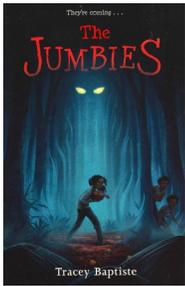


Books by the Stack



The Jumbies by Tracey Baptiste

Corinne La Mer claims she isn't afraid of anything. Not scorpions, not the boys who tease her, and certainly not jumbies. They're just tricksters made up by parents to frighten their children. Corinne must call on her courage and her friends and learn to use ancient magic she didn't know she possessed to stop the jumbies and to save her island home.

Why you'll like it: traditional Haitian folktale, scary, action-packed

About the Author: Tracey Baptiste was born in Trinidad, where she grew up on jumbie stories and fairy tales, and decided to be a writer at the wise old age of three. Her debut, a young adult novel titled *Angel's Grace*, was named one of the 100 best books for reading and sharing by New York City librarians. Tracey is a former teacher, textbook editor, ballerina, and amateur librarian who once started up a library in her house in the hope that everyone would bring their books back late and she would be rich! She is now a wife and mom and lives in New Jersey, where she writes and edits books for kids from a very cozy office in her house that is filled with more toys than she can count. *The Jumbies* is her second novel.

Questions for Discussion

1. Had you heard of any of the scary creatures that Tracey Baptiste describes in *The Jumbies* before reading the novel? If so, how did you first learn about the jumbie(s)? If not, which type of jumbie will you remember most?
2. In what ways is *The Jumbies* like folktales and fairy tales you've read? What makes it different?
3. What does Pierre mean when he says on page 19, "You know how the sea is. Nothing stays at the bottom forever"? After reading the story, does this meaning change?
4. On page 70, Corinne detects something wrong with the food Severine is cooking; her father doesn't. Describe a time when you knew something was not quite right even though it seemed to others that everything was okay.
5. If Corinne's mother were still alive, how might she have changed Corinne's belief that "stories about jumbies are just things that grown people say when they make up stories at night"? Do you think Corinne's mother would have told Corinne that jumbies were real? Why or why not?
6. Malik and Bouki are loyal friends who remind Corinne that sometimes everyone needs help. When has a friend helped you through something that was too big to handle on your own? Do you think the story would have ended as it did if Corinne hadn't had the help of her friends along the way? How would the ending have been different?
7. Dru is timid and shy when she first meets Corinne, while Corinne is a risk taker. How do the girls change or grow over the course of their friendship? Why are the girls such good friends? On page 92, Corinne has an experience that makes her believe that jumbies are real. How does this revelation change Corinne?
8. On page 27, the white witch says, "If I help one, I have to help the other. For balance." Over the course of *The Jumbies*, the white witch does provide each side with some help, but ultimately, does she stay true

to her vow to keep things balanced? Did she make the right choices, such as giving Severine magic that would help her live among humans, and saving Corinne, Dru, Malik, and Bouki from drowning? How would *The Jumbies* have been different without the white witch?

9. Who has more right to live on the island, jumbies or humans? Why?

10. On page 164, the white witch says, “Everybody thinks they need magic. Everybody wants answers . . . They want a bottle. Instant success! Something to drink, or sprinkle, or spill on the ground. They want magic from nothing. Magic doesn’t come from nothing. It comes from somewhere. And it isn’t so extraordinary. It’s just work. It’s just using your head and your heart.” Is there an example in the story that supports or disproves what the witch says? Explain.

11. How will Corinne’s life be different after *The Jumbies* ends? How might the discoveries about her family history change how the community treats Pierre and Corrine?

(Questions provided by publisher)



www.grpl.org/TeenBookClub