

BREWS + BOOKS

Discussion Questions for The Fifth Season by N.K. Jemisin

“It’s a gift if it makes us better. It’s a curse if we let it destroy us.”

“The Fifth Season” starts out with the line “Let’s start with the end of the world, why don’t we?” How did that opening line make you feel? What were the multiple interpretations of that line within the context of the book?

“The Fifth Season” includes chapters in multiple perspectives. Did you have a particular perspective you identified with the most?

Essun’s chapters are written in second person (addressing the audience as “you”) - a rare perspective in novels. How did that make you feel? Did it help you understand the story or connect with the character?



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What parallels do you see between the landscape and climate disasters in “The Fifth Season” and our own environment?

One of the themes of “The Fifth Season” is prejudice and oppression. How is the oppression shown in the book systemic? How is it individual? Did this book change your perspective on prejudice and oppression?

The book is set on a continent called “The Stillness,” and throughout the book we slowly learn more about the geography, science, and culture of The Stillness. What did you think of the world? What surprised you the most?

Did the connections between the three characters - Damaya, Essun, and Syenite - surprise you at the end of the novel? Why do you think that Jemisin structured the novel the way she did?

“The Fifth Season” is the beginning of the Broken Earth trilogy. Are you going to read the next book in the series?

READ-ALIKES

Did you enjoy this book and want to explore similar items?

- **Who Fears Death** by Nnedi Okorafor - If you liked the apocalyptic nature and detailed world-building of “The Fifth Season,” try this fantasy novel set in post-apocalyptic Africa.
- **The Raven Tower** by Ann Leckie - Like “The Fifth Season,” this book also features a large, diverse cast of characters having a world-changing experience, told through multiple perspectives.
- **Master of Poisons** by Andrea Hairston - An environmental disaster is also at the forefront of this fantasy story, told through several perspectives and in an afrofantasy setting.
- **An Unkindness of Ghosts** by Rivers Solomon - This book, which takes place on a spaceship rather than on a planet, features main characters that, much like in “The Fifth Season,” are part of societies that dehumanize them.
- **The Obelisk Gate** by N.K. Jemisin is book two of the Broken Earth trilogy launched by “The Fifth Season.” The trilogy concludes with **The Stone Sky**.

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