



Teacher's Dead

benjamin  
zephaniah



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## **Teacher's Dead** Benjamin Zephaniah

A teacher is dead, murdered by two of his students in front of the school. He was a good man. People liked him. So how could this happen? Why? It just doesn't make sense to Jackson, and he is determined to investigate the case until he understands.

## **Teacher's Dead Details**

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## From Reader Review Teacher's Dead for online ebook

### Vanda Denton says

The story opens with a cleverly descriptive chapter in the third person. A teacher, Mr. Joseph, is stabbed to death. The book then continues in the first person with Jackson, a pupil and witness to the murder, embarking on his personal form of therapy. He knows who did what but he wants to know why.

He finds general condemnation of the culprits, Lionel and Ramzi, but Jackson is seeking an explanation for their action. When he meets Mrs. Joseph we see an awkward teenager trying to understand adult concepts of searching for the right thing to say to a bereaved woman. Yet he persists and in so doing discovers that she wants the same kind of answers as he does. Thus, their friendship begins.

Between them their investigations bring to light the terrible problems both murderers suffered from but it is some time after these revelations that Jackson learns the true reason they gave their guilty pleas in court.

As a retired teacher, I was drawn to the notion of using this book in school. Maybe it already is on the curriculum. It could be helpful for teenagers both in the facts presented and in opening discussion on subjects such as bullying, inherited personality disorders, weakness and subjection, courage and much more no doubt. My only problem being that there are patches of dialogue that are too childish for the teens that are speaking. It would be a shame for those most in need of gaining comprehension to be left laughing, however inanely, at characters that are supposed to represent them.

Having said that, this book is a good read to be enjoyed by anyone of any age. Plus, there's an excellent twist at the end.

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### Pooja Khar says

Although 'Teacher's Dead' is a story moving ahead bit cold and numb, somehow it managed to maintain the pace of interest.

Strategically written, this was the first book which made me realize that every person's behavior is result of the environment in which he grows, what he has seen throughout her/his life, the incidents in her/his life and finally what she/he decides to outbalance - live like that or learn and step ahead to correct the things of past.

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### Natasha says

What a waste of a premise. Honestly between Rivers of London and this my recent reading activity has not been going great. I just wanted a murder mystery. That's all I was looking for! And this was a high school one which is my absolute favourite genre/sub-genre. But it is saying something when Meg Cabot can write a more compelling and logical mystery than this shell of a story. It explored nothing. The characters were nothing. The plot was meandering and pointless. The reveal was ludicrous. There was no subtle groundwork for revealing anything and our protagonist reminded me way too much of Charlie from The Perks of Being a Wallflower. The ending, oh my god the ending. It was SO rushed! Anti-climactic as hell.

The only reason it gets 2 stars is because I enjoyed the first few chapters. Plus it was a quick read. I thought a romance was being set up that could have been very interesting but no. Oh well, at least it gave a hilarious spelling mistake in the last page...perverting the court of law indeed...

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**Rida says**

it had me thinking completely something different. it shows that even though families represent each other one person can not be held responsible for what others in the family have done. it tells its readers that we should not judge people and don't make up our mind up about someone because of random gossip and rumours. the writer also shows that even though losing someone can be hard but we must move on and not hold grudges because forgiveness is what makes the world go around.

i really liked it because i was really able to understand each character's motives and it really made me want to read more and more

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**T says**

3.75

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**15PattarE says**

In my opinion, this book had a very captivating start, however I got bored very quickly. I think this book may have been the wrong style for me, even though I like mystery and action books; I rated it a one because I wasn't excited to pick the book up and read it but it is a good story about everything not being as it seems and not to assume the worst all the time.

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**Valen says**

No me gustó este libro para nada. Lo tuve que leer para mi curso de inglés y me pareció súper aburrido. También encontré algunas cosas muy repetitivas y que la historia se desarrolla muy lentamente para mi gusto. Creo que he leído libros policiales mucho mejores.

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**Ridan says**

I only picked this book up in the library because it was the nearly the end of the school year and the school library was almost running out of books to take out during the holidays and this one seemed interesting since I've gotten into mysteries lately. I read this book in a day. All of it. I honestly couldn't put it down!

Teacher's Dead is intriguing and gives you a clue to the puzzle as each chapter goes on. It's gritty, thrilling and constantly leaves you asking questions. It also has a neat little twist that wraps the story up really nicely. This is an interesting book, definitely different than most of the stuff that I read which is what drew me to it in the first place. It has you combining different pieces of information right until the end of the book where the truth is revealed. And honestly, you have your guesses but nearly all of them don't work or match the

final conclusion. And it's a very justified and pleasing conclusion as well.

The main character, Jackson, is known as quite a weird kid in school. And he's extremely annoying. He's smart, deep-thinking and quick when it comes to coming up with an idea. But he's just so... I don't know what it is but he really annoys me. It might be that certain part of the book where his silly actions really leave you feeling embarrassed to be reading about his embarrassing actions. Yeah, he's one of those characters who do all the silly stuff that makes them seem really stupid. He's quite pathetic really. Not in a mental way... Just how he is. I honestly feel sorry for him but at the same time he's almost laughable. I can relate.

The grittiness to this Urban world is very realistic. You're suddenly placed in a very poor and unfortunate place, much like most of the towns that are forgotten about and smothered by the flashier and more wealthy towns. This puts you straight into an urban area where you experience the real danger and atmosphere of what it's like to live in a place like this. It shows the true bleak ugliness of Urban landscapes and shows the unsettling nature of this dangerous world.

This is an extremely drawing book and I honestly couldn't put it down... Literally, like I said, it only took me a day to read and not once did I put it down (Apart from making a few cups of tea). It's edgy and each chapter leaves it feeling even more mysterious and making you ask even more questions. The story's plot is strange and unique and made me curious, also adding to that hint of mystery. It shows how families are held responsible in these kinds of events and also gives us an idea of what goes through someone's head in these types of situations.

So yeah, it is an enjoyable book to read. Surprised me really, I didn't think it was going to be this good. In English we had read another book by the same author (A play adaptation) called Face, and I enjoyed reading that. So I thought I'd try this out and I enjoyed it.

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## Eugenia says

Este libro fue una lectura que hicimos para el instituto de inglés, ya habíamos leído otro libro de Benjamin Zephaniah, Face, y como a la mayoría le había gustado, elegimos leer este. En realidad, a mí no me encantó tanto Face, pero mis compañeros eligieron leer este libro y bueno, a mí me daba lo mismo, así que dije que sí, pero no me había maravillado Zephaniah como escritor por lo que no estaba muy entusiasmada por leer este.

Teacher's Dead es la historia del asesinato de un profesor (ahí que es obvio), y cuando lees este título piensas que va a ser una historia llena de misterio, plot-twists, personajes secretísimos, un montón de obstáculos para llegar a "la verdad" o lo que sea, pero en realidad no es para tanto. O sea, sí, están todas esas cosas, pero está todo narrado y puesto en el libro de una forma tan light, sencillita, que parece una historia de misterio pero contada para niños. No es que esperaba que Zephaniah sea un Arthur Conan Doyle moderno ni nada parecido, no estaba una historia a lo Sherlock Holmes, pero al menos algo menos básico. Me pareció todo aburrido en el sentido de que nunca encontré un gran misterio.

Los personajes eran tan boludos que no les puedo explicar.

Empezando por el protagonista, Jackson. Jackson es un ¿niño? ¿adolescente? ~~no sé porque nunca se dice su edad ni detalles sobre su físico~~ que presencia el asesinato de su profesor y no se lo puede borrar de la cabeza entonces comienza a investigar sobre qué fue lo que realmente pasó. Jackson no tiene amigos, es mas o

menos un nerd, y no tiene nadie que lo acompañe en su investigación. Entonces se hace amigo de la esposa del profesor asesinado. Y después de la mamá del chico que asesinó al profesor. Entonces él, su mamá, la esposa del profesor y la mamá del asesino se convierten en mejor amigos, son como una familia de tres mamás. Es muy bizarro jajaja. Es muy boludo todo eso de que se hace amigo de dos mujeres mayores y lo hacen parecer algo normal, no digo que esté mal, pero queda tan raro jajaja. Y también era muy tonto todo lo que hacía en la escuela, muy muy fracasado, no sé si la idea del autor era hacerlo parecer eso, un tonto, pero le salió de todas formas. A mí me daba vergüenza por momentos por las cosas boludísimas que hacía/decía.

También la esposa del profesor asesinado, Mrs Joseph, es otro personaje que no me aguanté. Parece salida de una película de Disney. Buena, feliz, justa, amable, solidaria. Tan perfecta que da ganas de vomitar. Y bueno, así podría seguir criticando a todos los personajes, que me parecieron totalmente inverosímiles, pero vamos a dejarlo ahí porque creo que se entiende el punto.

Como cosas positivas puedo decir la narración. Creo que el libro está bien escrito, en el sentido de que todo está ordenado de forma correcta para causar el "efecto sorpresa" del final. El final no se me hizo predecible a medida que iba leyendo, así que generó lo que tenía que generar, al menos en ese sentido.

Y no es un libro aburrido. No me aburrí y se me hizo muy muy fácil leerlo, y eso que estaba en inglés, así que le damos puntos por eso también.

En fin, puedo decir que Teacher's Death es un libro muy básico, pero no malo. Me parece que sería una lectura más interesante para nenes chiquitos, por la forma en la que se desarrolla todo, tan por arriba, pero en realidad es imposible que sea un libro para nenes porque en el primer capítulo ya te describe todo un asesinato jajajaja. Así que no sé, yo creo que si el libro hubiera tenido más profundidad, más detalles, me hubiera gustado muchísimo más, porque tiene potencial, pero sin explotar.

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### **Mabel Quiroga says**

too predictable for my taste

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### **Michelle Keill says**

A very interesting book, reminiscent (perhaps only to me) of 'Pigeon English' (another great book). Good story, and Jackson is an interesting character.

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### **Karen Barber says**

A gripping start. A teacher is stabbed outside his school. There's lots of witnesses and the boys who did it confess.

That could have been the end of the story, but for Jackson Jones who witnessed the incident he is desperate to understand what happened. He befriends the teacher's wife and starts an investigation into the case. It doesn't take long for him to see that things are not as clear-cut as they appeared to be.

A quick read that will get students talking, though I'm not wholly convinced by the credibility of the story. That aside, it's certainly going to encourage readers to question events around them.

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### **Geoffery Crescent says**

I really wanted to like this book more than I did, being such a big fan of Zephaniah and in particular his first novel, Face. Unfortunately Teacher's Dead is just not as good. The main character, Jackson Jones is so utterly bland I felt it hard to feel anything for him. We're given very little info on him, certainly nothing physical, not even his age, apart from the fact his Dad has left, he's a bit of a loner and he likes school work, and these are hardly the most endearing qualities. His only real penchant is for hanging around with older women; his relationship with Mary Joseph (seriously, her name is Mary Joseph. I can't wait to meet her brother, Jesus God John the Baptist) is creepy to say the least, likewise with Miss Ferrier, especially after she's dumped urine on him multiple times. I also found it strange that his Mum took so long to get involved with his older lady friends, she was apparently fine with him going for drinks, chess tournaments and court dates with someone she barely knew. Jackson's head teacher Mrs Martel seemed strangely child-like, she had a chummy relationship with Jackson that was bizarre given he was one of her students and often asked him for advice. The weirdest thing about this book was the tone though. Child detectives are not uncommon in kiddie fiction, but they're normally accompanied by a host of well-meaning adults, a bunch of companions and a PG-13 mystery to solve. Jackson is out on his own, his informants include a mentally unstable old lady and his case is the murder of a teacher. It's a jarring blend of derring-do investigation and real life horror that just doesn't work.

The writing style is nice and fluid, although there were a couple of wonky sentences that would never have escaped my red editing pen, the plot rattles along nicely and the ending is good. I just feel the book would be better off as a therapy tool rather than an actual novel. Jackson is so nothingy that any child suffering a bereavement could easily put themselves in his shoes, but ultimately that's all this book ever feels, nothingy.

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### **Amber says**

This is by far my favourite Benjamin Zephaniah book. It was spectacular. It really makes you think that when you see something you are only seeing a fraction of the picture.

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### **Jimena González Lebrero says**

Mr Joseph es docente en un colegio secundario y un día es apuñalado por dos alumnos. Jackson, el narrador, también alumno, y testigo del asesinato, sabe que algo tiene que haber detrás de todo esto; dos chicos no se vuelven ni malos, y menos asesinos, de la nada. Y decide investigar.

Zephaniah escribió varias novelas para adolescentes en las que trata temáticas muy interesantes para trabajar con ellos, como la discriminación y el bullying. En este caso Zephaniah quiere que sus lectores no se olviden de que es mucho más fácil robar, tener problemas de alcohol y drogas, y hasta asesinar, si se vive en un contexto social y económico complejo. Hay personajes que no quieren siquiera comprender por qué un adolescente llega a asesinar a sangre fría frente a muchos testigos, pero están también los que tienen empatía por los menos beneficiados que terminan cometiendo crímenes por ser ellos víctimas del sistema.

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