

**CYRM RESOURCE GUIDE  
YOUNG ADULT NOMINEES  
(GRADES 9-12) 2014-2015**

***Daughter of Smoke and Bone***

by Laini Taylor

Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, 2011

***The Fault in Our Stars***

by John Green

Dutton's Children's Books, 2012

***Legend***

by Marie Lu

G.P. Putnam's Sons, Penguin Books, 2011

# ***DAUGHTER OF SMOKE AND BONE***

## **BY LAINI TAYLOR**

### **SYNOPSIS**

This richly imagined story is about destiny, self-discovery, and the importance of family. Like the classic tale of Romeo and Juliet or of Paris and Helen of Troy, Karou and Akiva come from families that are enemies; however, Akiva is an angel while Karou has been raised by chimera and demons. The story begins in Prague, where Karou is an art student with electric blue hair and a flair for languages. She manages to maintain a delicate balance between her life as a student and her job as a teeth collector for Brimstone, the horned monster with golden crocodile eyes who has raised her with the love and discipline of a father. As Brimstone sends Karou on an increasing number of errands to collect teeth, blackened handprints are appearing on doors around the world, burned into the wood by winged creatures that have crept through a slit in the sky. The reason behind these handprints will change Karou's life forever, as she must decide between the family that has raised her or the warrior angel who mesmerizes her. *The Daughter of Smoke and Bone* is the first in the trilogy, followed by *Days of Blood and Starlight* and completed by *Dreams of Gods and Monsters*.

### **MEET THE AUTHOR**

Laini Taylor is a California girl who currently lives in Portland, Oregon with her husband and young daughter. She received an English degree from UC Berkeley and was a National Book Award finalist for her novel *Lips Touch: Three Times*. In addition to being a writer, she is a self-described daydreamer, artist, and nerd. She is passionate about life and loves books and bookstores, mangoes and chocolate, and old houses and cake stands. On any given day, you might find her making cupcakes or dolls, playing games with her husband and daughter, or embarking on a wonderful travel adventure.

## HOOKS

- Have you ever loved someone whom your parents disapproved of? Was your attraction increased because of your parent's disapproval? How did the relationship end?
- If someone in your family could grant wishes, what would you wish for? How many wishes would you need to be satisfied?
- When is war justified? Is it more important to fight for a cause you believe in or to fight for your family and their beliefs?
- What is a monster? Does it depend on outward appearance or individual actions? What is an angel? Are wings necessary? Are good deeds essential?
- How does outward appearance affect how others see us?

## CONNECTIONS

Collins, Suzanne. *The Hunger Games*. Scholastic Press, 2008.  
Condie, Allie. *Matched*. Penguin Group, 2010.  
Fisher, Catherine. *Incarceron*. Hodder Children's Books, 2007.  
Lu, Marie. *Legend*. Penguin Books, 2011.  
Meyer, Marissa. *Cinder*. Macmillan Publishers, 2012.  
Meyer, Stephenie. *Twilight*. Little, Brown and Company, 2005.  
Porter, Sarah. *The Twice Lost*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Books for Young Readers, 2013.  
Oliver, Lauren. *Delirium*. HarperCollins Publishers, 2011.  
Roth, Veronica. *Divergent*. HarperCollins Publishers, 2011.  
Trussoni, Danielle. *Angelology*. Penguin Books, 2010.  
Wecker, Helene. *The Golem and the Jinni*. Harper Perennial, 2013.  
Westerfield, Scott. *The Uglies*. Simon and Schuster, 2005.

## CREATIVE ACTIVITIES AND WRITING IDEAS

Wishes: Brimstone chastises Karou for making frivolous wishes (for example, her blue hair was a result of one of her wishes), and then confesses that he never makes wishes because “[t]here are things bigger than any wish.” What does Brimstone mean? If you could have any wish, what would you wish for? Would they be frivolous or serious? How many

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wishes would you need? If you had access to an unlimited wish-making machine, would you ever be satisfied? Discuss as a class or have students write a short paper on wishes and why they selected each of their wishes.

Angels and Monsters: Angels and monsters have fascinated humankind for centuries. Begin by asking students what exactly makes an angel or a monster. Have students think about physical appearance and individual deeds. Explore as a class how their notions of each are influenced by art, religion, books, or movies. In a paper, either have students compare their notion of a monster with one of the creatures who raised Karou or have students compare their notion of an angel with Akiva and his deeds throughout the book. Alternatively, challenge your students to find their favorite angel or monster depictions in art throughout the centuries. Have them report on the artist and artistic time period. Create a classroom exhibit (either physically or online) of the images and their associated history and artists. For each image, ask students to write a short descriptive piece about the image and why it meets their definition of an angel or monster.

Ill-Fated Lovers: Ill-fated lovers from different backgrounds are a common theme in books and movies. From Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* to John Hughes's "Sixteen Candles," challenge students to find and share stories of lovers from different classes or backgrounds. Make sure they consider ancient stories and myths (like Tristan and Isolde) as well as modern stories (the *Twilight* series by Stephenie Myer). Have students summarize the forbidden love through a short play.

Love and Relationships: One of the early humorous scenes in the book deals with Karou's revenge on her former lover Kaz, an interesting but self-absorbed man who is not worthy of Karou. Later Brimstone tells Karou "When an essential one comes along, you'll know. Stop squandering yourself, child. Wait for love. It will come, and you will know it." Have students discuss as a class or in a class paper what Karou learned about love from her relationship with Kaz and how her relationship with Akiva differs.

Languages: Karou collects languages, often as gifts from Brimstone. Have students share languages with which they have a familiarity or with which they are fluent. Then have them share which languages they would like to learn and why. Have students guess which languages are the most widely spoken in the world, and then have them research the actual numbers. Working by language, locate the country or countries with the five most spoken languages. See if students can explain why certain far-flung countries share the same language (for example, why is Portuguese

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spoken in Brazil?). Have students discuss why a variety of languages exists and whether the world will ever have a common language. Have them prepare and defend an argument as to which language will become the dominant world language. Have students research Esperanto and discuss its history, merits, and flaws.

Doors: Doorways are important to the story. Ask students to find places in the story where doorways are important (with page references). Then ask students to write a narrative piece on the literal or figurative doorways they'd like to enter. Have students design and create paper doorways to display around the classroom. Create a paper hinge, allowing students to literally open their doorways—what would be beyond the doorway? Have students draw, write, or create a collage showing what lies beyond their doorway.

Characters: Akiva and Karou are dynamic characters. Have students brainstorm three things they admire about each character (make sure they include page references). Next, ask students to identify the weaknesses of each character and the challenges he or she must overcome. Further, have students pick their favorite secondary character and explain why the character is appealing or disturbing. Make sure to tell students about the associated e-novella, *Night of Cake and Puppets*, about how Karou's best friend Zuzana ensnares her boyfriend Mik.

War: In the book, the angels and the monsters have been enemies for centuries. Engage in a classroom discussion or ask students to write a paper on Akiva's military training and his actions. Has his thinking been altered permanently by his society or is he still capable of independent decisions? Have students show examples in the book supporting their opinions. Then, challenge your students to think about when war is justified today and when and how they would become involved in a war. When would they enlist in a modern war? Would they defend their parent's principles or their own? Would they defend the freedom upon which the U.S. is based? Have students write an opinion paper on war—is it ultimately good or bad for human existence? Make sure they support their positions with actual examples.

Settings: The settings are beautifully realized in the story. Ask students to select three settings from the book that appeal to them or the settings that they think are the most important to the story. Have them identify the descriptive language that brings the setting to life. Finally, ask students to write in detail a setting of their own choosing, either imagined or actual.

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Sketchbooks: The students at the art school that Karou attends are intrigued by her sketchbook. What fascinates them about the images she captures? Have students find and compare pages in the book where the images that Karou has drawn in her sketchbook are described. Then, challenge students to make their own drawings of the characters in the book and/or create their own drawings of monsters and angels. Create a classroom scrapbook that is available in paper as well as online.

# THE FAULT IN OUR STARS

## BY JOHN GREEN

### SYNOPSIS

Hazel Green is a smart and sardonic sixteen-year old girl who also has terminal thyroid cancer that has spread to her lungs. At a support group that she is forced by her parents to attend, she meets handsome, sexy, and witty Augustus Waters, a former basketball star who lost his leg to osteosarcoma but is now in remission. Hazel shares her favorite book with Gus, *An Imperial Affliction* by Peter Van Houten about a girl who has cancer, and they both want to know why the book ends so abruptly. Augustus gets The Genie Foundation to sponsor their trip to Amsterdam in order to meet Mr. Van Houten so they can learn what happens to the characters in his book. The story deals bluntly with the medical realities of cancer, but Gus and Hazel's story is deeply affecting because these young lovers provide love and support to each other in the midst of the physical humiliations and emotional trauma of cancer. They experience their forever within a limited number of days, and readers will treasure the glimpse of true love provided by John Green.

### MEET THE AUTHOR

John Green was born in Indianapolis, Indiana, but he grew up in Orlando, Florida. When he was 15, he elected to attend a boarding school, Lake Highland Preparatory outside of Birmingham, Alabama. This school became the main setting for his first young adult novel, *Looking for Alaska*, about a smart, sensitive boarding school student who gets bullied. *Looking for Alaska* won the highest prize for young adult literature--the Printz Award. Mr. Green graduated from Kenyon College in 2000 with a double major in English and Religious Studies. After college, he worked as a student chaplain for five months in a children's hospital, where he counseled dying children and their families. He then moved to Chicago and enrolled at the University of Chicago Divinity School, intending to become an Episcopal priest. Instead, he found a job at a book-review magazine, *Booklist*, and an editor there encouraged him to write and publish his fiction. Mr. Green has written five novels that currently have 13.5 million copies in print in North America. His writing has won a number of awards, including the Children's Choice Book Award for Best Teen Book of the Year in 2013 for *The Fault of Our Stars*.

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John Green currently lives in Indianapolis with his wife, four-year-old son Henry, one-year-old daughter Alice, and West Highland white terrier “Willy.” John Green and his wife returned to live in Indianapolis seven years ago so that his wife could work as a curator at the Indianapolis Museum of Art. They decided to stay, and Mr. Green says he likes living in Indianapolis because it is a very American city, in the best ways and the worst ways. Today, his wife Sarah has an office down the hall from his, where she works on the do-it-yourself art show entitled “The Art Assignment.” John Green’s day job is not writing but rather making online videos, including “Crash Course” (an animation-heavy show about literature, history, and science) and “Mental Floss” (in which Mr. Green shares weird facts on a variety of diverse subjects, from dogs to quirky museums). He sometimes concludes his videos with his catch phrase-- “Don’t forget to be awesome” or more simply “DFTBA.” Two million subscribers follow the blog he writes with his younger brother Hank, “Vlogbrothers” ([youtube.com/vlogbrothers](http://youtube.com/vlogbrothers)). His fans describe themselves as “Nerdfighters,” and the fans of *The Fault in Our Stars* have adopted the name of “Fault Fanatics.” You can follow John Green on Twitter (@realjohngreen).

## HOOKS

\* If you could meet with the author of your favorite book, what questions would you ask? What would you want to know about that book?

\* If you found out you were dying from cancer, what would you wish for? Why?

\* Have you ever had a close friend or someone you love die? What support can you offer to someone you love whom is dying? How should death be approached?

\* When should you have your first sexual encounter? How relevant are age, length of relationship, strength of emotion, possibility of the relationship continuing, and the wishes of your parents?

\* Is an intimate relationship necessary to show someone you love him or her?

\* What is an anachronism? What are some that you could live by?



## CONNECTIONS

### Dealing with cancer:

#### Books:

McGuire, Kevin John. *Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs*. GRIN Verlag, 2013.

Mukherjee, Siddhartha. *The Emperor of All Maladies*. Scribner, 2001.

Russell, Jesse. *Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs*. Books on Demand, 2012.

#### Websites that deal with the psychology of cancer:

Make a Wish Foundation ([wish.org](http://wish.org))

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs ([www.simplypsychology.org](http://www.simplypsychology.org))

### Rene Magritte:

#### Websites that have text and pictures:

[www.renemagritte.com](http://www.renemagritte.com)

[www.rene-magritte.net](http://www.rene-magritte.net)

### William Carlos Williams:

#### Books with other poems and writings of William Carlos Williams:

Bryant, Jen. *A River of Words: The Story of William Carlos Williams*.

Eerdman's Books for Young Readers, 2008.

Levine, Gail Carson. *Forgive Me, I Meant to Do it: False Apology Poems*.

HarperCollins Publishers, 2012.

MacGowan, Christopher (editor or poetry collection). *Poetry for Young People: William Carlos Williams*. Sterling Publishing Company, 2004.

#### Websites for other poetry, as well as the poems of William Carlos Williams:

[www.poetryfoundation.org](http://www.poetryfoundation.org)

### William Shakespeare:

#### Books about William Shakespeare:

Alike, Alike. *William Shakespeare & the Globe*. HarperCollins Publishers, 2000.

Broach, Elise. *Shakespeare's Secret*. Henry Holt, 2005.

Rosen, Michael. *Shakespeare: His Work and his World*. Candlewick Press, 2006.

Schmidt, Gary. *The Wednesday Wars*. Clarion Books, 2007.

Shakespeare, William. *William Shakespeare*. Waxkeep Publishing, 2013.

## WRITING PROMPTS

- Hazel reluctantly agrees to go to a support group meeting. Write a short opinion paper on the benefits given by support groups to those with terminal illnesses. Compare the benefits of a support group to the support given by close friends and family. Use examples from *The Fault in Our Stars* to support your reasoning.

- What does Hazel mean by, “I was a bit of a Victorian Lady, fainting-wise”? Discuss the stereotypes and expectations of boys and girls today when they are in a relationship. Are girls still considered “weaker”? Who should initiate the first date? Who should pay for dates?

\* Review the plot of William Shakespeare’s play *Julius Caesar*—what does it have to do with the title of the book?

- As shown in the book, terminal cancer is incredibly difficult from a physical and emotional standpoint. What specifically is meant by the phrase “cancer perk” as used by the characters in the novel? From a broader perspective, write a short opinion paper on whether Hazel and Gus had any benefits from knowing that their life and love would be cut short.

- Review Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs and then analyze where Peter Van Houton should be placed. Use examples from the book to support your analysis and make sure to include analysis of the way Peter Van refers to himself as “Novelist Emeritus and Semiprofessional Disappointer.”

- What is true love? Have Hazel and Gus found it? How do you know if you are in love or merely have a crush on someone? How does physical intimacy relate to love? When should individuals who care about each other enter a sexual relationship? Find examples from the book to show how Hazel and Gus support each other and show their love.

- Think about Hazel’s eulogy. What did she say and did she capture the essence of the boy she loved? What changes would you make?

- Write a eulogy for someone you love who has changed your life but is still living. Share it with him or her.

- Think about how you feel about facing the prospect of death. Why do so many people say “passed on” rather than “died”? Are Americans afraid of death? Are you afraid of death? What are the traditions that

Americans use following an individual's death and how are these similar or different to the death customs of other cultures? What traditions should be adopted here?

## CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

Book vs. Movie Comparison: *The Fault in Our Stars* was released as a movie in June 2014. Ask your students to compare and contrast the movie and the book; make sure they cite pages from the book in support of their thinking. Make sure they consider the following questions: Did the actors fit the image of the characters conveyed by the book? Was the setting realized well? Which scenes were deleted and were any scenes added? Was any actual dialogue from the book used? Create a classroom chart showing the similarities and the differences. Conclude by having students write a paper as to which version they prefer and why or ask students to write a movie review.

Celebrations: Hazel's mother finds creative ways to celebrate minor holidays. As a class, brainstorm "minor" holidays and create a chart of ways to celebrate. Use pictures and text to explain how you would celebrate. Incorporate at least three celebrations into your classroom community.

Close Observation: "The real heroes anyway aren't the people doing things; the real heroes are the people NOTICING things, paying attention." Besides smallpox, challenge your students to find a discovery that was made through observation. Describe how this discovery was made and share with your class.

Biographies: Many references are made in *The Fault in Our Stars* to famous authors and painters. Choose one and write a brief biography of him or her. Explain why John Green has referred to this individual in the book. Have students present their research to the class through a PowerPoint or Prezi or ask students to write a paper.

Creative Writing: Challenge students to begin a creative story but ask them to end the story at a crucial place. Have different students finish the story. Have a class discussion about whether the endings created by individuals other than the author were satisfying. Explore whether not knowing the ending can be a good thing.

# LEGEND BY MARIE LU

## SYNOPSIS

The story is set in a dystopian society where the United States has split apart and a plague is ravaging Los Angeles. It is told in alternating chapters by two teenagers—Day and June. Day fights to keep his family supplied with plague suppressant, while June prepares to join the military and to fight the Patriots. Both come from dysfunctional homes and are smart troublemakers who are loyal to their families. June is sent undercover to kill Day for the death of her brother, but Day is the unknown stranger who rescues June on her first day in the dangerous streets of Los Angeles. Later, June becomes sympathetic to Day's cause, eventually helping Day to escape from the firing squad. This is the first in a series of three books set in a futuristic world.

## MEET THE AUTHOR

Marie Lu was born in 1984 in Beijing, China. Her family moved to the United States in 1989 and she went to college at the University of Southern California. She currently lives in Pasadena with her two Pembroke Welsh Corgis and her boyfriend. She once worked in the video game industry, but now writes young adult novels full time. She says she likes food, fighter jets, afternoon tea, happy people, electronics, the interwebz, cupcakes, pianos, bright colors, rain, Christmas lights, sketches, animation, dogs, farmers' markets, video games, and of course, books.

## HOOKS

- \* What is the difference between a freedom fighter and a terrorist?
- \* What would you do to protect your family from a corrupt government? How far would you be willing to go?
- \* Could you survive on the streets? What skills are essential to survive day-to-day when you no longer have a home?
- \* Would you consider fighting in a branch of the U.S. military? Why or why not? Do you have any friends who have enlisted?

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\* What if you fell in love with someone who was considered your enemy?  
Could you go against your orders to protect that person?

\* What conditions would have to exist in order for the United States to  
break into two countries?

\* How would you go about protecting yourself and your family if a plague  
was in the area where you lived? What would you do?

## CONNECTIONS

### Climate Change:

Relevant Websites containing basic facts:

[www.epa.gov/climatechange/basic/facts](http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/basic/facts)

[www.climatechangeinfo.com](http://www.climatechangeinfo.com)

Books having to do with the issue of climate change:

Cherry, Lynne. *How We Know What We Know About our Changing Climate*. Dawn Publications, 2008.

Evans, Kate. *Weird Weather*. Groundwork Books, 2007.

### Civil War:

Relevant Websites that contain basic facts about the  
American Civil War:

[www.history.com/topics/civil-war](http://www.history.com/topics/civil-war)

[www.historynet.com/civilwar](http://www.historynet.com/civilwar)

[www.nps.gov/civilwar](http://www.nps.gov/civilwar)

Books that present factual information about the American Civil War:

McPherson, James M. *Fields of Fury: The American Civil War*. Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2002.

Murphy, Jim. *The Boys' War*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1993.

Starchak, John. *Civil War*. DK Publications, 2000.

### Plagues:

Relevant Websites that contain general information about the nature of  
plagues:

[www.cdc.gov/plague](http://www.cdc.gov/plague)

[www.answers.com](http://www.answers.com)

[www.emedicinehealth.com](http://www.emedicinehealth.com)

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### Books of fiction and fact with a plague theme:

Anderson, Laurie Halse. *Fever 1793*. Simon & Shuster Books for Young Readers. 2002.

Brooks, Geraldine. *Year of Wonders*. Penguin Group, 2002.

Dahme, Joanne. *The Plague*. Running Press Book Publishers, 2009.

Hirsch, Jeff. *The Eleventh Plague*. Scholastic, 2012.

Smith, Sherri. *Orleans*. Putnam Juvenile, 2013.

### Dystopian Novels:

Collins, Susan. *Hunger Games*. Scholastic Press, 2008.

Condie, Ally. *Matched*. Penguin Group, 2010.

Dashner, James. *The Maze Runner*. Random House Children's Books, 2014.

Estes, David. *The Moon Dwellers*. CreateSpace, 2012.

Lowry, Lois. *The Giver*, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2014.

Roth, Veronica. *Divergent*. HarperCollins Publishers, 2011.

## WRITING PROMPTS

- Why does June start to think of Day romantically instead of as a criminal? What characteristics does Day possess or what actions does he take that define him? What is the difference between a criminal (or terrorist) and a freedom fighter?
- Why does Thomas shoot Day's mother? Must soldiers always follow orders? When do soldiers need to use violence to convey a message? Are there ever other alternatives? Are soldiers ever justified in disobeying orders of their superior officers? How important is obedience to an army and a nation?
- The pledge of allegiance in the story reads as follows: I pledge allegiance to the flag of the great Republic of America, to the Elector Primo, to our glorious states, to unity against the colonies, to our impending victory. How is this the same and different from our current pledge of allegiance? How important is our current pledge of allegiance to citizens and residents of the U.S.? Should the current pledge be revised or made more relevant? What purposes to society do pledges have?
- In the story, volcanic eruptions have blanketed everything in white ash, covering the dead and dying. Wearing white, instead of black, then becomes the custom for funerals. How have other physical events in the natural world changed the customs of a country or an area? Alternatively, have students learn more about funeral customs around the world. What do these customs tell us about the beliefs of a society? Finally,

have students research whether any animal species have burial customs. If so, what can we conclude about the species?

- What is meant by "...our obligatory portrait of the Elector hanging on the wall..." Are we obligated to hang pictures of our government leaders on the wall? Why? Or why not? Does this occur in other countries today or has it in the past?
- Describe a Skiz? What are the rules? Who wins?

## CREATIVE PROJECTS AND RESEARCH PROJECTS

Rewrite a Chapter: *Legend* is told in alternating chapters by Day and June. Ask students to rewrite one chapter of the book from the perspective of the other character.

Civil Wars: Civil wars are an enduring aspect of human civilization. Have students locate Civil Wars occurring around the world today or in the last twenty years. Are there any commonalities between these wars in terms of causes, participants, or consequences? Have students write an opinion paper on civil war—does it solve the challenges and differences that engendered the war. Alternatively, ask students to research one aspect of the U.S. Civil War—including its causes, the weapons, the technological advances, the military leaders, the hospitals, participation of African-American soldiers, the Emancipation Proclamation, famous battles, Jefferson Davis, or President Lincoln. Have students write a report on their topic and present to the class via PowerPoint or Prezi.

Alternatively, have students discuss in depth the imaginary civil war of the book. Under what conditions could the war end? What roles would Day and June play? How could peace be brokered? Have students participate in mock peace negotiations with the goal of creating a settlement acceptable to both sides.

Plagues: Millions have died as a result of plagues throughout the centuries. Ask students to research one plague in history—its causes, its symptoms, the deaths caused, and how it was finally eradicated. Have students write a paper or create a PowerPoint based on their research.

Climate Change: In addition to the political differences, Los Angeles as described by Marie Lu from a physical perspective is vastly different from today. Ask students to find descriptions of Los Angeles in the book and then have them compare these descriptions to Los Angeles today. Create

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a list of differences and/or similarities. Then, have students through research explore the debate surrounding climate change today. For those who believe climate change is happening, what are the potential effects of climate change on the United States? The world? How would it affect those who live in California? Conclude by having students engage in a debate about whether climate change is real today.

Characters: June and Day are vividly realized characters. Have students draw a picture of Day or June using descriptions from the book (challenge students to find the actual language from the book describing the characters, complete with page references). Also ask students to research Marie Lu's comments online as to how she imagined Day. For those who don't like to draw, have them create a composite image of Day or June, taking elements of clothing or personal appearance from magazines or the Internet. Currently, there are discussions to make a movie based on Legend. Ask students which contemporary actors they would cast as Day and June and why. Have them explain whether physical appearance or personality would be more important in their casting decisions.

Biological Warfare: Biological warfare, also known as germ warfare, uses bacteria, viruses, smallpox, and fungi to injure or kill people. These weapons could be used in addition to or as an alternative to traditional weapons and chemical weapons. Have your students research biological warfare, including the recent anthrax scare in the U.S. Engage your students in a discussion about the weapons of war—traditional weapons, chemical, and biological—and whether any of these methods can be morally justified. Ask students to write an opinion paper on whether biological warfare is ever justified.