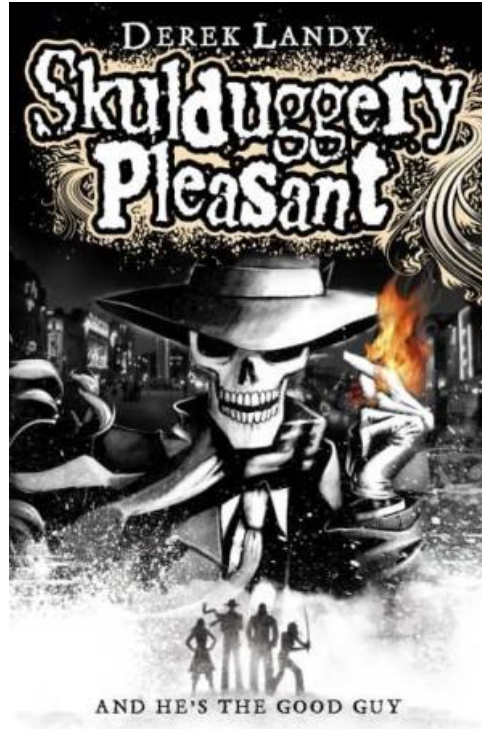


Skulduggery Pleasant by Derek Landy
(Harper Collins, 2007)

Skulduggery Pleasant is a wise-cracking detective who operates within a world of magic that coexists within our own. He also happens to be a long-dead skeleton who has stuck around to save the world from evil. Here he teams up with a 12 year old girl named Stephanie who has unsuspectingly inherited a powerful magic scepter.



1. Why is Stephanie attracted to Skulduggery and his world?
(Loved her Uncle, revenging his death)
2. Beyond revenge for her Uncle's death – why is she drawn to this parallel world of Dublin where skeleton detectives, vampires and zombies fight the dark forces?
3. Stephanie loves her parents, yet she deceives them, even agrees to have a somewhat lifeless double stand-in for her while she is off saving the world with Skulduggery? Why do you think she was willing to deceive her parents?
4. Names are important in this story. Skulduggery says you have three names – the one your parents handed you. (A mage knowing the name could have influence over you). Secondly, a real name, a true name. A name unique to you and you alone. You don't know it, at least consciously. It gives you power, but it also gives people power over you. That is why a true name must be kept secret. A third name you take. It can't be used against you, it can't be used to influence you, and it's your first defense against a sorcerer's attack.

5. Skulduggery means “crafty deception or trickery or an instance of it.” Why do you think Skulduggery chose this name?

6. Eventually Stephanie chooses Valkyrie Cain
In [Norse mythology](#), a **Valkyrie** (from [Old Norse](#) *valkyrja* "angel of death") is one of a host of female figures who decide who will die in battle. Selecting among half of those who die in battle (the other half go to the goddess [Freyja](#)'s afterlife field [Fólkvangr](#)), the [valkyries](#) bring their chosen to the afterlife hall of the slain, [Valhalla](#), ruled over by the god [Odin](#).
Why did Stephanie decide on this name? Does it fit?

7. Skulduggery is more than just a skeleton – he has powerful feelings, one of which is revenge - China says p. 220 “Skulduggery has been waiting a long time to get his revenge, and he will risk anyone and anything in order to get it.” Is his drive for revenge a good or bad thing?

8. After Skulduggery and Stephanie, who is the most important secondary character and why?

9. What about the relationship between Skulduggery and Stephanie – teacher/student? father/child? Comrades?

10. Tempo of the novel – how did Lundy break up the tension in the novel? What about the humor?

11. Any comments on the violence?

Caroline Ward, Coordinator of Youth Services
The Ferguson Library