EXTINCTION WARRIOR

Teacher's Guide

Grades 4–9 · ELA · Science · Social Studies · SEL · Ages 9–14

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1. Overview & Instructional Purpose

This guide supports classroom use of Extinction Warrior by helping educators integrate the novel's built-in discussion questions (Chapter 28), action-oriented resources (Chapter 29), and Afterword into ELA, science, and interdisciplinary lessons. The guide emphasizes critical thinking, ethical reasoning, and student agency without requiring extensive preparation.

2. Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Analyze character motivation, ethical dilemmas, and theme
- Understand key ecological concepts (biodiversity, invasive species, extinction)
- Evaluate human impacts on the environment
- Engage in ethical and reflective discussion
- Explore how individual choices can influence larger systems

3. Quick Classroom Use Options

Choose the format that fits your schedule. Every option works with the same chapters — just adjust depth and pacing.

Format	How to Use It
1-Week Unit	**Days 1–2:** Read Chs. 1–27 (or assign independently). **Day 3:** Science focus — Environmental Science & Ecology questions from Ch. 28 (see Section 4). **Day 4:** Ethics & character discussion — Ethics and Character & SEL questions from Ch. 28 (see Section 4). **Day 5:** Afterword + Take Action! (Ch. 29); student reflection writing.
3-Day Mini-Unit	**Day 1:** Assign reading; introduce eco-themes. **Day 2:** Small-group discussion using Ch. 28 questions (your choice of grouping). **Day 3:** Whole class debrief + one written reflection prompt.
Earth Day Pairing	Pair the Afterword (extinction rates, 30×30) with any Ch. 28 science questions (3, 4, 12–17). Add a Take Action (Ch. 29) research activity. Works as a single 60–90 min session.
Independent Reading	Share the Ch. 28 question list with students. Ask them to choose 2–3 questions and respond in a reading journal. The Afterword provides self-directed extension reading.
Literature Circles	Assign roles (discussion director, connector, illustrator, word wizard). Use Ch. 28 question groupings to guide each circle's focus. Ch. 29 organizations can anchor a group research project.
Substitute Teacher	**Setup:** Write 4–5 Ch. 28 questions on the board (suggestions: 2, 5, 9, 19, 22). **15 min:** Students write individual responses. **10 min:** Pair-share. **Remainder:** Whole-class open discussion. No prep required beyond the question list.

4. Using Chapter 28 Discussion Questions

Chapter 28 contains 24 discussion questions that can be used flexibly across grade levels. Select questions based on instructional goals, student readiness, or subject focus.

Theme	Questions	Focus Areas
Environmental Science & Ecology	3, 4, 12–17, 21	Invasive species · endangered animals · causes of the sixth extinction · climate change and pollution · limits of technological fixes
Ethics, Decision-Making & Responsibility	2, 10, 19, 21, 24	Moral tradeoffs · short-term vs. long-term thinking · justification of actions · human responsibility toward other species

Theme	Questions	Focus Areas
Character, Identity & SEL	5, 9, 18, 22, 23	Courage and fear · individual talents · emotional intelligence (human and artificial) · personal growth under pressure
Systems, Power & Society	1, 6–8, 11, 20	Language and framing · leadership and authority · gender perspectives · technology and power

Instructional Tip — These questions work for:

- Whole-class discussion
- Literature circles
- Written response journals
- Socratic seminars
- Assessment prompts

5. Differentiation & Grade-Level Adaptation

- **Grades 4–5:** Emphasize comprehension, science concepts, and personal reflection.
- **Grades 6–9:** Emphasize ethical reasoning, debate, and systems thinking.
- Allow students to choose questions that resonate with them to support voice and agency.

6. Writing & Reflection Extensions

Educators may extend discussion through:

- Persuasive writing (environmental or ethical arguments)
- Narrative writing (imagining future solutions or alternate choices)
- Reflective journaling on courage, responsibility, or stewardship

7. Take Action & Student Agency (Chapter 29)

Chapter 29 offers students a curated list of youth-focused environmental organizations and initiatives from around the world. These resources are intended to inform, inspire, and empower — not to prescribe participation.

In classroom settings, educators may wish to:

- Treat the list as a research resource rather than an assignment
- Encourage students to explore organizations aligned with their interests or values
- Emphasize awareness, inquiry, and discussion over direct action
- Adapt use of the resources to align with school or district policies

Instructional Options:

- Research an organization’s mission and methods
- Compare approaches to environmental stewardship across regions

- Discuss how young people can engage responsibly at different ages
- Reflect on the idea of agency without requiring participation

8. Real-World Context & Informational Text (Afterword)

The Afterword provides factual context for themes explored in the novel, including current extinction rates, biodiversity loss, conservation initiatives such as the global 30×30 effort, and real-world species referenced in the story.

Educators may use this section to:

- Connect narrative fiction with informational texts
- Support science or research standards
- Practice evaluating sources and evidence
- Reinforce the relationship between storytelling and real-world issues

This section is particularly effective for integrating ELA and science instruction.

Closing Note for Educators

Extinction Warrior presents environmental challenges through story to spark curiosity, dialogue, and thoughtful engagement with the natural world. It empowers students to see themselves as capable of meaningful choice and action while encouraging critical thinking and independent perspectives. Classroom use should prioritize discussion, inquiry, and reflection rather than advocacy.

This Teacher's Guide may be used freely for classroom and library instruction.

For more classroom resources and news from the author, visit susanbwile.com

