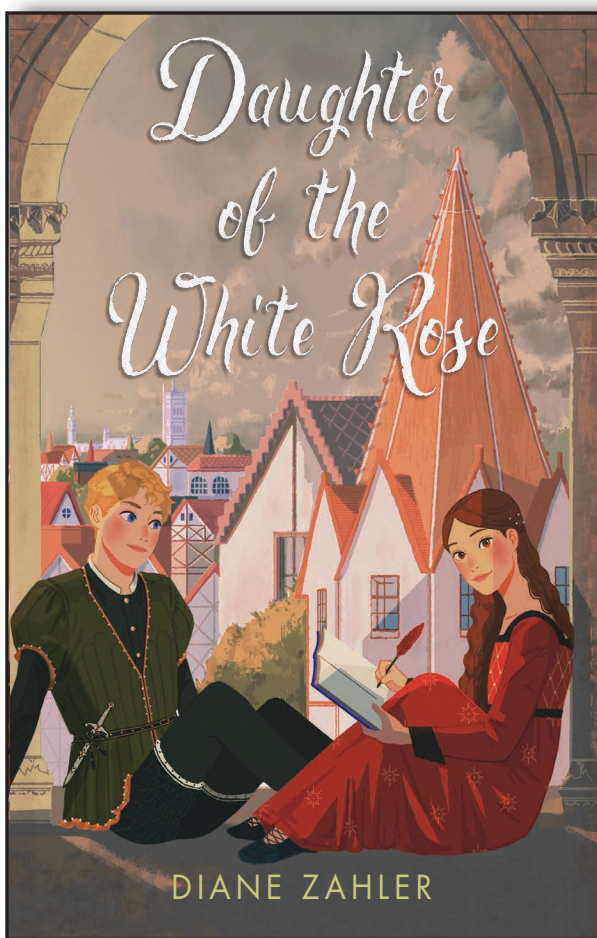


# HOLIDAY HOUSE READING GROUP GUIDE



## *Daughter of the White Rose* by Diane Zahler

A Junior Library Guild Gold Standard Selection

### ABOUT THE BOOK

**Can a common girl save a prince trapped in the Tower of London?**

April. England. 1483. The king is dead. Long live the king.

Nell Gould is the daughter of the royal butcher, a commoner, but she has been raised as the playmate of King Edward and Queen Elizabeth's royal children: Princess Cecily, Princess Bess, Prince Dickon, and Prince Ned,

their apparent and Nell's best and closest friend. They think alike, she and Ned, preferring books and jousts to finery and gossip and the sparkle of the court. But when King Edward dies, Prince Ned is imprisoned in the Tower of London by his scheming uncle, the evil Richard III—and Nell with him. Can they escape? Is Nell the key?

Based on the real royal scandal of the Princes in the Tower, *Daughter of the White Rose* covers a shocking episode in medieval history that has captured the imagination for 530 years. This girl-led, medieval middle-grade novel is a story of murder, betrayal, resilience, and growing up.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Foreshadowing is a hint about events to come in a book. Read the riddle at the beginning of the novel. How does it foreshadow specific plot episodes that unfold?
- Discuss the War of the Roses. Identify the leaders of the “Banner of the Red Rose” and the “Banner of the White Rose.” How is the war about money, power and land?

- Define treason. Why does Nell’s father, the butcher, worry about being accused of treason if he provides food for Edward’s wife, Queen Elizabeth?
- Describe Queen Elizabeth. She is believed to have been “cold-hearted and proud,” and to possess a “hot temper.” Cite scenes to support this image of her.
- Discuss the character traits of Richard III. What is the first hint that he is a murderer? Explain Nell’s first encounter with Richard of Gloucester (Richard III). How does this shape her view of him forever?
- Nell and Ned bonded in the cradle. Trace their developing relationship. How is it traumatic for them when Ned is sent away to Ludlow Castle to study to be King?
- Explain why Nell and Ned could never marry. At age eleven, Ned gives Nell a tiny ring with instructions that if she should ever need him, “show this and you be able to get to me” (p. 84). She gives him a similar ring. How do they make use of the rings later in the novel?
- What is the role of Thaddeus, the Queen’s fool? The Queen goes to London Tower to await Ned’s coronation. Thaddeus says, “There is a dark spider that sits in the North, weaving his web and waiting for his supper.” Who is the spider? How does he weave his web? What is his supper?
- After Ned and Toby are killed, Nell and her father help Prince Dickon escape to France. Nell says, “I was beginning to realize that I could never go home again. I had no home” (p. 205). Why is taking exile at the Convent of St. Anne her best option? Why doesn’t Nell feel she deserves a happy life?

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Photo credit: Ben Sickler

**Diane Zahler** is the author of more than ten books for young readers, both fiction and nonfiction, including the acclaimed middle-grade fantasy novels *The Thirteenth Princess* and *Princess of the Wild Swans*. She lives in Riverdale, New York, with her husband, a professor at Fordham.