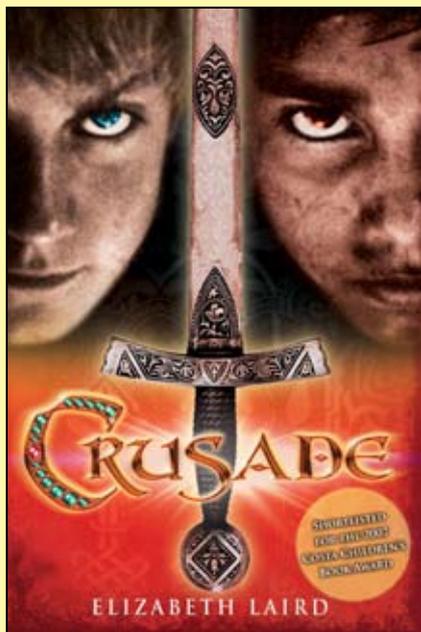


“Seriously good” Times
“Engaging” Guardian



CRUSADE



Price	£5.99/€8.30
Case	Read On
Author	Elizabeth Laird
Publisher	Macmillan Children's Books



Using this book in your classroom

Quick summary

This exciting historical novel tells the story of two boys whose lives are caught up in the Third Crusade, in the twelfth century. Adam is a poor English boy whose mother has just died, and he believes that if he can go to Jerusalem and bring back some dust to sprinkle on her grave, her soul will be free to go to heaven. Working as a dog-boy for a powerful local knight, Adam gets the chance to join the Crusade and he sets off eagerly, determined to reach Jerusalem for his dead mother's sake. Meanwhile, Salim is the son of a Muslim merchant living in Acre in Palestine. As the threat of war sweeps closer to the city, Salim's father apprentices him to a travelling doctor so that he can escape the danger. But Doctor Musa becomes the personal doctor of Sultan Saladin himself, and Salim finds himself in the heart of the war after all.

War brings Salim and Adam together, and through a series of encounters they learn more about each other, and about the faiths and cultures that divide them. In this powerfully resonant story, Elizabeth Laird raises important questions about the nature of faith and the paradoxes of a 'holy war', which seem just as relevant now as they were over eight centuries ago.

Story themes

This book deals with themes of **love, friendship, courage and duty**, and it allows the reader to reflect on many aspects of **religious faith**, within a **historical** context.

The story session

1. Introducing the story

Begin by reading the blurb and the historical prologue (just before the start of Chapter 1) to the children. Ask: "What do you think will happen to Adam and Salim in the story? How do you think Salim and other people living in Palestine felt about the Crusaders?"

2. Reading the story

- Read Chapter 1 (pages 3-24), and talk about Salim. Ask: "What kind of person is Salim? Do you like him as a character? Do you think the author makes us feel interested in what will happen next for Salim?" Share children's thoughts about what might happen to Salim next.

3. Follow-up

- If time allows, read Chapter 2 (pages 27-40) and compare the lives of Salim and Adam. Talk about what they have in common, and the ways in which they are different. Encourage the children to predict what will happen next for each of them.

Did You Know?

- Crusade was shortlisted for the 2007 Costa Children's Book Award and the 2008 Carnegie Award.
- Elizabeth Laird has travelled extensively and has lived in Lebanon, as well as in New Zealand, Britain, Ethiopia, Iraq and India.
- The nicest job she ever had was playing the violin in the Iraq symphony orchestra!