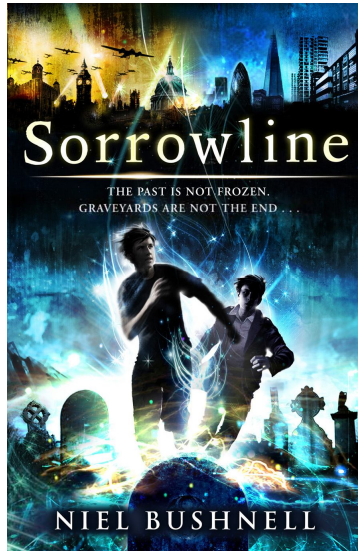




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**Sorrowline – a perfect book club/reading group title**

**READING GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE**



**Sorrowline by Niel Bushnell**

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**ABOUT THE BOOK**

Twelve-year-old Jack Morrow is used to life being complicated. His mother died five years ago, and his father is now headed for prison. But then Jack discovers he's a Yard Boy - someone with the ability to travel through Sorrowlines, the channels that connect every gravestone with the date of the person's death - and he is quickly pulled into an adventure beyond anything he could have possibly imagined.

Finding himself in 1940s war-torn London, with his then-teenage grandfather, Davey, Jack soon realises that his arrival in the past has not gone unnoticed. The evil forces of a secret world are determined to find him - and to find out all he knows.

As Jack struggles to survive, he comes ever closer to unlocking the dark secret at the heart of his family, and to - just maybe - changing his own destiny . . .

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Niel Bushnell is a writer and animator who has worked on several feature films and British television series. Sorrowline is his first novel.

## SOME DISCUSSION POINTS AND QUESTIONS

- The book is set in London in the present day and 1940. How does the city differ in the two time periods? When would you prefer to live?
- Jack gets the opportunity to meet his grandfather, Davey, when he's about the same age as him. If you could travel through a Sorrowline which family member would you like to see? How do you think they would differ from their older selves?
- In 1940 Jack follows Davey to the Hanging Tavern. How have attitudes to smoking and drinking changed since 1940? What other everyday things have changed?
- When Davey discovers he's Jack's grandfather his attitude towards him changes. How is their relationship altered by this revelation?
- During their journey with the Boogymen Eloise expresses the wish to die. Why do you think this makes Jack angry?
- When Jack travels to 1813 to rescue Davey he spends several days as a gravedigger. How does Jack change and grow during his time there?
- Jack repeatedly tries to change the events of his past in order to save his family. How does Jack's view of 'family' differ from the beginning to the end of the book.
- Many elements of European myth, folklore and traditional tales inspired Sorrowline. Did you spot any?
- In order to travel to 2008 Rouland makes a deal with the mysterious Grimnir, yet later the Grimnir appears to help Jack. What did you feel these creatures represent?
- Throughout the story Jack discovers more about his mother and her family in the First World. How does this affect Jack?
- Did the expectations you had of the book based on its cover and title change as you read it? Why? How?
- If you could travel back in time through a Sorrowline what year would you like to visit? Why?