

SCYTHE

by Neal Shusterman

Published in 2016

Rating (0 stars is the absolute worst, 10 stars is the BEST BOOK EVER)



Genre(s):

☐

Contemporary/Realistic

☒

Action/adventure

☒

Science Fiction

☐

Fantasy

☐

Romance

☐

Horror

☒

Mystery

☐

Nonfiction

☐

Historical fiction

☐

Other:

The plot follows two teenagers, one boy and one girl, who both feel somewhat detached from their peers. In this world, death is controlled by an elite group known as Scythes. They decide who dies and why, and they are the only human-run part of governance. All other laws and systems are overseen by an AI called the Thunderhead. The two teens are unexpectedly chosen as Scythe apprentices and must accompany a Scythe through his "gleanings" (sanctioned killings), forcing them to confront and reshape their own moral compasses.

The book is well-written and consistently well-paced, but when I first read it, I was in a fantasy-reading phase. Because of that, I don't think I fully appreciated the novel at the time. Looking back, I can see how rich it is: filled with philosophical questions and examinations of morality. Reading it encouraged me to reflect on my own beliefs and consider the moral dilemmas the characters face.

In my honest opinion, this book is an excellent choice for readers who enjoy analyzing difficult decisions and exploring questions of right and wrong. For example, anyone interested in philosophy would appreciate the diverging paths the two main characters take: one growing more cynical and power-driven, the other becoming more tempered and compassionate. If you enjoy experiencing character growth and moral development alongside the protagonists, this book is a wonderful fit.

By Gabriel K, 12th grade, enjoys reading mystery, fantasy, historical fiction, science fiction, and action/adventure