



# A WRINKLE IN TIME

MADELEINE L'ENGLE

Colleen Melone

# BACKGROUND INFORMATION

## Madeleine L'Engle

- 1918-2007
- Growing up she preferred writing for herself, rather than schoolwork
- Wrote over 60 books
- Worked as a librarian for the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine

## A Wrinkle in Time

- Published 1962
- First book in the Time Quintet
- Inspired by exploration of Einstein's theories and physics
- #23 on ALA's 100 Most Frequently Challenged Books of 1990-2000
- Meg, her brother Charles Wallace, and their friend Calvin go on a quest to save Meg's father and stop the Darkness
- Incorporates both Science Fiction and Fantasy elements

*"A Wrinkle in Time* was almost never published. You can't name a major publisher who didn't reject it. And there were many reasons. One was that it was supposedly too hard for children. Well, my children were 7, 10, and 12 while I was writing it. I'd read to them at night what I'd written during the day, and they'd say, "Ooh, mother, go back to the typewriter!" *A Wrinkle in Time* had a female protagonist in a science fiction book, and that wasn't done. And it dealt with evil and things that you don't find, or didn't at that time, in children's books. When we'd run through forty-odd publishers, my agent sent it back. We gave up. Then my mother was visiting for Christmas, and I gave her a tea party for some of her old friends. One of them happened to belong to a small writing group run by John Farrar, of Farrar, Straus & Giroux, which at that time did not have a juvenile list. She insisted that I meet John any how, and I went down with my battered manuscript. John had read my first novel and liked it, and read this book and loved it. That's how it happened."

A Special Message from Madeleine L'Engle





# REVIEWS

- An allegorical fantasy in which a group of young people are guided through the universe by Mrs. Who, Mrs. Which and Mrs. What -- women who possess supernatural powers. They traverse fictitious regions, meet and face evil and demonstrate courage at the right moment. Religious allusions are secondary to the philosophical struggle designed to yield the meaning of life and one's place on earth. Young Meg's willingness to face IT in the form of a black east in order to save a dear friend is one sign of her growing awareness. Readers who relish symbolic reference may find this trip through time and space an exhilarating experience the rest will be forced to ponder the double entendres. (Kirkus Reviews, March 1, 1962)

- Top 100 Chapter Books of All Time in 2012 poll by School Library Journal - #2
- Teachers' Top 100 Books for Children in 2007 by the National Education Association

# READ-A-LIKES



# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- When being explained tesseracting, Meg says, “For just a moment I got it! I can’t possibly explain it now, but for a second I saw it!” How would you explain tesseracting to child to whom you were promoting this book?
- This book is frequently described as a blend of science fiction and fantasy. How is it science fiction? How is it fantasy?
- Madeleine D’Engle wrote *A Wrinkle in Time* in 1959/1960. How do you see this time period reflected in the book? Some areas to consider – technology, gender roles, politics (anti-communism), society.
- Do you think without historical knowledge of the time period there are elements modern children will miss when reading? If so, does this take away from their ability to appreciate the book? How would you try to make up for the 50+ year gap between publication and modern readers?
- What would your target audience be for promoting this book?



# BIBLIOGRAPHY

- "A Wrinkle in Time." *NoveList*. EBSCO Industries Inc., n.d. Web. 20 Oct. 2016. <<http://web.a.ebscohost.com.proxy2.library.illinois.edu/novelist/detail?vid=3&sid=2f2c63fa-8e84-451a-bc66-f0e47c79484e%40sessionmgr4010&hid=4002&bdata=JnNpdGU9bm92ZWxpc3QtbGl2ZQ%3d%3d#UI=093686&db=noh>>.
- "About Madeleine L'Engle (1918-2007)." *Madeleine L'Engle*. Crosswicks Ltd, 18 Jan. 2016. Web. 20 Oct. 2016. <<http://www.madeleinelengle.com/madeleine-lengle/>>.
- Bird, Elizabeth. "Top 100 Chapter Book Poll Results." *School Library Journal*. Fuse 8 Production, 7 July 2012. Web. 20 Oct. 2016. <<http://blogs.slj.com/afuse8production/2012/07/07/top-100-chapter-book-poll-results/>>.
- L'Engle, Madeleine. "A Special Message from Madeleine L'Engle." *Teachers & Librarians*. Random House, n.d. Web. 20 Oct. 2016. <<http://www.randomhouse.com/teachers/author/lengle-madeleine/>>.
- "The 100 Most Frequently Challenged Books of 1990–20001." *ALA*. N.p., n.d. Web. 20 Oct. 2016. <<https://web.archive.org/web/20070404225512/http://www.ala.org/ala/oif/bannedbooksweek/bbwlinks/100mostfrequently.htm>>.