



# THE WINGFEATHER SAGA

*The Monster in the Hollows*

Book Club Kit

**Hello from Madame Sidler!**

Can I help you?

Andrew and I are thrilled that you're interested in reading these books together! One of the things I love best is reading with friends. This book club kit contains some tips to get started, a bunch of discussion questions, three recipes, tons of ideas for activities, and a craft. We have more digital resources and lore at [WingfeatherSaga.com](http://WingfeatherSaga.com)! If you need anything, you can find me lurking about the [Official Wingfeather Saga Fan Group](#) on Facebook. And of course, we'd love to hear your thoughts, both about the books and about your book club!

Now, let's get started! As Jinto Qweb so famously said, "Hurry! Reading is fun!"

—Madame Sidler

## How to run a book club

1. Decide together where and how often you'd like to meet. Once per week, per month, per book? In a library, a coffee shop, a park, someone's house?
2. Decide together if you'll have one person leading the club, or if you'll take turns.
3. Set a couple of simple ground rules for discussion. Rules might include, "Only one person talking at a time," and "No biting." The leader can make sure everyone gets a chance to participate by noting whether someone has been very quiet, and sometimes asking them a specific question, so they don't feel like they're interrupting. Don't be afraid to talk about things not in the discussion guide! It's just there to get you started.
4. Snacks are always a good idea! The leader can bring snacks, or ask different people to bring snacks each time.
5. If you want to do an activity or craft during your club time, the leader can make sure everyone knows what to bring.
6. Most of all: **Have fun!** And come to the [Official Wingfeather Saga Fan Group](#) on Facebook if you need any help.

**Note:** This book club kit is designed to be used after you have read *The Monster in the Hollows*. If you have not yet read the book, you will find spoilers in the discussion questions and activities.

## Discussion Questions

1. Which character is your favorite so far? Why? Has that changed from book to book?
2. What's a sound that you would miss if it disappeared? (p 2)
3. Do you agree with Janner about the difference between Fangs and Stranders? Why does that difference matter? (p 20)
4. Have you ever thought you were over a hurt, but then realized you weren't? What happened next? Has it been resolved? (ch 4)
5. What song would you want to hear to know that the singer is friendly? (ch 5)
6. What feelings do you have as you see the Hollowsfolks' reactions to Kalmar? What do you think Kal is feeling? (chs 7, 9, and elsewhere)
7. What do you do when it seems like you have to make a choice between protecting your own people from outside threats, or protecting someone from the outside who needs your help? (ch 9)
8. How do you feel when you see someone who does "look" like they belong in your neighborhood, school, church, etc.? (ch 7)
9. Have you ever traveled to a place where you don't "look" like you belong, or the customs are different? How do you feel? What kind of reactions do you get?
10. Do you know anyone new in school (or the neighborhood, church, soccer...)? Can you help them?
11. What calms you when you're in a panic or meltdown? (End of chapter 10, beginning of 11)
12. Who teaches you to be brave? (ch 11)
13. Who would you declare *turalay* for? (ch 12)
14. What's your favorite flavor of bibes?
15. Who's someone you were afraid of at first, but who ended up being friendly? (chapter 17)
16. What guild would you most want to join? (ch 19)
17. How would you fare in the Durgan Guild? (ch 20)
18. Have you ever felt the way Janner did after his first day of Durgan training? What helped? (ch 21)

19. What do you say when someone you care about is struggling with feelings of guilt?  
(ch 27)
20. Which section of the library would you most like to visit? (ch 28)
21. Have you ever read a book of your family's history, or heard stories from an elderly relative? What was it like to imagine your parents (or even your grandparents) as children? (ch 29)
22. Are there books that tell you who you are? Maybe one about your family, like in the question above, or maybe one that reminds you of your own story or your own feelings or gives you a new perspective on something in your life, or helps you think about your future or makes you brave? (ch 29)
23. Have you ever had to face a bully, whether they picked on you or on someone else? What did you do? Did it make the situation better? What do you think of Janner's solution? Would you have done anything like that? Would you have handled it differently? (ch 33)
24. What do you think is going on in the Bunges' heads, or the chiefs', as they pursue and try Kalmar? What would you be thinking if you were in the crowd? (chs 43-44)
25. What helps you when you feel beset by darkness? (ch 52)
26. What would you hope for after the Fork Factory? (chs 47, 53)
27. How does music connect you with those you love? (ch 55)
28. What was the funniest part of the book? What was the saddest? What was the most scary? What was the most wonderful?
29. Was there a part of the book you couldn't stop thinking about? What was it? What do you think about it?
30. Was there something that happened in the book that you expected, or wished, had happened differently? What do you think would have happened if things had turned out the way you expected?
31. Who was the Monster in the Hollows?
32. What do you think will happen next?

## Ideas for Activities

1. If you can, go sailing. (Look for hourly boat rentals nearby if you don't own a ship.)
2. Make paper boats and sail them in the bathtub (kiddy pool, rain barrel, pond).
3. Play Get the Boot! (You can do this with an old boot, or you can also play an indoor version by making a drawing of a boot and taping it to someone's back.)
4. Gather a few friends, an apple, and a staff-whacker (or maybe a pool noodle or cardboard tube). Take turns being the Guildmaster/Guildmadam and see who can sneak away the apple without being caught!
5. Seize a teachable moment and have a spitting contest.
6. Try Podo's favorite pepper brew.
7. Make one of the recipes in this kit, or come up with your own recipe!
8. Tour a library. Find out how the books are organized. Organize your own books!
9. What Guild would you want to belong to? Come up with some guild activities. Here are a few ideas to get you started!
  1. Juicery: Mix a few juices together to make your own blend.
  2. Houndry: Teach your dog a trick, or practice dogspeak with a friend's dog.
  3. Woodwrightery: Find a simple woodworking project and try it out!
  4. Bookbindery: Make a book! Find instructions, or devise your own method.
  5. Cookery: Make dinner for your family one night this week.
  6. Muffinry: Make two or three varieties of muffins. Have a taste-test.
  7. Rockwrightery: Make a dry-stack stone wall like Andrew's! (See his Instagram.)
10. Look up where your family came from before they immigrated or settled where they are now. Read about the customs there. Draw a map. Imagine.
11. Ask a parent or older relative about your family history. Which ancestor do you wish you could meet? What would you ask them?
12. Find a place where you can go snowshoeing, hiking, or caving.
13. Invent a crime and a penalty. Try the case. How would you argue (for or against)?
14. Have a readaloud together! This is extra fun if you do the voices.
15. Send Andrew a letter or email to tell him what you thought about the books, or to share your artwork, costume photos, recipe, or some other Wingfeathery thing you have been working on. (Find his contact information on the Wingfeather website at <https://www.WingfeatherSaga.com/contact>).

## Craft: Durgan Cloak

*Tip: If you can get some black fabric for your cloak, good—but if you think you'll do most of your sneaking around the house, an old bedsheet (with permission!) might provide the best camouflage!*

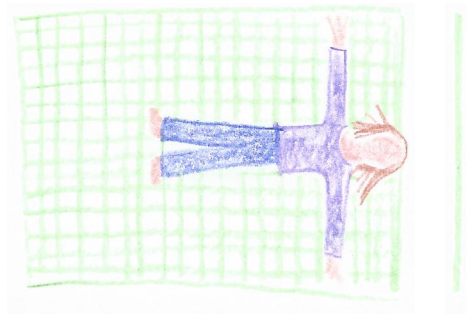
### Items You Need:

A big piece of fabric or an old flat sheet (make sure you have permission!)

A spool of ribbon or a long, thin piece of fabric

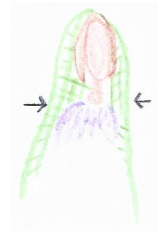
A needle and thread (if you have permission) or adult with a needle and thread (if you need help). Or, you can use safety pins (you will need five).

Step 1: Get a big piece of fabric or an old flat sheet (check with your parents first!) and lay it on the ground. Lay down and stretch out your arms to be sure the short end is as tall as you are, plus 4 inches. The long side should be one and a half times that length, so if your short side is 50 inches, for example, the long side should be 75 inches.



If you have permission, you can cut the fabric or sheet so that it isn't bigger than you need. But definitely check first!

Step 2: You will need a ribbon (or a long, thin piece of cloth) the same length as the short side of your fabric.

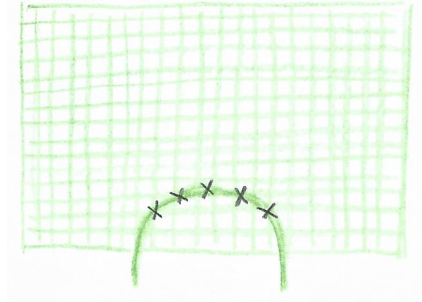


Step 3: Drape the sheet/fabric over your head so that your head just peeks out under one edge of the exact middle of the long side. With a clothespin, a safety pin, or some other means, mark where the cloth meets your shoulders on each side. Those marks will be the edges of your hood.



Step 4: Pull the fabric forward over your head so that it comes as far as you want it for full Durgan concealment. A good shadowy hood is essential to good sneaking. Reach back and grab the part where the cloth meets your shirt collar. Have a helper mark that spot for you, or hold tight to that spot while you take off the sheet so you can mark it yourself. That mark will be the back of your hood. Lay the fabric back down flat, with the markers on top so you can find them.

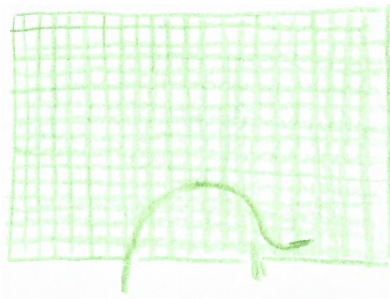
Step 5: Find the middle of your ribbon by folding it in half. Then unfold it and put it down on the fabric so that the ribbon's middle matches the mark you made at the back of your neck. Using a needle and thread, tack down the ribbon to that mark by making a few strong X stitches. You can also use safety pins instead of sewing.



Step 6: Find your front hood markers, and drape the ribbon in a half-circle so that it lands on those marks, with about 6 inches of ribbon on each end hanging past the fabric. Halfway down each side, tack the ribbon down again. Tack the ribbon down one more time on either side, between the back and the tacks you just made.



Step 7: Get a little piece of ribbon and fold it in half. Tack it down on one of the front hood markers. It doesn't matter very much which side, although if you put it on the same side as your dominant hand (looking down while you're working), the "clasp" will be on your non-dominant side while you're wearing it, which might make it a bit easier to work the clasp.

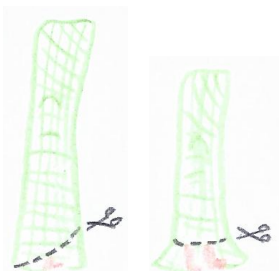


Step 8: Drape the cloak over your head. Pull the ribbon around on both sides, put the ends through the little clasp loop, and pull them through. You want the cloak to feel



secure, and comfortable (just tight enough to stay on while you're sneaking and fighting, but not so tight it's choking you). Tie the ends together into a bow. (For safety's sake, don't double knot.)

Step 9: You can wear your cloak with the hood up, or with the hood down. You can also push the shoulders back so your arms are more free, or pull the front closed to keep you warm against wind (or air conditioners). In the words of Sara Cobbler, "Adjust the cloak so it looks awesome." Now you are ready to sneak!



Extra tip: If you have permission, you can trim the extra fabric so that it hits just where you want it. Younger Durgans might want calf-length cloaks for safety. Older Durgans might want their cloaks to drag epically but reasonably behind them. If you expect muddy conditions, ankle-length might be best. Use your judgment and a pair of scissors (with permission).

## Recipe: Elenna's Famous Pumpkin Bread

“A fair woman with her hair in a bun approached the table and stood with her hands on her hips. ‘Welcome, travelers. Danniby likes my pumpkin bread, or else you’d be at another inn right now.’”—*The Monster in the Hollows*, chapter 8

½ cup butter (1 stick), softened

⅔ cup sugar

1 cup puréed pumpkin (canned is fine)

⅓ cup apple cider

2 eggs

½ teaspoon vanilla extract

1 ⅔ cup AP flour (that’s *all-purpose!* ha!)

1 teaspoon baking soda

½ teaspoon baking powder

½ teaspoon salt

¾ teaspoon freshly-ground nutmeg (or more, if you’re using store-ground)

½ teaspoon ground cinnamon

½ teaspoon ground cardamom (if you can’t find cardamom, you can leave it out)

½ cup halved pecans

Cinnamon and sugar for sprinkling

Before you start, heat the fire in your oven to about 350°, and lightly grease a loaf pan.

Beat all the wet ingredients together with a wooden spoon. Stir in the dry ingredients, just until they’re evenly mixed. It will be very thick. Pour the batter into the pan and smooth it out a bit on top. It doesn’t have to be perfect. It even looks a little nicer if it isn’t! Sprinkle some cinnamon and sugar, and spread the pecans evenly across the top. (You don’t need very much cinnamon and sugar—a light sprinkling will make the loaf prettier, and a lot will make a bit of a crunchy crust.)

Bake the bread for 60-80 minutes, or until a knife comes out clean when you pierce it. Let it cool on a windowsill or a rack before you slice it, or it will fall apart a little.



## **Recipe: Fruit Crisp**

*Fruit crisp—and fruit crumbles, cobblers, buckles, flummeries, and desserts generally—are a staple around the Hollows. Ridgerunners love a good crisp, too, although if you invite one over you'll be in violation of the Fruit Federation Protocols of 2/175. Eat fruit crisp with ridgerunners only at the border, and only with a Durgan present.*

*You can make this crisp with any kind of fruit, but apple is Andrew's favorite.*

5 cups of berries or sliced fruit (any kind! or a mixture!)

2-4 tablespoons sugar

½ cup rolled oats

½ cup brown sugar, packed firmly into the measuring cup

¼ cup flour

¼ teaspoon cinnamon, nutmeg, or ginger (whichever you think will go best with your fruit. Be creative! Try different combinations! And a little extra usually won't hurt.)

¼ cup butter, cut into smaller pieces

¼ cup chopped nuts (optional)

Before you start, heat the fire in your oven to 375°.

Mix the fruit and sugar together in a square baking dish. In a separate dish, mix together the next four ingredients. Use your fingers to squish the butter into this mixture. You want a kind of rough sandy texture with some bigger pieces. It doesn't have to be perfect. Stir in the nuts, then sprinkle all of this evenly on top of the fruit.

Bake for 30-35 minutes or until the topping is brown and the juices are bubbling. If you used a firmer variety of fruit, like apples, be sure you can pierce it with a fork.

### **Bonus Ridgerunner Fruit Recipe**

Needed: Fruit.

Instructions: Eat the fruit.

(That's pretty much it.)

## Recipe: Pumpkin Stew

*This is Elenna's official recipe from the Orchard Inn and Cookery, and it is the best non-fruit thing I (Madame Sidler) have ever eaten.*

½ cup (1 stick) butter

1 medium onion, chopped roughly

4-5 stalks celery, chopped

1 bundle (about 9 ounces) of carrots, chopped and with tops removed

2-4 garlic cloves (to taste), minced (or squashed with the flat of your knife blade)

1 lb. Italian sausage (hen or hogpig)

4 c. henmeat broth

1 small pumpkin, 2½-3 pounds, cut into chunks (if pumpkin is not in season, you can use butternut squash, fresh or frozen; canned pumpkin might work—let us know!)

1 tablespoon minced fresh honeybud (thyme works nicely as a substitute)

Salt and freshly ground pepper

¼ pound smoked gouda (or other cheese), cut into ½-inch chunks

1 c. heavy cream

Pinch of freshly grated nutmeg

About ¼ cup chopped greenions, for garnish (optional)

In a big pot over a medium-hot fire, melt some butter and sauté the next five ingredients. Add the broth and pumpkin and bring everything to a boil, then turn it down to a simmer. Add the seasonings and let it all simmer until the pumpkin can be easily pierced with a fork.

If you want a smoother stew, you can puree half of the pot's contents in a blender (be careful, since it's hot!). We don't have blenders in Ban Rona, so Elenna cooks the pumpkin separately and mashes it before adding it to the stew, but either way works. Once that's done, add the gouda, cream, and nutmeg. If it seems too thin, you can add ¼ c. or so of flour or potato starch and let it cook a bit longer to thicken. Serves 8-12.