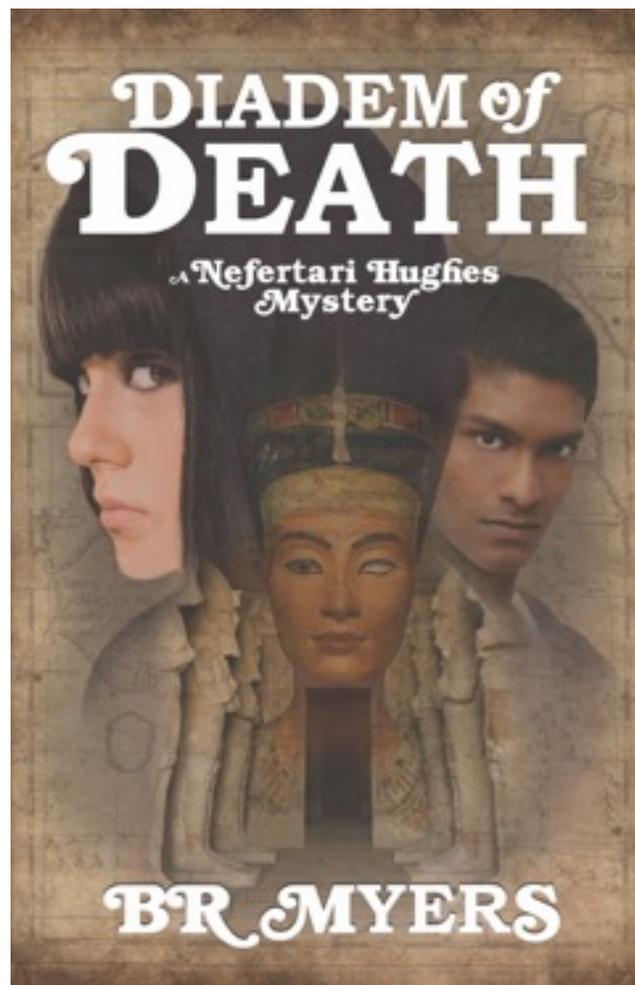


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# The Nefertari Hughes Mystery Series Teaching Resource

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Audience: Teen / Young Adult

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# The Nefertari Hughes Mystery Series Book Descriptions

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## **The Nefertari Hughes Mystery Series, Book 1: *Asp of Ascension***

Nefertari “Terry” Hughes has three rules for surviving high school:

1. Don’t attract attention.
2. Don’t get involved.
3. Don’t make trouble.

A year after the accident that left her disabled and took her mother’s life, sixteen-year-old Terry just wants to keep her head down and survive her new high school. When she catches the eye of cute basketball star Zach, all hopes of flying under the radar are gone.

She is thrust even further into the spotlight when Fraser, the editor of the school newspaper, learns that her father is the renowned archaeologist overseeing the new Egyptian display at the museum, which is rumoured to include Cleopatra’s sarcophagus. When Fraser stumbles upon the fifty-year-old mystery of a girl who vanished in the museum and Terry’s father falls into a mysterious coma, Terry is caught up in a whirlwind of events that leads all the way back to ancient times.

## **The Nefertari Hughes Mystery Series, Book 2: *Diadem of Death***

Nefertari “Terry” Hughes is looking forward to spending the school break with her boyfriend, but when her archaeologist father announces he’s working on a project that will take him to Egypt, all hopes of having a romantic summer are buried.

Terry accompanies her father to Alexandria where she’s reunited with her first crush, Awad—all grown up and an expert in translating hieroglyphics. He confides that the team is in a race to find Cleopatra’s lost tomb before a secret band of rebels steals Egypt’s last Pharaoh and her diadem.

But sabotage and a deadly accident put everyone on high alert, and Terry isn’t sure whom to trust. As the line between ally and enemy begins to blur, Terry has to keep her wits about her and figure out who wants the diadem badly enough to kill.

## **The Nefertari Hughes Mystery Series, Book 3: *Medallion of Murder***

Still struggling with nightmares from the past summer, Nefertari “Terry” Hughes tries to bury her secret guilt and enjoy her family’s first Christmas in Devonshire. But when a murdered man is found with a postcard addressed to her, Terry fears the repercussions from that fateful night in Egypt are becoming a reality.

After she receives a coded message from Awad, Terry and her best friend Maude are thrown into the hunt for a lost medallion, an artifact that possesses a great power—and a gruesome destiny. As each clue leads to more disturbing truths (and bodies), Terry begins to suspect she’s the real target of the search. When Awad goes missing, she becomes certain the Illuminati are involved, and has no choice but to risk losing the thing she cherishes the most to get him back.

But Terry will soon discover the secrets of the tomb cannot be erased by distance or power, because the ghosts of her past are closing in quickly... and this time, they refuse to stay buried.

## Reading Levels

### Flesch Reading Ease score:

- 82.4
- Easy to read

### Gunning Fog:

- 6.7
- Fairly easy to read

### Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level:

- 4.7
- Fifth grade

### The Coleman-Liau Index:

- 7
- Seventh grade

### The SMOG Index:

- 5
- Fifth Grade

### Automated Readability Index:

- 4.2
- 8–9 year olds / Fourth–Fifth graders

### Linsear Write Formula:

- 5.5
- Sixth grade

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# Author Bio

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Always in the mood for a good scare, B.R. Myers spent most of her teen years behind the covers of Lois Duncan, Ray Bradbury, and Stephen King. She is the author of several YA novels. Her contemporary coming of age book, *Girl On the Run*, was chosen by the Canadian Children's Book Centre as a Best Book for Teens for 2016.

When she's not putting her characters in awkward situations, Myers works as a registered nurse. A member of the Writer's Federation of Nova Scotia, she lives in Halifax with her husband and two children—and there is still a stack of books on her bedside table.

## Author Photo



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# Major Themes

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- Bullying
- Death and Grieving
- Loss of Identity / Struggling with Identity
- Guilt and Greed
- Coming of Age / Self Discovery

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# Character Descriptions

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## **Terry Hughes (Protagonist)**

Female. 17 years old, long dark hair, likes to hide behind long bangs. Slight build, wears baggy cargo pants and mostly hoodies. Has prosthetic leg for below the knee amputation. Quiet, but strong willed, extensive knowledge of ancient Egyptology. Dealing with loss of mother and moving to a new town. Has found a loyal friend in Maude Sanchez.

## **Maude Sanchez**

Female. 17 years old. Hispanic and loves to dye her hair various shades of pink and blonde. Adores style and makeup and usually sports a complicated braid or up-do. Is a candy connoisseur who always has treats in her Hello Kitty backpack. She is tolerant of school bullies and shows Terry a tenacious loyalty. Has secret crush on Fraser.

## **Fraser**

Male. 18 years old. School newspaper editor with plans to take journalism. Messy hair that reaches top of his glasses. Casual chic style with vintage shirts and skinny jeans. Curious and always ready to skip school for the latest scoop or scandal.

## **Zachary Brenton**

Male. Eighteen years old. Tall jock, captain of basket ball team. Feels pressure of peers to act a certain way and hang out with popular crowd, but is attracted to Terry. Hides his learning disability behind his sporting and social skills. Has an undiscovered talent for drawing.

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# Classroom Activities

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1. Imagine that you are about to make a feature-length film of the novel you read. You have been instructed to select your cast from members of your English class. Cast all the major characters in your novel from your English classmates and explain why you selected each person for a given part.
2. Make a 'Wanted' poster for a person or object from the novel. Make sure to include the following: a) a drawing or image of the object/person, b) a description of the object/person, c) the deeds or misdeeds of the object/person, d) other information that is important, e) the reward offered for the object/person (may not even be a monetary award!).
3. Make character cards (ID cards) for three different characters from the novel. Include an image or drawing on the front. On the back include stats such as: a) name b) age c) likes/dislikes d) and random bits... like maybe their biggest secret!
4. Using a quote or passage from the book, create a meme. Make sure to include a background that matches the feel of the quote.
5. Create a quiz about the book for your classmates. Include five true or false and five multiple choice questions.
6. With a partner, choose one of the main characters—it could even be the villain! Pretend that this character is being interviewed by the radio for their deed or misdeed. Prepare a script of questions with one partner being the character and the other being the interviewer.
7. Imagine the book is a major motion picture. Come up with a tagline that will go on the movie poster.
8. Complete each of these six ideas with material gained from the book:
  - This book made me wish that...
  - This book made realize that...

- This book made me wonder about...
  - This book made me believe that...
  - This book made me feel that...
  - This book made me hope that...
9. Look through magazines for images or words that describe the book. Use these to make a collage on a bookmark.
  10. Choose an interesting character from your book. Consider the character's personality, likes, and dislikes. Decide on a gift for him or her... something he or she would really like and use. Design a greeting card to go along with your gift. In the greeting, explain to your friend from the book why you selected the gift.
  11. Write a diary that one of the story's main characters might have kept before, during, or after the book's events. Remember that the character's thoughts and feelings are very important in a diary.
  12. Write a feature article (with a headline) that tells the story of the book as it might be found on the front page of a newspaper in the town where the story takes place.
  13. Pretend that you are going to join the characters in the story. What things will you need to pack? Think carefully, for you will be there for a week, and there is no going back home to get something!
  14. Write an ad for an online dating service for one of the characters. What information do you think they would include on their profile?
  15. Pretend that you can spend a day with one of the characters. Which character would you choose? Why? What would you do?
  16. Pick five pivotal scenes from the book and choose five songs to match those scenes. Explain your choices.

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# Discussion Questions

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## Asp of Ascension

1. Even though Terry had a unique upbringing, what qualities does she have that make her a relatable character?
2. At a point in the novel, Terry makes the comment, “Everyone has their own limp, but some are more obvious than others.” What did she mean by that?
3. Maude and Terry support each other throughout the novel. What strengths/qualities does Maude have that Terry lacks and vice versa?
4. A ficelle is a character who adds extra information for the reader, helping the author avoid information dumps. They have the same motives as the protagonist, but don’t have the same obstacles. In *Asp of Ascension*, which character do you think is the ficelle?
5. What qualities does Cleopatra embody that Terry finds the most inspirational? Why?
6. Who do you think is the real villain in this story? Why?
7. Bullying is a central theme in the novel. Does Allison show any redeeming qualities by the end of the story?
8. At the beginning of the novel, Terry makes it a point to stay under the radar and not get involved. How does this change by the end?
9. Several characters had their own motives for getting the power of the asp. Which character had the most to gain/lose?
10. Which character changed the most throughout the course of the story? What actions or decisions triggered that change?

## Diadem of Death

1. If you could ask the author any question, what would you ask?
2. Is the ending satisfying? If so, why? If not, why not... and how would you change it?
3. Which character did Terry underestimate the most? Why?
4. In *Diadem of Death*, several characters had secret agendas. Which character had the most dishonourable intentions?
5. There is a central theme regarding the purpose of archaeology versus the ownership of invaluable antiquities. In your opinion, what is more important: the proliferation of artifacts for display and preservation, or honouring sacred burial sites?
6. How does the loss of Terry's power affect her judgement and the choices she makes?
7. A Threshold Guardian is a character who likes things the way they are and opposes the protagonist when she wants to change the situation. They can be an ally of either the protagonist or the antagonist, or a completely neutral party. They test the protagonist by pushing them to solve their problem by making discoveries or creating conflict by their actions. In *Diadem of Death*, which character(s) do you think were the Threshold Guardian(s)?
8. Where would you rather live: ancient Egyptian times or modern day Cairo? Why?
9. Do you agree with Terry's choice in the last scene or would you have started investigating the new lead?
10. What plot twist surprised/shocked you the most?

## Medallion of Murder

1. Agatha Christie wrote in her autobiography about her dislike of mysteries having a romance as a subplot. In *Medallion of Murder*, do you feel the love aspect between Terry and Zach distracted from the story or enhanced it?
2. It's widely observed that believable villains actually think they're the hero. In this novel, who do you think was the villain, and why did they think they were the hero?
3. Which character had the most to lose by finding the medallion?
4. Which character sacrificed the most?
5. Terry struggles with trying to keep her superhero life and her normal life separate. By the end of the story, how has this changed and why?
6. *Medallion of Murder* is the third book in the Nefertari Hughes Mystery series. Is it important to read these novels in proper sequence?
7. A red herring is a false clue that the mystery writer uses to send readers off in directions that do not lead to the discovery of the villain. It's meant to heighten suspense and create a more challenging puzzle for the reader. Are there any red herrings in this novel?
8. Does the author do an effective job at keeping you guessing? Which was the most surprising plot twist for you?
9. If you could hang out with any of the characters for a day, who would you chose and why? What would you do?
10. Terry's choices in the novel shaped the plot and led to the incident on the bridge. Are there any choices she made that you would have done differently? Why?