or film is represented as happening.

**Components:**

- a) where – the earth, the moon, the house on the corner, the chair in front of the fireplace, in one’s imagination
- b) when – 1900, 1492, 12 noon on Tuesday, night, fall, winter, etc.
- c) duration - from 1900 to 1947, from Tuesday to Friday, 3 generations, 12 minutes

As with Atmosphere, Setting helps to set up the expectations of the reader. If someone threatens to drop a valuable vase from the 27 floor of a building on earth, the reaction of the reader is different from the reaction he/she would have if the same threat were made on the moon because of the difference in gravity in the two places.

### **APPENDIX 3 – DIFFERENTIATED LEARNING**

First, a disclaimer: We’re in no position, in this brief unit write-up, to introduce all the principles of what has been called “differentiated learning,” “differentiated instruction,” “layered curriculum,” and so forth. There are two possibly useful references on page one of this unit. We’re not claiming a strict adherence to any particular orthodoxy here. What we are hoping to do is fairly humble. We want to suggest a basis for structuring the materials we’re offering in a manner that is consistent with a few basic principles that are common to most of the descriptions of “DI” that we have read: 1) The students get to **CHOOSE** some of the things they address themselves to. 2) They are **ACCOUNTABLE** for what they do with what they choose. 3) The advice you give them and the activities you design for them provide opportunities for students to achieve **MORE COMPLEX AND MORE SENSITIVE THINKING**. (C.f. Kathie Nunley, “Layered curriculum in a nutshell,” <http://help4teachers.com/nutshell.htm>)

One more easy notion, and then we can begin: The adherents of the “layered curriculum” approach find it useful to classify progressively the knowledge that we want the students to acquire, from least complex and challenging to most complex and challenging. This spectrum goes something like this:

**Basic Layer (Or “C layer”)** – Straight declarative knowledge; facts; the root building blocks of knowledge

**Application or Manipulation Layer (Or “B layer”)** – the student uses C layer information to solve problems

**Critical Thinking and Analysis Layer (Or “A layer”)** – the student uses C and B layer information to theorize, explain, invent new knowledge, form opinions.

The idea is to give your students some choice about what they attempt, but encourage them to attempt at least a few things that are outside their “comfort zones.” We want them, as

much as possible, to be operating in what Vygotsky famously called “the zone of proximal development.” So when you devise the structures and routines within which your students make their choices, you have to be careful not to allow anyone to make choices only at the “C” level. (The letters, remember, do not classify students. They classify the levels of complexity of the ideas under study. We want all students to acquire information that is at all three levels.)

You will have noticed that there are three phases to the study we have outlined here: Pre-Reading, Reading and Post-Reading.

#### **STEP ONE (Pre-Reading)**

Choose the group work approach on page 2. You will need to invent topics for the groups to research. But since you have two broad and easily research topics before you (Victorian Era and Steampunk), sub-topics are easy to devise. A “C-layer” Victorian Era sub-topic might be to “Collect a set of pictures of Victorian clothing to show the class. Make sure you say what sort of person might have worn each piece of clothing and on what occasion.” A “B-layer” topic might be to “Find out what wars were fought by the English during the Victorian Era, and give the circumstances that led to each war.” An “A-layer” topic might be to “Discover the reasons for the overpopulation and unsanitary conditions of the cities in the Victorian Era. Think about how both might have been prevented.” The students, in effect, group themselves by deciding what level of research they would like to conduct and present to the class.

#### **STEP TWO (Reading)**

(i) The P.A.C.T.S. approach: If you choose to go this way, consider Plot and Setting to be “C-level,” Character and Atmosphere to be “B-level” and Theme to be “A-level”.

Those students who choose to address themselves to the least challenging study of what they are reading will write approximately 130 comments on Plot and/or Setting AND 50 comments on Character and/or Atmosphere.

Those who choose to address themselves to a more challenging study of what they are reading write approximately 100 comments on Plot and/or Setting AND 80 comments on Character and/or Atmosphere.

Those who choose to address themselves to the most challenging study of what they are reading write approximately 50 comments on Plot and/or Setting AND 131 comments on Character and/or Atmosphere,

(ii) If you pick the Chapter Questions approach: Each question (and sometimes each part of a question) is labeled “B” or “C”.

Those students who choose to address themselves to the least challenging study of what they are reading will answer 131 C questions and 50 B questions.

Those who choose to address themselves to a more challenging study of what they are reading answer 100 C questions and 80 B questions.

Those who choose to address themselves to the most challenging study of what they are reading answer 50 C questions and 131 B questions.

### **STEP THREE (Post-Reading)**

**Conventionally, many teachers like to end the study of a work with a paper or a project. We have listed 18 questions that would do equally well as topics for essays or projects. We have also indicated, by a letter in each case, what level we think each topic could be pegged at. Feel free to blend them, adapt them, simplify them or whatever in order to bend them to your own preference and uses.**

**In guiding your students' choices, you are in the best position to decide how hard to push. There will be some who do well if they can manage everything at level C (with a small number of B-type questions added in). Some may be able to do initial group work at level C, but then to do the questions at level B, returning to level C for the culminating experience. In fact, any combination of levels may be attempted, and the students' efforts will be marked according to what they attempted and whether or not their attempts were successful.**

**We hope your students enjoy both the book and the process of studying it.**