

***The Unwanteds* by Lisa McMann (Simon & Schuster, 2011)**

*When you become an Unwanted you die...everyone knows that. So when Alex is dubbed Unwanted he expects the same fate. But then he is sent to Artime, where creative talent is shaped into magic. Can he and the other Unwanteds survive?*



**Discussion Questions:**

1. How are Quill and Artime different? What is your favorite part of Artime?
2. Why is it that the creative people – those who excel in the arts, theater, music writing - are considered the Unwanteds?  
(P. 35 Mr. Today tells the children “The governments and especially the High Priest Justine, wants to eliminate creative thinkers like you – they see creativity as a weakness. After all it could lead to something horrible...like magic.”)
3. When the Unwanted first arrive and Mr. Today introduces them to the concept of Artime, Samheed calls him a lunatic. P.39 The children are shocked, but Mr. Today’s starts clapping saying “Bravo, Bravo, dear Boy” Why does he have this reaction?
4. P. 105 Alex asks Mr. Today “Why doesn’t anyone challenge the High Priest Justine”?
5. Alex is very upset when he is not selected for warrior training; he becomes discouraged and even contemplates going back to Quill where he has no responsibilities, no expectations. Why is Mr. Today reluctant to begin Alex’s warrior training?
6. How does living in Artimé change each of the four friends – Alex, Samheed, Meghan and Lani? What incidents in the plot affect the characters and their relationships? For example, Lani starts teasing Alex. Why does she do that? How does it affect their friendship?
7. Of all the friends Samheed feels the most divided between the two worlds. How does this show in his actions? Why does he feel that way?
8. Why does Alex dream about his twin brother Aaron, but not his parents?

9. There are a number of characters who are pitted against a relative Alex/Aaron, Mr. Today/Claire, and (until the truth is revealed at the conclusion) Lani/General Haluki. Why do you think that Aaron is so determined to battle his brother even after Alex has given him every opportunity to reconcile?
10. Quill is said to be a world that discourages creativity. Yet Aaron works hard to solve problems about poor food and lack of water. Can this be considered creative?
11. Mr. Today always gives “his people” a choice. He gives the warriors of Artime a choice in their methods saying....” Some of you think it is wrong to kill another person no matter what reason.... Others would not hesitate to give back to Quill the same sentence that they once gave to you. Consider your choice seriously.” He also gives them choices as the battle is about to begin. They can choose to fight, or they can be useful in the Mansion. Why does Mr. Today give these choices?
12. If you were a fighter in Artime which of the magical spells would you use against the Quillitary? (Slam poetry, fireball dragons, splatter paint, itch glue stinging soliloquies, blinding highlights, the dreaded Shakespearean curse.)

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