

Discussion Guide: An introduction to *The Healing Muse* 17 for readers and educators

Looking for ideas on how to use *The Healing Muse* as a text in a classroom or as a selection for a book club?

Here is an excerpt from the Readers' Guide for this issue of *The Muse*. You can access the entire guide for this and other issues at www.thehealingmuse.org

Allusion and Meaning

A double sense of joy occurs when a piece of literature contains a reference to another piece of literature or a work of art or music. The line or image can take on added significance, or, conversely, the reader realizes a first impression has to be rethought. How do the allusions in the following pieces add to the authors' themes?

- *Hope Speaks* by A. Scott Henderson
- *The Universe Built by Birds* by Cassie Garison
- *Inside the Whale* by Colin Pope
- *Seeking Oz* by Lori Hawks
- *Prodigal Forecast* by Grayson Jones

The Kindness of Strangers

Every day we see stories occurring around us; most of the time we ignore them and continue living our own. But what happens if we pay attention, if we think we need to enter someone else's story? Compare and contrast the outcomes in the following pieces.

- *The Invitation* by Jim McKeever
- *That Girl Is a Bag of Water* by Caelan Tree
- *Lark* by Ann Sutera Botash
- *Funny Boy* by Natalie Cawthorne