

## Reading Guide

### *Halo* by Zizou Corder



Puffin  
9780141328300  
£6.99



#### The author:

Zizou Corder is the not-so-secret identity of Louisa Young and her now seventeen year old daughter Isabel Adomakoh Young, who have been writing together since Isabel was seven. They have previously written four books including the critically acclaimed *Lionboy* trilogy. They wander the world in a gilded balloon, and have 17 pet ducks and eight miniature grand pianos.

#### The book:

Washed ashore as a baby in ancient Greece, Halo is discovered by a family of centaurs. Although her true identity remains a mystery, she is loved as one of their own. But when Halo is dragged away by fishermen, her wild adventure begins...

#### Talking points:

- 'No one has any respect for women, let alone girls.' Halo disguises herself as a boy to avoid being restricted by the limited role women have to play in ancient Greek society. Discuss the different views of women which are presented in the novel, and the ways in which Halo challenges them.
- *Halo* blends historical fact with ideas from Greek myth and legend. How important are the fantastical and mythological elements to the story as a whole?
- Halo becomes part of a number of different family and community groups, from her peace-loving Centaur family on Zakynthos to Pericles's powerful Athenian dynasty. How important a role does family play in *Halo*? Discuss how both conventional and unconventional family relationships are presented.
- "KNOW THYSELF" are the words Halo reads inscribed over the entrance when she visits the temple at Delphi. To what extent does the novel highlight young people's need for self-knowledge?
- Halo and Leonidas come from very different cultures, yet are still able to relate to each other; however there are many other examples of characters who distrust those who come from different social, cultural or ethnic backgrounds. How effectively does Zizou Corder explore difference and prejudice in the novel, and how relevant do you think these ideas are to contemporary British society?

#### Read more:

*Lionboy* trilogy by Zizou Corder  
*Troy* by Adele Geras  
*The Kite Rider* by Geraldine McCaughrean

#### More about Zizou Corder:

Zizou Corder's website: [www.zizoucorder.co.uk/](http://www.zizoucorder.co.uk/)  
Zizou Corder at Puffin: [www.puffin.co.uk](http://www.puffin.co.uk)

### The Booktrust Teenage Prize celebrates the best contemporary writing for young people

This guide provides information about some exciting online resources as well as ideas to trigger in-depth discussion during class or with a reading group. There are six guides, one for each of the 2010 shortlisted titles.