



Cinder

by Marissa Meyer

Interesting Facts:

- The book is based on Cinderella. It is part of a larger series of books based on various fairy tales called *The Lunar Chronicles*.
- As a teenager, Marissa Meyer wrote *Sailor Moon* fan fiction under the pen name of Alicia Blade.
- Marissa Meyer was inspired to write *Cinder* after participating in the 2008 National Novel Writing Month (NaNoWriMo) contest, in which she wrote a story focusing on a futuristic version of fairy tale "Puss in Boots."
- Meyer used two versions as her primary source material: the first was *Ye Xian*, a Chinese version of the tale (which is why Meyer sets the tale in a fictionalized, futuristic version of Beijing). The second was Perrault's *Cendrillon*, a French version that includes the additions of the Fairy Godmother, the pumpkin that transforms into a carriage, and glass slippers.
- In *Cinder*, Queen Channary, Queen Levana, and Princess Selene are all part of the royal family of the moon colony Luna—and their names are particularly apt for where they live. Channary derives from the Khmer words for "moon" and "girl," Levana derives from the Hebrew word for "moon" and "white," and Selene derives from the Greek word for "moon."

Discussion Questions:

- What similarities exist between *Cinder* and the Cinderella fairy tale (the version that you are most familiar with)?
- Can you spot references to any other fairy tales besides Cinderella within *Cinder*?
- Much of *Cinder* is centered around letumosis, a highly contagious and deadly disease that's plaguing the Earth of the novel. What parallels do you see between the contagion in *Cinder* and the real life pandemic we experienced in 2020–2021?
- Stereotypes and discrimination are prevalent in the book. In what ways do the qualities that make Cinder and people like her different help her and help the other characters that she interacts with?
- Fairy tales have been around for centuries. Why do you think they have endured for so long? What aspects of fairy tales do you consider timeless?
- In some versions of *Cinderella*, all of Cinderella's stepsisters and her stepmother are portrayed negatively. How are the depictions of these characters in *Cinder* different? Why do you think Marissa Meyer made that decision?

Other Resources:

- Check out [the other books in *The Lunar Chronicles*](#) that follow other fairy tale characters like Red Riding Hood and Rapunzel.
- Listen to [a podcast called *The Happy Writer*](#), hosted by Marissa Meyer, in which she interviews other authors about obstacles they faced and how they overcame them.

Additional Activities:

Fairy tale rewrite: What's your favorite fairy tale or one that is most interesting to you? Take the basic premise of that story and write your own version! Change the setting, time period, the physical qualities of the characters, or even key plot points.

Create your own book cover: Sketch or paint or create a collage of an alternate cover of the book. You could show Cinder interacting with any of the other main characters in the

book, create something more abstract, or make something that's unique to your interpretation of the book.

Cyborg BFF: Draw a cyborg or android who you'd like to meet and why. What adaptations do they have and how are they useful?

- [Watch this video](#) about how 3-D-printed prosthetic hands are changing kids' lives. How is the attitude of the kids in the video different from how Cinder seems to feel about her adaptations?

Let the music play: Create a song playlist for your favorite chapter or scene in *Cinder*.

- If you feel inspired, create a playlist for the whole book!