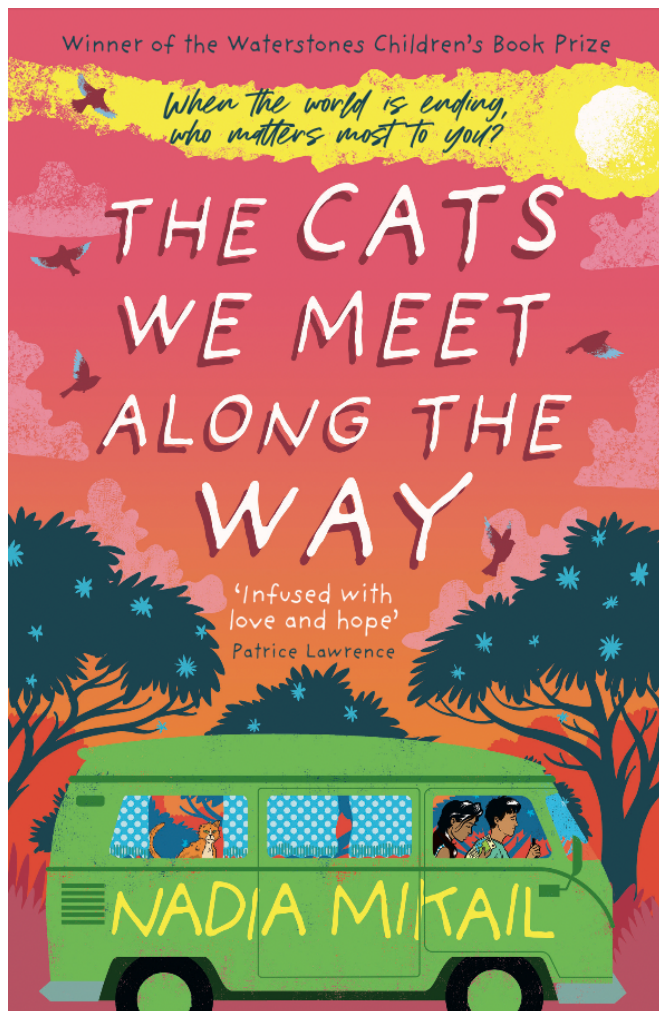


# Teaching Resource: Discussion Questions

Key Stage  
3 and 4



## The Cats We Meet Along The Way By Nadia Mikail

Seventeen-year-old Aisha hasn't seen her sister June for two years. And now that a calamity is about to end the world in nine months' time, she and her mother decide that it's time to track her down and mend the hurts of the past. Along with Aisha's boyfriend, Walter and his parents (and Fleabag the stray cat), the group take a roadtrip through Malaysia in a wildly decorated campervan – to put the past to rest, to come to terms with the present, and to hope for the future.

## Discussion questions

### Pages 1 – 53

- Which character introduced in these early chapters seems the most likeable to you? Why?
- Do you think it is harder to lose somebody who has chosen to leave, or to lose somebody who has not chosen to leave?
- How realistic do you find the reaction of people to the news that the world will be ending in a year?
- Do you think people would still build bunkers even if scientists told them that it was pointless to do so?
- Do you find the scar metaphor effective in helping you to understand Aisha's feelings about her sister's departure?

### Pages 54 – 101

- *'Well. He gets what he wants.'* She was talking about the cat and the boy. Do you think Walter gets what he wants? What other similarities are there between Walter and Fleabag?
- Why do you think it was important for Esah to pack up the contents of the house before they set out on the road trip?
- How far do you agree with Walter that *'there's not a limit to getting attached'*?
- *It was a delicious marvellous delicacy of oiled-up beef noodles, and Aisha missed it deeply and daily.* Do you think it is possible to miss a food item 'deeply'? What might the beef noodles represent?
- *There had been a chance of a life without grief.* If the world was not due to end, would Aisha's life have been without grief?

## Discussion questions

**Pages  
102 – 149**

- Why do you think Aisha is so preoccupied by the distasteful colour of Fleabag's fur?
- Do you think Esah has some good memories of her time in the little house with the green door in Penang?
- If the world was going to end in a year, would you make a *bucket list* like Walter? What would be on it?
- What do you think is the significance of the house in Melaka having a freshly painted lime green front door?
- Do you agree that *fighting to keep anger down* is harder than *being brave*?

**Pages  
150 – 202**

- How does the inclusion of James in the narrative make it harder for June to express her emotions?
- Do you think digging a bunker is a waste of their time?
- How has Aisha's attitude and behaviour towards Fleabag changed since the start of the story?
- Aisha is angry about many things. What do you think she is most angry about?
- How do you think the news about the end of the world changed Aisha and Walter's relationship?

**Pages  
203 – 247**

- What do you think triggered Aisha to finally be able to cry?
- What do you think Aisha has learnt about grief?
- Does it matter if stories *live on* or not?
- Which details from Aisha's *hypothetical present* stand out to you, or appeal to you?
- Why do you think the story starts and ends with a description of Fleabag?