

Chalkline by Jane Mitchell

Teaching Guide

JANE MITCHELL | AWARD WINNING WRITER OF BOOKS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS

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About the author

Jane Mitchell is one of Ireland's leading authors for children and young adults. She has published seven novels—several of which are award-winners—and three short stories.

In 1994, her debut novel *When Stars Stop Spinning* won Ireland's premier youth literature award: **CBI Bisto Book of the Year Award**. *Chalkline* won the inaugural **CBI Children's Choice Award** in 2010.

Jane lives in Dublin and works in an NGO providing services for people with disabilities.

You can find out more about Jane at www.janemitchell.ie.

Amnesty International

This book has been endorsed by Amnesty International as contributing to a better understanding of human rights and the values that underpin them. This means that Amnesty recommends it. Find out more about Amnesty from their website: www.amnesty.co.uk.

About the cover

The cover of *Chalkline* shows the boy Rafiq against his school wall, with a chalk line at his ear.

Illustrators often use symbols to represent ideas and meanings. What do you think the images in the background mean? What might they symbolise?

Design your own cover for the book. Try to include **symbolism** to represent ideas and meanings from the story.

About the story

Rafiq is only nine when Kashmiri Freedom Fighters raid his village in search of new recruits. Tall for his age, he is the first boy to cross the chalk line into a life of brutality and violence.

Jameela cannot forget her brother. While Rafiq is trained to kill in the rebel camp high in the mountains, she keeps his memory alive.

When finally their paths cross again, Rafiq is unrecognisable as the boy who left the village. Will Jameela know him?

Rationale and Themes

This novel has been chosen for use in the senior classes of primary school and the junior classes of secondary school because it deals in a compelling and sensitive manner with themes such as **human rights, armed conflict, and gender equality**, all of which are relevant in the contemporary world.

Chalkline is on the Junior Certificate curriculum for English and its subject matter is highly relevant today in light of recent events in places such as Syria, Palestine and Iraq, and in view of the current challenges faced by children living in areas of armed conflict.

The subject matter of the story provides plenty of opportunity for **discussion, activities, debate** and the **development of personal opinion**. Themes are explored in a way that is powerful and compelling, resonating with clarity.

The main discussion areas woven into the fabric of the story include:

Children and armed conflict

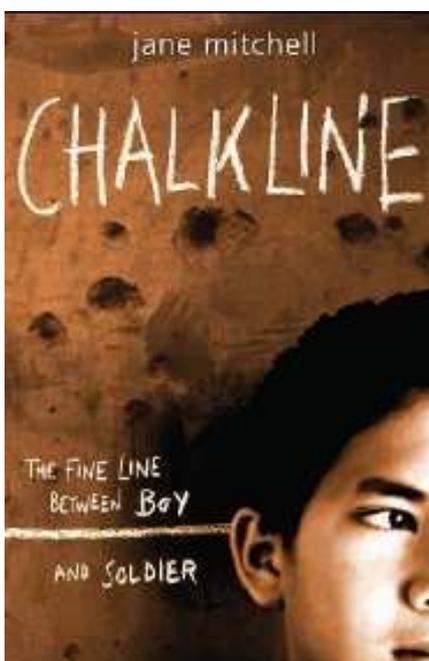
Death and loss

Human Rights

Education

Gender equality

Family and friendship



Teaching guide approach

For the purposes of this teaching guide, the novel has been divided into four units, loosely based on the structure of the story.

Chapter summaries, discussion points and activities, mostly based on language development, are included for each unit.

The pace at which the novel is read depends on the teacher and the students.

What is a child soldier?

Any person under 18 years of age who is recruited or used by an armed group in any capacity, including boys and girls used as fighters, cooks, porters, messengers, spies or for sexual purposes.

Unit 1: Prologue and Chapters 1 to 6 (pages 7-68)

Summary of prologue & chapters 1 to 6

Prologue

Fourteen year-old Rafiq leads a team of children as they ambush an armed convoy high in the mountains of Kashmir, north India. Rafiq is a hard taskmaster, using every opportunity to tutor the younger boys in the skills they need to ambush successfully. They are nervous of him, which hints at Rafiq's tougher side. The ambush is successful and the boys escape into the hills with their plunder.

Chapter 1

Five years earlier and back in their small village in the mountains, seven year-old Jameela is sent by her mother to call her brothers Rafiq and Mahmood for their dinner. Jameela takes her sibling, baby Imraan and toddler Afrah, to find the boys, who are not happy to be called in by their sister. After dinner, Rafiq teaches his little sister to read: girls do not go to school in their village. Their father believes it is a waste of time, but their mother thinks it is important. Rafiq wants to be a teacher when he grows up, and to have girls as well as boys in his class.

Chapter 2

Early the next morning, gunmen storm into Rafiq's school, terrifying the children and teachers with violence and gunfire. They draw a chalk line on the wall of the classroom and measure every boy against it. Rafiq is the first child who is taller than the chalk line and is thrown into a truck, along with almost half the boys from the school. To the bewilderment of the children, the gunmen slam shut the truck door and drive

out of the village.

Chapter 3

The truck travels for many hours. It is hot and uncomfortable inside. The gunmen stop to eat and rest in the fresh air for a while. Rafiq is ashamed of some of the boys, who cry openly. He remembers when he got lost as a small child and his father told him never to shame his family by showing his emotions. When the boys have to return to the truck, one boy escapes, only to be gunned down by the gunmen, which shocks the other boys.

Chapter 4

Back in the village, the teachers and small boys left behind in the school tell the villagers what has happened. Jameela, her mother and younger siblings hear the terrible news. There is an outpouring of grief and anger from the villagers. The village men head off with makeshift weapons to look for the boys, but return hours later in desolation, not having found anything.

Chapter 5

Rafiq and the boys travel for a long time in the truck. When they stop, it is night-time. They are tied in a long line by the gunmen and made to march through the night and finally rest beneath a huge banyan tree. Rafiq is exhausted but cannot sleep as thinks of his family and Jameela. Only the previous evening, he had shown her the new kid goat that had just been born, not realising how much his life would change.

Chapter 6

On the third day after his capture, the boys are led high into the moun-

tains where the temperature drops. Rafiq is impatient with the weaker boys who constantly fall. One of the gunmen recognises Rafiq's strong spirit and potential. The boys are untied to climb over a dangerous ravine and Rafiq almost falls, but manages to clamber across. That evening, they arrive at a camp settlement nestled deep in the mountains: their final destination.

Unit 1 Discussion Points

In the **Prologue**, Rafiq teaches Omar and Tariq to lay mines on the road. Their hands shake and they are nervous. Why might they be afraid? Does Rafiq make it harder for them or is he supportive? Explain your answers.

In **Chapter 1**, we find out that Jameela doesn't go to school. She relies on Rafiq to teach her to read. This is not unusual. In many countries around the world, girls have no right to education. Do you agree with this? Why/why not? Should all girls have a right to education? Why do some countries have different views on this? Give reasons for your answers.

In **Chapter 4**, Jameela is in the village square with her mother, Mahmood, Afrah and Imraan when she learns about what happened to Rafiq. Should the children have heard the truth? How do you think that difficult news should be given to children?

Unit 1 Activities

Chalkline is set in Kashmir, north India, where there is really a war going on. Look up Kashmir on a map and find out what countries border it. Why is there a war in Kashmir? What groups or countries are involved?

In **Chapter 1**, Rafiq's father says it is a waste of time teaching girls to read. Work in groups to decide on the best arguments to convince Rafiq's father otherwise. Explain why girls should have the same rights as boys.

Look up information about **Malala Yousafzai** and find out what she had to go through to get educated. She comes from Pakistan, which is just across the border from Kashmir. Write and illustrate her story.

Unit 2: Chapters 7 to 14 (pages 69-134)

Summary of Unit 2: chapters 7 to 14

Chapter 7

In the settlement, the boys are given food. Rafiq does not want to be there. He thinks of his family and village, and silently objects when the lead gunman, Abdullah, refers to the settlement as Rafiq's new home and the people as his new family. The boys are brought to the river to wash, and after prayers, are locked in huts to sleep. For the first time since his capture, Rafiq gives in to his grief. Tears spill down his cheeks as one of the gunmen guards them.

Chapter 8

It is still dark when the boys are sent to collect fuel and water the following morning, beaten by Abdullah and another gunman, Kareem. After washing and praying, the boys are marched to an assault course in the mountains. Rafiq throws stones at a weak slow boy, and the other boys copy him. They must compete against each other for water. Rafiq succeeds in getting a bottle of water but is ambushed by another boy who steals his prize. Rafiq is furious and punches the thief. He is then punched by Kareem for being stupid enough to let someone steal his water.

Chapter 9

Back in the village, Jameela grieves for her brother. The police from Varahamula arrive to take reports from the families. They discover the body of the murdered child in the desert. He cannot be identified and is buried in the village. Everyone hopes he was not their son. School resumes with the remaining children. Rafiq's family struggles to accept he is gone. There is no news from the police as weeks stretch into months.

Chapter 10

After one year in the mountains, Rafiq has grown stronger, taller. He misses his home, his village, and is weary of being beaten and shouted at but is proud that he has been selected as a capable boy soldier to participate in a mission to become a free soldier of Kashmir. Rafiq is paired with Ahmed, another trainee, to set mines on the road a distance from the camp. In the middle of the mission, a bus thunders upon them, startling them all. The boy soldiers flee, except for one boy who chases after the bus because it reminds him of his home and his family.

Chapter 11

A year after Rafiq's disappearance, Jameela and her

mother rush for the bus to take them to market. The bus is late and crowded. Jameela and her mother cram on and begin the long journey. As they climb through the high mountains, the bus skews aside and brakes to avoid boys and men on the road. The bus makes a hasty departure when the driver sees guns. As Jameela looks back, she sees a young boy on the road, staring at the bus. Is it Rafiq? She can't wait to tell her mother. But her mother tells Jameela there is nothing they can do. They go to market.

Chapter 12

Kareem walks after to the boy who chased the bus. The boy is crying, pleading for understanding, which hurts Rafiq and reminds him of what they have lost. The boy soldiers are ordered to tie up the boy and to arm the mines they have laid, which shocks them. They hike to a valley where Kareem commands them to dig a hole. He flings the tied-up boy in and orders the others to stone him or be stoned themselves. Rafiq is grief-stricken, angry and confused. He hates what he has to deal with and what he has to do, but he must do it. When the boy is dead, they cover up the body and leave the valley.

Chapter 13

Winter rolls into the mountains and the river freezes over. Rafiq is up first every morning, even before it is light. He is proud when he hears Abdullah praising his skills to the other men. The boys need more food to keep warm and the camp's stocks run low. Ahmed and Rafiq take part in a horseback raid to a local village to steal provisions. It is a poor village and Rafiq feels bad taking food, although he tries to remind himself he is a soldier. The raid is a full day mission and Rafiq finds it difficult.

Chapter 14

When the village women on the bus tell the police in Varahamula about seeing boys in the mountains, the police tell them of an explosion that killed people at the exact place where the boys were seen. They realise that the boys are being trained as militants. Jameela's father denies his son from that moment and says that Mahmood is his first son now, but not all families have the same response. Jameela secretly disagrees with her father and vows to always keep Rafiq's memory alive. Two years after he has gone, she tells her little brother Imraan stories of how special Rafiq was.

Unit 2: Activities

In **Chapter 7**, Rafiq spends his first night in the settlement. He is overwhelmed with grief and sadness as he remembers his family and village. Imagine he writes and illustrates a short description of his favourite memory of Jameela. He includes details of colour, sound and smell as well as describing what they did, where they went and how he felt. Use your imagination to help Rafiq write the description and illustrate his memory.

In **Chapter 9**, the police come from Varahamula to find out what happened in the village. You are the police officer who meets with Rafiq's family. Write up your report. You will need to state the **facts** clearly. Include **witness statements**, report the **final outcome** of the incident, and indicate if there is to be any **further action**.

In **Chapter 11**, Jameela and her mother take a long bus ride from their village to the market in town. It is an interesting journey and Jameela sees different sights along the way. Describe a journey through the centre of your own town or area with the same attention to detail. You can use maps, illustrations and descriptions.

Unit 2: Discussion Points

In **Chapter 10**, we hear that some of the stolen boys are too weak to learn the techniques of armed combat. Instead, they work around the settlement, helping with chores, while others just disappear. Do you think these boys are still child soldiers? Research definitions of child soldiers to help you with this discussion.

In **Chapter 11**, Jameela tells her mother she thinks she saw Rafiq on the road behind the bus. Her mother disregards it. Do you think that this is fair? Why do you think her mother dismissed what her daughter had to say, but listened when the other women told her the same news? Can you think of other situations where someone's opinion is ignored for no good reason?

Unit 3: Chapters 15 to 19 (pages 135-187)

Chapter 15

Rafiq is now a young teenager. He travels with Kareem and a ten-year old boy soldier called Samir to a mission in the town of Poonch, where they stay overnight in a safe house. Rafiq is uncomfortable and unsettled in the crowded town and when he sees a small girl smiling at him, is disturbed by distant memories. Next day, goes with Kareem and Samir to check out the escape routes to and from the cloth bazaar and the temple: sites of the planned attack.

Chapter 16

Back in the safe house, they prepare for the mission, but Rafiq is concerned about Samir, who lacks concentration. On the steps of the temple, he warns Samir to focus, then sets his decoy incendiary device in the cloth bazaar. He is almost caught in the explosion and is injured, but joins Kareem and Samir. The three freedom fighters detonate explosions, fire guns and shoot people. When they leave the temple, they get lost in the back alleys as they try to find the jeep. They split up and agree to meet after dark. Kareem and Rafiq arrive safely, but Samir doesn't. They wait until the moon is high, and then leave the town without Samir to return to the settlement.

Chapter 17

A dust storm blows across the land, rattling houses in the village and keeping Jameela awake. Up in the mountains, the storm shrieks through the mountains. Rafiq goes to the cooking area to get torches as Ahmed searches for plastic sheeting and rope to secure huts in the settle-

ment. An explosion tears apart the store cabin, killing Ahmed instantly. Rafiq realises they are under attack. He hides as the settlement is torn apart by the army, who shoot the freedom fighters and torch the camp. When the soldiers spread out to search the surrounding area, Rafiq hides in caves for the night.

Chapter 18

Five years after Rafiq was stolen, Jameela is washing clothes with her mother and Afrah when a local village woman tells them of a raid on a camp high in the mountains. The police discovered the camp after a young boy was found with a gun in the streets of Poonch following an attack on a temple a few months previously. When the woman is gone, Jameela convinces her mother to come with her to Varahamula to ask the police about the raid, behind her father's back. Afrah is excited and agrees to cover for them and so it is settled.

Chapter 19

For three days, Rafiq hides out alone in the cave. He is tormented by terrifying dreams and images, and doesn't know what to do. When he finally returns to the camp, it seems he is the only survivor: the settlement has been razed to the ground and the occupants killed. Rafiq is distraught and confused. He collects a few items from the remaining huts and discovers the underground munitions store has not been raided. He loads up a wandering horse with weapons and leaves the camp forever, riding through the gathering darkness as he plans his revenge.

Unit 2: Discussion Points continued

In **Chapter 14**, Rafiq's father wants nothing to do with his son when he discovers that Rafiq has become a militant. Other families in the village have different views. Whose opinion do you agree with and why? What shapes opinions about other people? Does it make a difference that they are living in a small village?

Unit 3: Discussion Points

Rafiq is uncomfortable in Poonch and disturbed when he sees a small girl smiling at him in **Chapter 15**. Why does being in the town make him uncomfortable? What do you think is disturbing him? Can you think of any situation when you were uncomfortable or unsettled in a new place? How did you feel?

In **Chapter 16**, Samir is only ten years old, yet he is excited by setting off explosives and shooting people. What would you say to Samir to show him how wrong this is? He gets lost after they try to escape from the attack. What would you do to help him if you found him on the streets? Should Samir be helped or punished for his actions?

In **Chapter 18**, Jameela persuades her mother to go to Varahamula behind her father's back. Her mother is at first shocked, but her daughters remind her of other times she has not been honest with her husband. Is their mother right or wrong to do this? Give reasons for your answers. Can you remember a time when you weren't entirely honest with someone to help someone else? How did you feel?

Unit 3 Activities

The bombing of the cloth bazaar and the attack on the temple in **Chapter 16**, shocks the people of Poonch. Can you report from the scene for the local newspaper? You will need to describe the destruction as well as how everyone helps out. Interview witnesses for their reactions. Include a sketch of the damaged street, and a plan showing the layout of the area.

In **Chapter 17**, Rafiq hides in the darkness and watches while the camp is attacked. Imagine that Ahmed escapes with him. As they lie beside each other in the night, watching the settlement being destroyed, what might they say to each other? Could you recreate their conversation? Work in small groups to write a short play of the scene. Perform it for the rest of the class.

In **Chapter 19**, Rafiq collects items to bring with him before he leaves the ruined settlement. Write down the items he gathers. What else might he need on his journey? Make a list of items you might bring with you and why.

Unit 4: Chapters 20 to 26 (pages 188-232)

Summary of Unit 4: chapters 20 to 26

Chapter 20

As Rafiq travels, he pilfers food from local homes and villages when his own meagre provisions run out. The temperature rises as he descends from the high mountains. He follows the river to Varahamula. He finds it difficult to make decisions, constantly haunted by memories of the settlement and distant recollections of another family life. When he arrives in Varahamula, he hides his explosives in a derelict site, then makes his way to the main square where he scopes the police station and decides how to attack it the next day. He hunkers down in a doorway for the night.

Chapter 21

Jameela and her mother are up early to prepare for their covert trip to Varahamula to find out about Rafiq. Afrah makes breakfast for them and is secretly excited about keeping house for the day. The bus journey seems to take forever and Jameela's thoughts are full of dreams of finding Rafiq. They hurry to the police station, where long queues mean they wait half the day. Jameela's mother sends her to the market to buy fruit. Jameela sees a beggar boy sitting in a doorway behind the fruit stall. She buys him a peach.

Chapter 22

Rafiq startles awake to see a strange girl in front of him, holding a peach. Angry, confused, he takes it from her and watches as she climbs the steps to the police station. There is something vaguely familiar about her,

but Rafiq dismisses the memory. He eats the peach, his thoughts of revenge blunted by the sweetness of the fruit, the girl's kindness, the activity in the market. He is slow to get moving, although he knows that he must avenge his brothers. Finally, he walks his horse back to the derelict site where he hid the weapons. He prepares the explosives and loads up his horse.

Chapter 23

Jameela returns to her mother in the police station. When they are finally called to the counter, the police officer tells them there was a camp in the mountains, but it was raided and there were no survivors. He tries to comfort them but Jameela is swamped with disappointment and grief. Her mother tries to be strong as they leave the police station.

Chapter 24

Rafiq pauses on the steps of the White Mosque. As he peers at the market, he sees the girl who gave him the peach leave the police station with an older woman—her mother?. He watches them descend the steps. She nudges his memory again and he notices that her movements are slower, sadder, than earlier. He turns to pray, secretly pleased that she is no longer in the police station.

Chapter 25

Jameela and her mother go to buy a scarf for Afrah. Jameela is despondent, but her mother tells her they must keep their hopes alive. Jameela steps away from

her and when her mother looks to see her daughter, she is talking to a strange boy leading a horse. Jameela's mother is stunned by a similar memory that explodes into her mind of Rafiq and Jameela back home many years ago. She sees the same two children in front of her now and collapses to the ground in shock. When Jameela rushes to her aid, her mother manages to clamber to her feet and shout after the boy as he climbs the steps to the police station with his heavy sacks: Rafiq!

Chapter 26

Rafiq whirls around when he hears his name called out. He searches the crowds wildly to see if any freedom fighters have survived, but only sees the old woman and the girl. He is angry with himself for being distracted and is about to return to his task when the girl climbs the steps to him. She asks him if he is Rafiq, if he is her brother. Rafiq is confused and startled. He can't answer such a question lightly in the middle of strangers. He considers her response. But some tiny spark lights up in his memory and he replies yes, he is Rafiq.

Unit 4 Activities

- ▮ Pretend you are Jameela. You are meeting Rafiq for the first time after five long years. What are the most important things you would want to tell him? Write down the first conversation you imagine having with him. How do you think he might respond?
- ▮ The story ends ambiguously: there are a few possibilities about what might happen next. What do you think might happen next? In small groups, write up your ideas for the next chapter.
- ▮ It is estimated that there are 250,000 children involved in armed conflict around the world. Find out what countries use children as soldiers. What tasks are these children forced to do?
- ▮ Jameela's father turned his back on Rafiq when he heard he was a trained militant. Write up a conversation he might have with Rafiq if he returns home with Jameela and their mother. Work with others in your class to perform this conversation as a play. Involve Jameela and her mother too.

Unit 4

Discussion Points

Before Jameela and her mother leave for the long bus journey to Varahamula in **Chapter 21**, they eat breakfast and help Afrah to prepare food for dinner. What do they eat for breakfast? What is prepared for dinner? How do these foods compare with your breakfast and dinner? What other foods do Rafiq and Jameela eat?

There are actions ordinary people can take to help child soldiers around the world. These could include writing letters, fundraising for charities that help child soldiers and participating in demonstrations. Find out what action your class could take to help raise awareness of child soldiers and support them. What do you think would be most effective? Why?

An important theme of the story is the deep bond between Jameela and Rafiq. How does this friendship help them over the years?

Chapter by chapter comprehension questions: prologue, and chapters 1 to 3

Prologue

- ▮ What are the names of the characters we meet in this chapter?
- ▮ What does Rafiq try to teach Omar and Tariq?
- ▮ What do we learn about Rafiq when he is teaching the other boys?
- ▮ What do the boys take away with them from the ambush site?

Chapter 1

- ▮ What are the names of Rafiq's brothers and sisters?
- ▮ Why does Mahmood get annoyed when Jameela calls him?
- ▮ What do Rafiq and Jameela do after dinner?
- ▮ What does their father think of this?

Chapter 2

- ▮ What do the gunmen do when they arrive in the village?
- ▮ Why is Rafiq chosen by the gunmen?
- ▮ What happens to the boys who are taller than the chalk line?
- ▮ How does it make him feel?

Chapter 3

- ▮ What happens when the truck stops?
- ▮ Why does Rafiq feel ashamed of some of the older boys?
- ▮ What happens to the boy who tries to escape?
- ▮ How does this make Rafiq feel?

Chapter by chapter comprehension questions: chapters 4 to 16

Chapter 4

What happens back in the school after the gun-men take the boys?

How does Jameela learn what happened to Rafiq?

Why does she think he hasn't been taken, that there was some mistake?

What do the village men decide to do?

Chapter 5

What happens when the truck stops?

How does Rafiq feel?

Why can't Rafiq sleep when they stop for the night?

What did Rafiq and Jameela do together the night before he was abducted?

Chapter 6

Where do the gunmen walk the boys?

How does the landscape change?

What does Rafiq do to the boys who fall?

Why does he do this?

Chapter 7

What happens when the boys arrive in the settlement?

How do they behave when given food by the women?

What does the lead gun- man, Abdullah, tell the boys?

What does Rafiq do when he is locked in the hut for the night?

Chapter 8

What new characters are introduced in this chapter?

What jobs are the boys told to do?

Why does Rafiq throw stones at one of the boys?

How does Rafiq lose his bottle of water?

Chapter 9

What happens in the village when the police arrive from Varahamula?

What does Mahmood do in the school to make his father angry with him?

What do the camel traders find in the desert?

What happens when they bring it back to the village?

Chapter 10

Why is Rafiq proud of himself?

What does Abdullah mean when he talks about the

boys becoming free soldiers of Kashmir?

What happens to boys who are not strong enough to become soldiers?

What happens to Rafiq and Ahmed when they are laying mines on the road?

Chapter 11

Describe the occupants and items in the bus to market.

What does Jameela see out of the window on her journey?

What happens when the bus stops suddenly?

What does Jameela think when she looks back at the road?

Chapter 12

Why does Abdullah tells Kareem not to strike the boy on the road?

How do the boy's words make Rafiq feel?

What do the boys have to do in the valley after they have eaten?

Why is Rafiq angry with the boy when he is in the hole?

Chapter 13

How does the weather change in the mountains?

Why do the boys decide to ride to the village?

Chapter 14

What do the police tell the village women happened in the mountain they saw boys and men?

How does Jameela's father react?

How do the parents of other stolen boys react?

What does Jameela decide to do about the news?

Chapter 15

Where is Rafiq going and who is with him in this chapter?

Describe something about the character of Samir.

Why is Rafiq disturbed by the small girl who smiles at him?

Why does Rafiq sleep badly?

Chapter 16

What does Rafiq say to Samir to make him focus on the mission?

Why is Rafiq late in setting his decoy explosion in the cloth bazaar?

What is Samir's job before the attack on the temple?

What happens to Rafiq, Kareem and Samir after they flee from the temple after the attack?

Chapter by chapter comprehension questions: chapters 17 to 26

Chapter 17

Why does Jameela worry about the hen when the dust storm rattles the village?

What does Ahmed want Rafiq to help him with?

Why does Rafiq go to the cooking area?

From where does Rafiq watch the army attacking the settlement?

Chapter 18

What is Jameela doing when the village woman arrives with news about the settlement in the mountains?

Why does Afrah think this woman is very strange?

What news does the woman bring them?

What does Jameela persuade her mother to do?

Chapter 19

Why does Rafiq put out the fire in the cave in the mountains?

How does he feel when he returns to the settlement and sees what has happened?

What does he take with him from the ruined settlement?

How does he travel?

Chapter 20

Where does Rafiq get food to eat as he travels?

Why is it hard for him to make decisions?

What does he do with his weapons and ammunition when he arrives in Varahamula?

Why does he go to the main square of the town?

Chapter 21

Why does Afrah get up early on the morning Jameela and her mother travel to Varahamula?

Why does the journey seem so long to Jameela?

Where do they go when they arrive in Varahamula?

Why does Jameela's mother send her out to the market to buy fruit?

Chapter 22

How does Rafiq feel when he wakes up to see a strange girl standing in front of him?

Why does he find it difficult to get moving?

Where does he go when he finally gets up?

What does he do when he returns to the derelict site with his horse?

Chapter 23

What does Jameela tell her mother about the boy she saw when she returns to the police station?

Who else is in the queue ahead of Jameela and her mother?

Why does the police officer have to help Jameela and her mother with the forms?

What news does the police officer tell them about the camp in the mountains?

Chapter 24

Why does Rafiq go to the White Mosque?

Who does he see on the steps of the police station?

What does he notice about Jameela?

How does he feel about her not being in the police station anymore?

Chapter 25

What does Jameela's mother want to buy in the market?

Why does Jameela step away from her mother?

Why does her mother fall to the ground?

What does Jameela do to help her mother?

Chapter 26

What does Rafiq do when he hears his name called out?

Who else does he look for in the market?

How does this make him feel?

What answer does he give Jameela?

'Governments must ensure that children are not abducted or sold. Governments must protect children from all other forms of exploitation that might harm them.'

(United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child)

Where does the title 'Chalkline' come from?

The title of the book comes from the random way Rafiq and the other boys are chosen by the gunmen.

Think of other random ways to select children for a task, based on another physical quality. Try them out with others in your class.

Is this a fair way to choose someone? Give reasons for your answer.