

## Dead City

Middle school student Molly is starting a prestigious science school in New York but when she's not at school she hangs out at the local morgue, which she knows well because her Mom worked there before she died. When Molly makes friends with some students at her school she is recruited into a secret group that tracks zombies in the city, and Molly helps uncover a plot as well as gains some critical information about her Mom. This highly engaging novel, suitable for grade 4-7 students, has relatable characters, a twisting and turning plot, and deals with themes of friendship, relationships, and family. Suitable for read-aloud or independent reading. Some social considerations noted.

### **CURRICULUM FIT**

**Does the resource support BC curriculum?**

Extensively

**THIS PRODUCT SUPPORTS THE CORE COMPETENCIES OF THE BC CURRICULUM:**

---

- Communication
- Creative Thinking
- Critical thinking

Dead City is an excellent resource to support students' exploration of how stories and text can help them to understand themselves and make connections to others and to the world. At first glance the story is a fantasy about zombies, however, themes of mother/daughter and peer relationships are also explored. The exploration of these themes will provide students opportunities to engage in the thinking competencies and practice comprehension strategies. The book can be a resource to help students make connections to their own lives and relationships. Through

this story, students can also learn to explore and practice thinking skills to gain meaning from text.

## **SUGGESTED CLASSROOM USAGE**

Dead City is an engaging resource and could easily be used as a class read-aloud. Alternatively students can also use the text as an independent read. The novel can be a catalyst for study in character development. In writing students can use the main character and compare the character's relationships and/or experiences in school with their own relationships and experience in school. For teachers who are looking to explore creative writing Dead City would make an excellent exemplar when introducing the fantasy genre.

## **SOCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

### **Belief System:**

The mother dies from cancer before the events of the book, but later is found to be a zombie. Zombie characters have 'died' yet remain in zombie form.

### **Violence:**

There are many fight scenes and some gruesome description of the wounds inflicted on the zombies. The humans train to kill zombies. The main antagonist admits to infecting a person (the Mom), out of spite, causing her to become ill and turn into a zombie.

### **Humour:**

There is some humour here connected to violence. While it may be presented in a humorous ways some students may not find it funny.

### **Do the social considerations support, rather than detract from, student learning?**

Extensively

## **SOCIAL CONSIDERATIONS COMMENTS:**

The social considerations in Dead City do not detract from student learning. As you would expect about a book on zombie hunters, there are fight scenes and descriptions of wounds the zombies incur. Some of the characters who have died in the book come back as zombies. Teachers

could use caution in communities that disapprove of fantasy novels that include interactions with the deceased.

## **GENERAL CONTENT**

### CONTENT

---

**Is the resource engaging?**

Extensively

**Is the content current for the intended curriculum and grade?**

Extensively

**Is the content accurate for the intended curriculum and grade?**

Extensively

**Is the content timely and important for student broad understandings?**

Extensively

**AUDIENCE:**

---

**Is the content appropriate to the emotional maturity and cognitive level of students?**

Moderately

**Does the resource provide opportunities for creative and critical thinking?**

Extensively

**Is the level of detail appropriate?**

Moderately

**Is the language use appropriate to the emotional maturity and cognitive level of students?**

Extensively

Dead City would be a highly engaging read for students in upper elementary and early middle school years. Zombies in the fantasy genre have been a current topic of interest for this age group of students which would make this book an easy, engaging sell. The struggles of the young teen are relatable to similar-aged students. While it is presented in a comedic way, the violent fight and death scenes may be too graphic for younger students, however, it is not the feature of the narrative. The themes of family, loss of a mother, and the awkwardness of not fitting in

with the crowd will allow students many opportunities to broaden their understanding of themselves and others in their world.

## **TECHNICAL DESIGN**

**Does the resource make effective use of the medium?**

Extensively

**Is the resource easy to use?**

Extensively

**Is the use of font, text size and presentation uniform?**

Extensively

**Are extraneous elements/illustrations kept to a minimum?**

Extensively

Dead City is well designed and accessible to the targeted audience of Upper Elementary and Early Middle School. There are 24 chapters, each 6-10 pages long. There are no illustrations other than the cover design depicting events from the narrative.

## **PRINT NOVEL**

**Does the text show insight into the complexity of the human condition?**

Extensively

**Does the text broaden students' experiences and understanding?**

Extensively

**To what degree is this text stylistically rich?**

Moderately

**PLOT DESCRIPTION:**

---

Dead City immediately engages the reader with the main character, Molly, being trapped in a washroom with a dead body. Molly attends the prestigious Metropolitan Institute of Science and Technology (MIST) in New York. When she isn't at school, she spends time in the local morgue, a place she is very familiar with because her Mom worked there for years. Molly is clever, athletic, and doesn't mind being around dead bodies. While at school, she is recruited into a secret organisation that tracks zombies.

She helps to uncover a plot and along the way learns some crucial information about her Mother, who died two years prior.

### RELATED COMMENTS:

---

This book is an adventure book with elements of science fiction and mystery. The book has themes of friendship and family woven throughout. The characters are not perfect and make mistakes along the way, they learn as they go, and have a strong sense of right and wrong. They are loyal to what they believe is right. There are twists and turns in the plot along the way and revelations at the end that make this an enjoyable read.

### GENRE:

---

- Adventure
- Science Fiction
- Fantasy
- Mystery / Suspense

### LITERARY HIGHLIGHTS:

---

- Complex conflict
- Rich Characterization
- Well-developed themes
- Point of view

### TYPE:

---

Novel

### **ADDITIONAL COMMENTS**

### READABILITY:

---

- At intended grade level(s)

This book is also available in an e-book edition. Students or teachers can visit the website [Kids.SimonandSchuster.com](http://Kids.SimonandSchuster.com) to learn more about the book and the author. The book is a Grand Canyon Reader Award Nominee (AZ).

It made the Sunshine State Young Readers' Award List (FL) and the Texas Bluebonnet Master List. It was also nominated for the Truman Reader Award Final Nominee (MO).

## **CURRICULUM FIT**

**Does the resource support BC curriculum?**

Extensively

**THIS PRODUCT SUPPORTS THE CORE COMPETENCIES OF THE BC CURRICULUM:**

---

- Communication
- Creative Thinking
- Critical thinking

Dead City is an excellent resource to support students' exploration of how stories and text can help them to understand themselves and make connections to others and to the world. At first glance the story is a fantasy about zombies, however, themes of mother/daughter and peer relationships are also explored. The exploration of these themes will provide students opportunities to engage in the thinking competencies and practice comprehension strategies. The book can be a resource to help students make connections to their own lives and relationships. Through this story, students can also learn to explore and practice thinking skills to gain meaning from text.

## **SUGGESTED CLASSROOM USAGE**

Dead City is an engaging resource and could easily be used as a class read-aloud. Alternatively students can also use the text as an independent read. The novel can be a catalyst for study in character development. In writing students can use the main character and compare the character's relationships and/or experiences in school with their own relationships and experience in school. For teachers who are looking to explore creative writing Dead City would make an excellent exemplar when introducing the fantasy genre.

## **SOCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

**Belief System:**

The mother dies from cancer before the events of the book, but later is found to be a zombie. Zombie characters have 'died' yet remain in zombie form.

**Violence:**

There are many fight scenes and some gruesome description of the wounds inflicted on the zombies. The humans train to kill zombies. The main antagonist admits to infecting a person (the Mom), out of spite, causing her to become ill and turn into a zombie.

**Humour:**

There is some humour here connected to violence. While it may be presented in a humorous ways some students may not find it funny.

**Do the social considerations support, rather than detract from, student learning?**

Extensively

**SOCIAL CONSIDERATIONS COMMENTS:**

---

The social considerations in Dead City do not detract from student learning. As you would expect about a book on zombie hunters, there are fight scenes and descriptions of wounds the zombies incur. Some of the characters who have died in the book come back as zombies. Teachers could use caution in communities that disapprove of fantasy novels that include interactions with the deceased.

**GENERAL CONTENT****CONTENT**

---

**Is the resource engaging?**

Extensively

**Is the content current for the intended curriculum and grade?**

Extensively

**Is the content accurate for the intended curriculum and grade?**

Extensively

**Is the content timely and important for student broad understandings?**

Extensively

## AUDIENCE:

---

**Is the content appropriate to the emotional maturity and cognitive level of students?**

Moderately

**Does the resource provide opportunities for creative and critical thinking?**

Extensively

**Is the level of detail appropriate?**

Moderately

**Is the language use appropriate to the emotional maturity and cognitive level of students?**

Extensively

Dead City would be a highly engaging read for students in upper elementary and early middle school years. Zombies in the fantasy genre have been a current topic of interest for this age group of students which would make this book an easy, engaging sell. The struggles of the young teen are relatable to similar-aged students. While it is presented in a comedic way, the violent fight and death scenes may be too graphic for younger students, however, it is not the feature of the narrative. The themes of family, loss of a mother, and the awkwardness of not fitting in with the crowd will allow students many opportunities to broaden their understanding of themselves and others in their world.

## **TECHNICAL DESIGN**

**Does the resource make effective use of the medium?**

Extensively

**Is the resource easy to use?**

Extensively

**Is the use of font, text size and presentation uniform?**

Extensively

**Are extraneous elements/illustrations kept to a minimum?**

Extensively

Dead City is well designed and accessible to the targeted audience of Upper Elementary and Early Middle School. There are 24 chapters, each

6-10 pages long. There are no illustrations other than the cover design depicting events from the narrative.

## **PRINT NOVEL**

**Does the text show insight into the complexity of the human condition?**

Extensively

**Does the text broaden students' experiences and understanding?**

Extensively

**To what degree is this text stylistically rich?**

Moderately

### **PLOT DESCRIPTION:**

---

Dead City immediately engages the reader with the main character, Molly, being trapped in a washroom with a dead body. Molly attends the prestigious Metropolitan Institute of Science and Technology (MIST) in New York. When she isn't at school, she spends time in the local morgue, a place she is very familiar with because her Mom worked there for years. Molly is clever, athletic, and doesn't mind being around dead bodies. While at school, she is recruited into a secret organisation that tracks zombies. She helps to uncover a plot and along the way learns some crucial information about her Mother, who died two years prior.

### **RELATED COMMENTS:**

---

This book is an adventure book with elements of science fiction and mystery. The book has themes of friendship and family woven throughout. The characters are not perfect and make mistakes along the way, they learn as they go, and have a strong sense of right and wrong. They are loyal to what they believe is right. There are twists and turns in the plot along the way and revelations at the end that make this an enjoyable read.

### **GENRE:**

---

- Adventure
- Science Fiction
- Fantasy

- Mystery / Suspense

## LITERARY HIGHLIGHTS:

---

- Complex conflict
- Rich Characterization
- Well-developed themes
- Point of view

## TYPE:

---

Novel

## **ADDITIONAL COMMENTS**

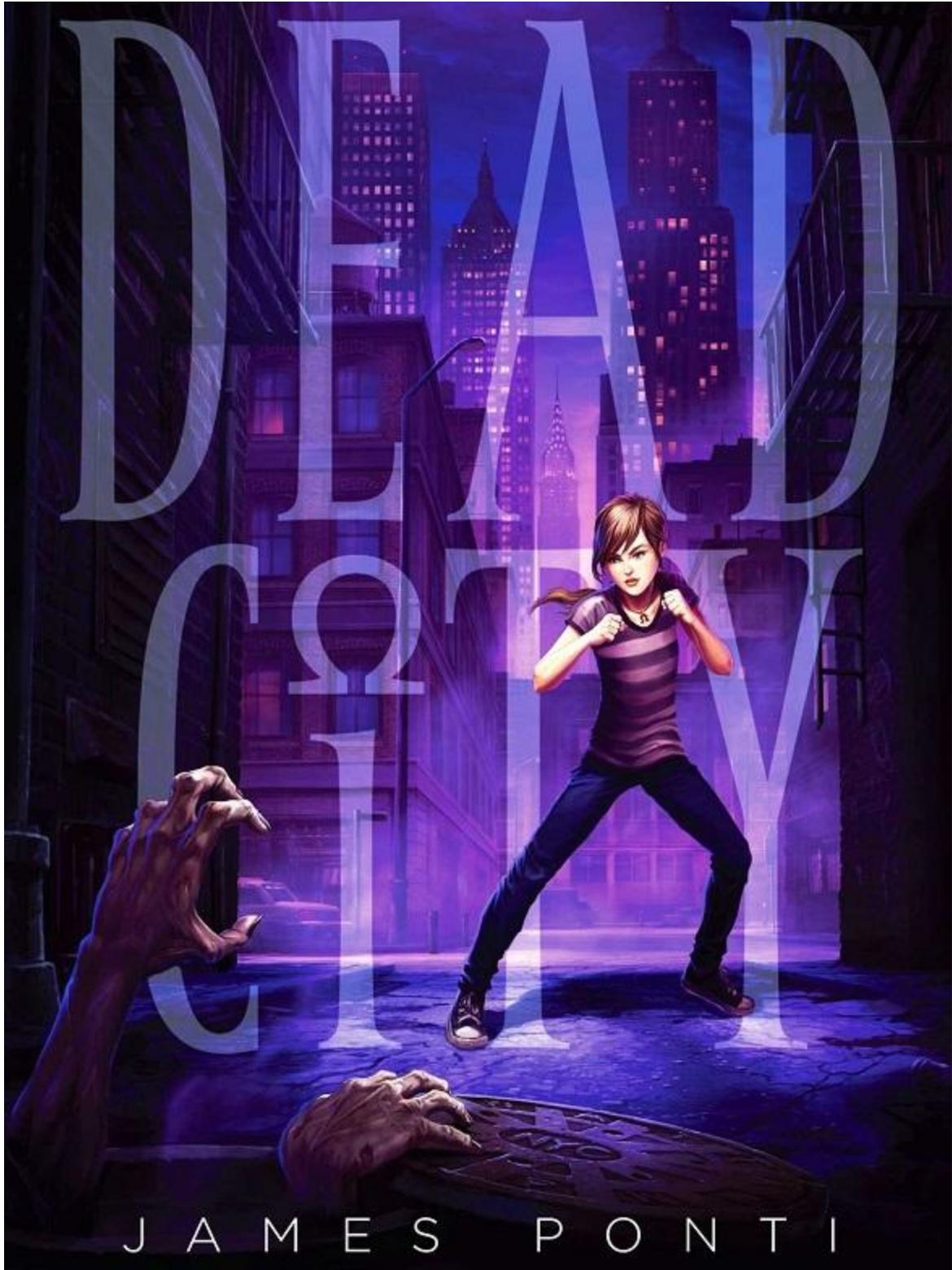
---

## READABILITY:

---

- At intended grade level(s)

This book is also available in an e-book edition. Students or teachers can visit the website [Kids.SimonandSchuster.com](http://Kids.SimonandSchuster.com) to learn more about the book and the author. The book is a Grand Canyon Reader Award Nominee (AZ). It made the Sunshine State Young Readers' Award List (FL) and the Texas Bluebonnet Master List. It was also nominated for the Truman Reader Award Final Nominee (MO).



**Author/Publisher/Website**

Ponti, J.

**Copyright**

2013

**Primary Identifier**

9781442441309

**Recommended Grades & Subjects/Courses**

4-7

**Evaluation/Record Entry Date**

Dec/2020

**Subject**

English Language Arts

**ID**

[View recommended grades and subjects](#)