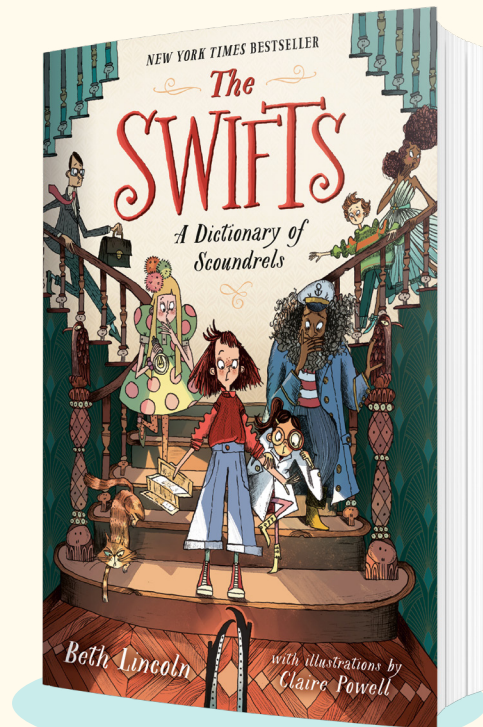
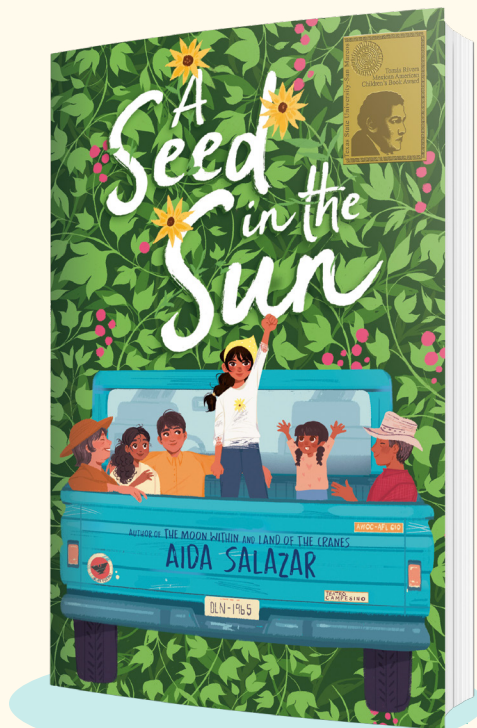
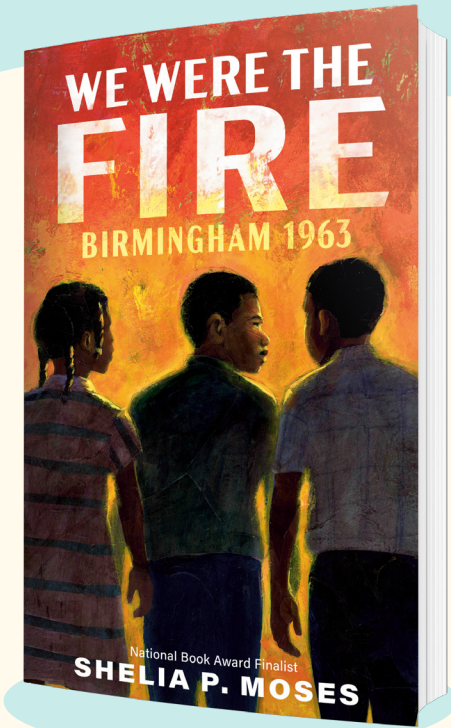


DISCUSSION-WORTHY READS

FOUR NOVELS FOR YOUR LITERATURE CIRCLES OR BOOK GROUPS!



A NOTE FROM THE TEAM

Penguin SCHOOL & LIBRARY

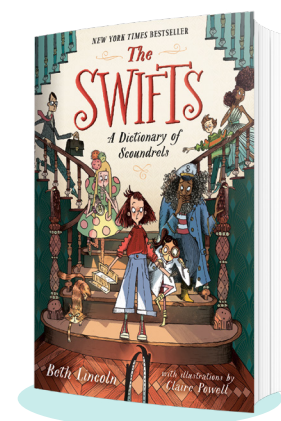
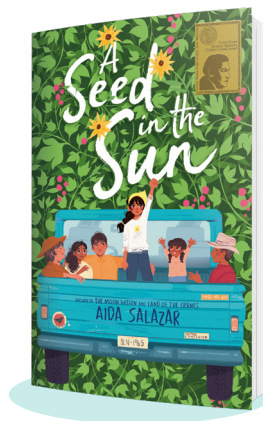
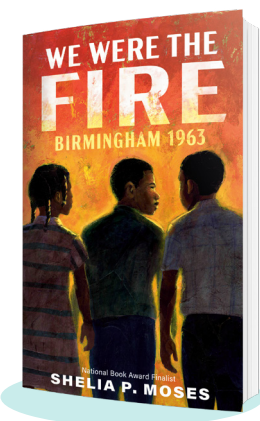
Dear Educators and Librarians,


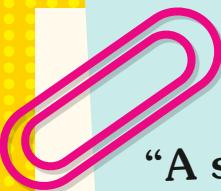
Whether you're using literature circles, book groups, or book clubs in your class or library, young readers engage with modern texts that reflect their lived experiences or show them a new perspective in a way that resonates with their world today. These new and acclaimed novels offer different entry points for readers from historical fiction and mystery to sports and novels in verse. They explore themes of body positivity, friendship, human rights, and more—and give your readers much to discuss. The questions and activities for each book below were developed by teachers and librarians who serve on award committees and run book clubs and who are passionate about bringing high quality, high interest books to children.

Thank you for taking the time to share these books with your readers.

Happy reading,
Penguin School & Library Marketing Team

CLICK THE COVERS TO JUMP TO DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR EACH BOOK!





“A stirring, cleareyed look at the young people who risked much for social change as they fought for their civil rights.”

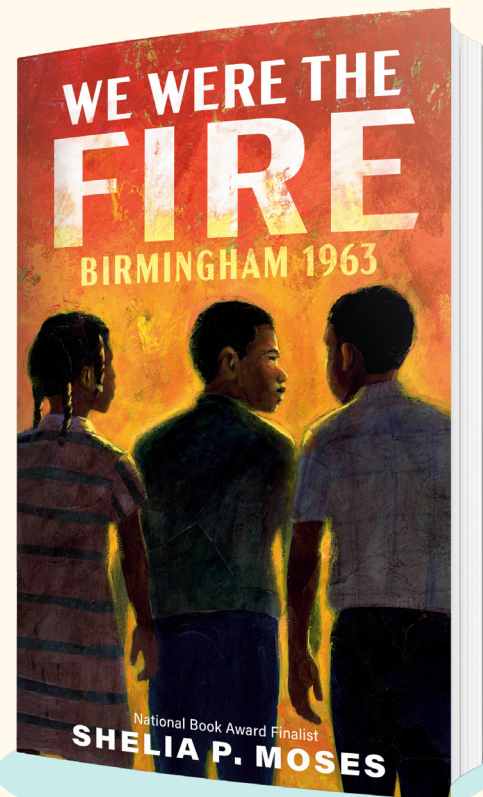
—Kirkus Reviews, starred review

3
Starred
Reviews

A 2023
NCSS Notable
Social Studies
Trade Book


5
State Award
Reading List
Selections and
Counting!

The powerful story of an eleven-year-old Black boy determined to stand up for his rights, who's pulled into the action of the 1963 civil rights demonstrations in Birmingham, Alabama



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



1. Define “segregation.” Who were Sheriff Bull Connor and Governor George Wallace? What was their stance about segregation and how did it influence their governing?
 2. Describe Rufus Jackson Jones, Jr. In what ways does he evolve throughout the book? How do his friends and family influence his evolution?
 3. Reread the opening two pages of chapter 1. What do you know about Rufus? The time period? The setting?
 4. Who is in Rufus’s family? Describe each member. Why did they move to Birmingham? Describe the community of Bull Hill.
 5. Singing provides comfort for Georgia and Mama. What are moments that they turn to music to comfort and galvanize them?
 6. Who is Mr. Paul? Describe his relationship with Rufus’s mother. Why was it significant when Rufus and Georgia called him “Daddy Paul”?
 7. Who are Slide and YouOut? How did they get their nicknames?
 8. Who is Miss Boone? What is her role in the Birmingham community? Why does she allow Rufus’s family to rent the house next door to her? Why does it cause apprehension for Rufus and his family to move to Ivy Town? In what way did the town respond to Rufus’s family moving in? Why did she offer to drive Rufus and Georgia to and from school?
 9. This story takes place during the Civil Rights Movement. Communication about upcoming protests and the nonviolent resistance trainings were done in secret. Why? What are some of the ways that Black citizens in Birmingham shared news about visits of Civil Rights Movement leaders and upcoming trainings and protests? What are examples of DJ Shelley’s signals to the listening radio audience?
 10. Why did Rufus want to go with Daddy Paul to a meeting at Uncle Sam’s house?
- 

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

11. YouOut, Slide, Ace, and Rufus left school to participate in a march. Describe the events when they walked out of school (pp. 124–131). Rufus, his classmates, and other young people from the community returned to Park the next day. They were attacked with dogs and fire hoses and were eventually jailed. In what ways did these images of children being attacked and harmed getting broadcast on national news serve as an impetus for social change? (See the “Author’s Note” for additional insight.)
12. Reflect on the following passages and discuss why they may be significant:
- “If they need the high school kids, they’re going to need us too,” said Slide. “I heard my mom talking last night, and she said her and her friends would be fired from their jobs if they marched. But guess what? We can’t get fired because we don’t have jobs.” (p. 33)
- “Listen to me real good. I am not your blood daddy, but I love you. It’s my job to protect you. I also have to tell you the truth—and the truth is that the world is hard. Your life don’t mean anything to some people, but it means everything to me and your mom and your family. And that’s why we be going to all these meetings. We need to change things. I want you and the other children to live in a different kind of Birmingham than the one I was raised in. A free Birmingham.” (pp. 53–54)
- “. . . They need to be woken up. The system is unfair. That’s why so many of use are against segregation and we speak out.” (p. 74)
- “That’s what they’ve been taught to do when a bunch of leaders are together. A few will always leave to make sure they are not in jail at the same time.” (p. 94)

ACTIVITIES & WRITING PROMPTS

RESEARCH THE FOLLOWING CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT ICONS AND LANDMARKS

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
Rev. Fred Shuttleworth • Medgar Evers
Ralph Abernathy • Dick Gregory

READ THE FOLLOWING PICTURE BOOKS TO GAIN ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Bandy, Michael S., and Eric Stein. *Granddaddy’s Turn: A Journey to the Ballot Box*. New York: Candlewick Press, 2015.

Clark-Robinson, Monica. *Let the Children March*. New York: Clarion Books, 2018.

Rappaport, Doreen. *Martin’s Big Words: The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.* New York: Little Brown Books for Young Readers, 2007.

Winter, Jonah. *Lilian’s Right to Vote: A Celebration of the Voting Rights Act of 1965*. New York: Anne Schwartz Books, 2015.

RESEARCH MORE ABOUT THE CHILDREN’S MARCH

Clark, Alexis. “The Children’s Crusade: When the Youth of Birmingham Marched for Justice.” History. Last modified April 16, 2024.
www.history.com/news/childrens-crusade-birmingham-civil-rights

National Museum of African American History & Culture. “The Children’s Crusade.” Accessed September 17, 2024.
www.nmaahc.si.edu/explore/stories/childrens-crusade

Peñaloza, Marisa, and Debbie Elliott. “60 Years Since ‘The Children’s Crusade’ Changed Birmingham and the Nation.” NPR. June 2, 2023.
www.npr.org/2023/05/31/1179125099/birmingham-childrens-crusade-civil-rights-60th-anniversary

National Park Service. “Kelly Ingram Park: Birmingham Civil Rights National Monument.” Accessed September 17, 2024.
www.nps.gov/places/kelly-ingram-park.htm

“Effortlessly captures the complicated and often conflicting emotions of being a tween, especially one who has to face microaggressions for being fat, brown, Latina, and not rich.”

—*The Bulletin of the Center for Children’s Books*, starred review

3
Starred
Reviews

A
2024 Rise:
A Feminist
Book Project
List
Selection

A 2024
Bank Street
Best Children’s
Book

A
Latinidad List
Best Latino
Books of
2023
Selection

A dazzling story full of heart about how one twelve-year-old channels her rage into synchronized swimming dreams.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. The opening scene of the book depicts Nat in a swimming race, and she describes herself, saying, “In this pool, I’m a swordfish. I’m a mermaid. I’m an underwater speed demon” (p. 4). Why does Nat feel so confident in the water?
2. Why is synchronized swimming so appealing to Nat?
3. Nat is fascinated by fashion and makeup, but hides her interest from her mom, who “doesn’t think girls need to wear makeup to feel empowered” (p. 8). Do you agree or disagree with her mom’s statement?
4. Why is being a part of the L.A. Mermaids so special for Nat? What does she mean when she says, “we stand out in this pool of sameness, and this makes me happy” (p. 126)?
5. Nat confidently declares, “I’m fat and proud,” but she still faces hurtful comments from strangers who doubt her abilities because of her appearance (pp. 2, 20, 37). What do you think makes someone an “athlete”?
6. How does Nat’s friendship with Joanne start to change? What leads to these changes?
7. Nat is always ready to defend her friends and family, but it doesn’t always land well, like when Sheila becomes upset that Nat fights the boy at the pool (p. 28), or when Daniel tells her, “I don’t need you to speak for me” (p. 57). Why might they have reacted this way?
8. On page 118, Nat says, “There’s so much pressure on my shoulders. I don’t like the way it feels.” Why is she feeling so much pressure?
9. After performing at the fancy party with Mayra and Olivia, Nat expresses, “I don’t like the heaviness of this shame, how it feels around my body and my heart” (p. 155). What is it about this performance and the party that makes her feel this way?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

10. The author depicts different types of parents, from Nat's own progressive parents to Sheila's very strict mother, Lupe, among others. Thinking about these different parents and their relationships with their kids, what does Nat's mom mean when she says, "We all need to grow alongside our kids" (p. 214)?
11. Early in the book, Nat declares, "I don't view my confrontations as fights. I view them as misunderstandings and teachable moments" (p. 24). Do you think her perspective changes in any way by the end of the book? Can confrontations ever be positive?
12. Why does Mom tell Nat, "There are so many ways to be a Latina" (p. 212)? What do you think this means?

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

LOCAL HEROES:

When Nat learns about Esther Williams (p. 22), a famous synchronized swimmer, she is instantly intrigued and looks up more information about her. She learns that Esther grew up in the city of Inglewood, not far from Nat's own hometown. Research a local hero who inspires you or that you'd like to learn more about. What interests you about them? What do their achievements mean for the community they come from?

OUTCOMES CHART:

After asking her parents' permission to join the L.A. Mermaids, Nat is anxious about what they will say. Her brother Ramon suggests creating an outcomes chart for each possible scenario ("yes" and "no"), where she can write out how each response might make her feel, and what her next steps might be in either case (p. 67). Create your own outcomes chart for an uncertain situation. Why might writing out possible outcomes be beneficial if you are feeling unsure about what will happen?



POSSIBLE OUTCOMES:



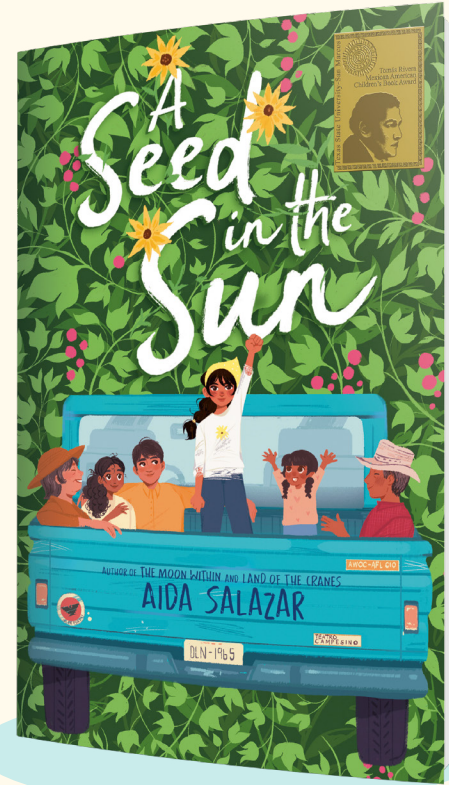
YES	NO
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

This guide for *Barely Floating* was written by Jessica Agudelo. Jessica is the youth collections coordinator at BookOps for the New York Public Library and Brooklyn Public Library. She has served on several book award committees, including the 2023 Newbery committee, and as chair of the 2021 Pura Belpré Award committee.



“Seamlessly combines historical events of the farmworkers’ rights movement and the 1965 Delano grape strike with a sensitive portrayal of a girl trying to make sense of the world.” ”

—*The Horn Book*, starred review



4
Starred
Reviews

A
Tomás Rivera
Children’s
Book Award
Winner

An NCTE
Notable
Poetry Books
and Verse
Novels
Selection

A
Jane Addams
Children’s
Book Award
Finalist

An ALA
Rise:
A Feminist
Book Project
Top Ten
Selection

An NCSS
Notable
Social Studies
Trade Book

A farm-working girl with big dreams meets activist Dolores Huerta and joins the 1965 protest for workers’ rights in this tender-hearted novel in verse.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

POEM FOR STUDENT GROUP/CLASS DISCUSSION: “LIGHT BLUE SCHOOLHOUSE” (PAGES 8-9)

Poetry as Teaching: Perspective

Consider the importance of going to school for Lula. How can we interpret the great meaning that school has for Lula?

Poetry as Teaching: History

What other challenges do migrant farmworkers’ children face that we learn about in this poem?

Poetry as Resistance: Role of School

What role does school play in Lula’s life? What advice does Concha give Lula about school? How does this advice compare to the type you’ve received about going to school?

POEM FOR STUDENT GROUP/ CLASS DISCUSSION: “ESCABS” (PAGES 12-13)

Poetry as Teaching: History

What do we learn about the Filipino workers’ demands and strike?

Poetry as Healing: Protest as a Form of Healing

What does “They’re in huelga” mean (p. 12)? How can protesting (striking; usually a first method of resistance) be considered a way toward healing?

Poetry as Resistance: Injustice in Society and in the Home

How does this poem touch upon the resistance to injustice in society (how Filipino workers were treated and what they did about it) and in the family (how Papá “saves his sweetness for the babies”)?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

POEM FOR STUDENT GROUP/CLASS DISCUSSION: "WOMEN'S WORK" (PAGE 107)

Poetry as Teaching: Perspective

At this point in the story, we see that Lula is not only growing in her awareness of unfairness with farmwork and who gets to protest, as we read in "Susto," but also in the gender expectations at home. Lula and Concha perceive their roles in their family differently than the adults. Their brother, Rafa, also knows that these expectations are unfair. Discuss with students how these expectations impact everyone in the family.

Poetry as Resistance: Creating a New Narrative of Women's Work

Seeing Dolores as a leader in the movement advocating for farmworkers' rights is a type of work that is different from what we see in this poem. Open up the conversation on ways that Lula and Concha might resist this imposition of gender roles in the family. What could they say and do? How might their parents respond? Partner students to create a poem in response to "Women's Work."

POEM FOR STUDENT GROUP/CLASS DISCUSSION: "PICKUP TRUCK CHEERLEADERS" (PAGE 150-151)

Poetry as Teaching: Perspective and History

- What do we learn about the ways that entire families were involved with the struggle for workers' rights?
- What are some popular chants that are associated with the farmworkers' movement?

Poetry as Healing: Awareness on the Road to Healing

- The poem says, "We are doing the things he expects of us" (p. 151). How does this show the tension that Lula feels as she is doing what her father expects her to do while she'd rather be on the picket line? How is this awareness part of healing?
- How do we see Leonor's influence on Lula in this poem?
- How are Leonor and Lula's families different regarding how the families see their kids' roles in the strike?

Poetry as Resistance: Paths of Resistance

- What does resistance look like for Lula in this poem?

POEM FOR STUDENT GROUP/ CLASS DISCUSSION: "OUTLAWED" (PAGE 182)

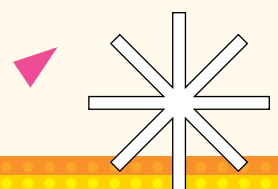
Poetry as Teaching: Women in Social Movements

1. How does this poem show the ways that people were silenced?
2. Revisit some other poems that also show women leaders in the movement, along with this poem. Who were the women involved in this movement? Why is it important to be aware of women leaders, especially during this time period?
3. How does this poem show the power of language in social protest?

POEM FOR STUDENT GROUP/ CLASS DISCUSSION: "BRAZOS ABIERTOS" (PAGES 250-251)

Poetry for Healing: Apologies and Changing Our Actions To Not Cause Harm to Others

Lula has been waiting for a long time to feel a connection with her papá. We can see how this happens in "Brazos Abiertos," as she finishes her performance with El Teatro Campesino. Students can discuss the events that led up to this point and what Papá's words mean to the children. There is also something powerful expressed at the end of the poem as the family listens to Dolores Huerta's speech: "Feeling connected / to one another / and to our purpose / to carry on" (p. 251). Have students discuss what connects the family now and how this moment is different from the first few scenes in the book.



EXTENSION ACTIVITY

CLASS POETRY ANTHOLOGY

This extension activity includes taking the short poems written throughout the reading and editing them for a class anthology. Students can work in partnerships or small groups to give one another feedback. The anthology can form part of the classroom and/or school library collection.


El Teatro Campesino: Students can create scripts for short scenes from *A Seed in the Sun* and perform them in small groups or for other classes if this is a reading across the grade. Some students can prepare some remarks that teach the audience about El Teatro Campesino before they watch the performance.

The questions for this title were pulled from the full educator's guide for *A Seed in the Sun* that was written by Carla España and Luz Yarida Herrera.

[DOWNLOAD THE FULL GUIDE HERE](#)

ABOUT THE BOOK

Lula Viramontes aches to one day become someone whom no one can ignore: a daring ringleader in a Mexican traveling circus. But between working the grape harvest in Delano, California, with her older siblings under dangerous conditions; taking care of her younger siblings and Mamá, who has mysteriously fallen ill; and doing everything she can to avoid Papá's volatile temper, it's hard to hold on to those dreams. Then she meets Dolores Huerta, Larry Itliong, and other labor rights activists and realizes she may need to raise her voice sooner rather than later: Farmworkers are striking for better treatment and wages, and whether Lula's family joins them or not will determine their future.



DEAR EDUCATOR,

We bring to our reading of *A Seed in the Sun* bilingual and multilingual children, teacher conversations we've had with children and educators in a different way. Reading *A Seed in the Sun* in this form, but also allows us to learn about how different family members navigate and stand for justice. We can't wait to hear from you about your family relationships, following the most vulnerable.

CARLA ESPAÑA AND LUZ YARIDA HERRERA

PREPARATION FOR READING: Setting the Scene with Multimodal Texts

Spend some time setting the scene for this reading by engaging with some of the following texts and media. This list includes those sources recommended by author Aida Salazar (as you read on the back matter of *A Seed in the Sun*). We've added the links and other favorite sources from our work with schools.

- PHOTOGRAPHY / PHOTO ARCHIVES**
 - Harvey Richards Photo Archive, 1955-1966 at Estuary Press
 - Bob Fitch Farmworker Photo Archive at Stanford University
 - Jon Lewis Photo Archive at Yale University
 - Walter P. Reuther Library at Wayne State University
 - Claudio Bonet Archive at Boise State University
- DOCUMENTARIES / FILMS / VIDEOS**
 - Dolores*, directed by Peter Bratt for PBS
 - Harvest of Shame*, directed by Edward R. Murrow
 - The Delano Strike*, directed by Edward R. Murrow
 - Amor Amor*, directed by Marissa Arroy
 - Clase Chávez*, directed by Laurie Coyle
 - Chicago! History of the Mexican-American Civil Rights Movement*, directed by Diego Luna
 - Dolores Huerta on El Teatro Campesino*
 - Luis Valdez - I Am Theater
- ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES**
 - Farmworker Movement Documentation Project at UC San Diego Library
 - Stories of 2020: Agricultural Workers at the National Museum of American History Behring Center
 - Backero History Archive
- SOCIAL MEDIA GRAPHICS**
 - United Farm Workers Labor Union account @UFWupdates on Instagram and Twitter. United Farm Workers



★

“A Gothic novel of corrosive values . . . Lincoln’s manor-set murder mystery maintains a *Knives Out* feel by way of Lemony Snicket.”

—*Publishers Weekly*, starred review

5
Starred
Reviews

An ALA
ALSC
Notable
Book

5
State Award
Reading List
Selections and
Counting!

A wickedly smart whodunit packed with wordplay, misadventure, and mischief.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Before you begin reading *The Swifts: A Dictionary of Scoundrels*, study the book’s cover. Based upon the cover, what predictions would you make about the book’s plot? What can you suppose about the characters who appear on the cover? With clues gathered from the cover in mind, what questions do you hope to have answered as you read the story?
2. A preface is a short essay at the start of a book written by the author. A preface generally intends to establish the writer’s credibility or to provide helpful context for what’s to come. Lincoln’s preface notes, “The English language is big, messy, and argumentative.” She also suggests language is “[r]estless and impatient,” and constantly evolving. How does the author’s preface help frame this story for you? As you read, keep track of examples of linguistic contradictions or evolutions you come across in the novel, as well as words or phrases with multiple meanings, such as *illuminated* (p. 15) and *buried the hatchet* (p. 176).
3. *The Swifts: A Dictionary of Scoundrels* is described as having a “*Knives Out* feel by way of Lemony Snicket.” As you read, what connections can you make with other stories you’ve read, albums or songs you’ve enjoyed, or shows you’ve watched? Create a playlist or assemble a mood board of these associations that you can update as you continue reading.
4. Author Beth Lincoln’s writing style is quippy, morbid, full of heart, and highly descriptive, with exceptionally sophisticated vocabulary choices.
 - Make a list of new-to-you, peculiar, and particularly delightful words you encounter while reading *The Swifts: A Dictionary of Scoundrels* and look up the definitions of those you cannot discern from context. This word list might include *Gramercy* (p. 26), *buffeted* (p. 65), *soppy* (p. 141), *galumphing* (p. 183), or *charlatan* (p. 227).
 - Lincoln is especially gifted in crafting unexpected and evocative turns of phrase, frequently in the form of similes and metaphors. As you read, keep a list of vivid and expressive declarations, such as the House being “packed tight as sardines” yet “comfortable, like an old cushion that finally had enough stuffing” (p. 56); She-nanigan waking up “gritty-eyed and grumpy” (p. 109); “Fortissimo’s booming voice...like a cannon going off” (p. 259); or one character’s rage “banked like hot coals in the center of him.” (p. 277)





DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

5. Illustrator Claire Powell created original black-and-white art that appear throughout the book, both as full-page art and as chapter headers. How would you describe Powell's illustration style? What does the artwork signal to you as you read? How does the presence of artwork support this story?
 - Which unillustrated scene of the story is so cinematic you can picture it in your mind's eye? Sketch a four-panel (or more!) comic interpreting the moment in a graphic novel format.
 - Study the chapter headers in detail. Notice how they incorporate the chapter title and that elements of each header signal to the reader a key plot point of that chapter. Consider other novels you've recently read; did the authors give titles to each chapter, or merely numbers? Choose one chapter and debate among classmates the efficacy of that combination of art and words to encapsulate the chapter's content. Focus on connotation of the art and text as well as reading comprehension.
6. Maps orient us to a novel's setting and typically appear at the start of a story. Yet Shenanigan Swift's map of the House, "a bold attempt to mark down every concealed nook, every hidden pathway, every hiding spot in the House" (p. 26), is only revealed once the story is well underway (p. 27). Why might the author have waited to share Shenanigan's map? Study the map; what distinctive features of Swift House do you notice? Maelstrom concedes that "No one in the world knows a house better than a naughty child who grows up in it" (p. 224). How might this map differ had it been created by anyone other than Shenanigan? What questions does Shenanigan's map raise for you? Where might you hide the Hoard if you were Vile? Notice that the grounds, including the cemetery where the story opens, do not appear on Shenanigan's map. Note key details of the Swift property as you read, and work as a group to sketch how you imagine the grounds might surround the home.
7. Inanimate objects, including the Dictionary, the House, and the Hoard (if it truly exists?), play outsized roles in the story. These items have seen hundreds of years of Swifts come and go and each has borne witness to the murderous chaos of this current Reunion. Think of your favorite scene from *A Dictionary of Scoundrels* and rewrite it from the perspective of the House, the Hoard, or the Dictionary. What insights might this outlook offer? What foibles or failings might this viewpoint risk?
8. Shenanigan Swift is a charmingly flawed protagonist. What do you make of her decision, an admittedly "selfish" one, to keep the secret room to herself (p. 106)? How do you feel about her justification, her "unshakeable belief that she would be the one to find Vile's Hoard" (p. 107)? "Plans were never Shenanigan's strong suit" (p. 266), but what other questionable choices do we see Shenanigan make over the course of the story? What positive actions does Shenanigan take for her family? How do you see the totality of these behaviors balancing out?
9. Most of the characters we meet in *A Dictionary of Scoundrels* are born into the Swift lineage. An exception is Cook, who is suggested to have a notable lineage of her own. (Did you catch it? Revisit page 262 if not!) Cook is as much a beloved member of Shenanigan's family as her Arch-Aunt Schadenfreude and Uncle Maelstrom, yet the Swifts turn on Cook viciously, even after twenty years in the House (p. 262).
 - When the Swifts "debate the merits of cooking Cook" (p. 265), Shenanigan is appalled by their mob mentality. "It was very calm. It was very reasonable. People often reasonably discuss such unreasonable things" (p. 266). Have you ever found yourself in a situation where a popular choice seems to you to be an inappropriate or unreasonable decision? If you went along with it, why? If you made an unpopular decision in a group setting, what did that require of you? Reflect on Cook's situation; how would you feel if twenty years of your love and loyalty proved insufficient?
 - As Shenanigan reflects on the last day of the Reunion, "Just sharing blood wasn't enough to make someone proper family; she'd take Cook over most of her blood relatives, any day." Where else in the story do you see characters making active choices around fellowship, among their blood kin or self-selected? What factors do you think contribute to a strong "found family" bond?



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

10. What lingering questions do you have upon finishing *A Dictionary of Scoundrels*? What predictions do you have for the book's sequel? Does the sequel's subtitle, *A Gallery of Rogues*, offer you any clues as to what might happen in that story, or what sort of characters it might include?

POST-READING ACTIVITIES

1. Names can hold incredible power, and nominative determinism (p. 139) is a key theme of *The Swifts: A Dictionary of Scoundrels*. In the book, family members are given a randomly selected name from the Dictionary upon birth. Many Swifts, like Aunts Inheritance and Schadenfreude, believe your name dictates your personality and sets the tone for your entire life—they are quite literally set in stone! Phenomena and Shenanigan stage an experiment to question this concept of predestination. What role, if any, do you think predeterminism plays? To what extent do you think Swift family assumptions—effectively peer pressure—might impact someone's behavior? Where do you think deliberate misinterpretation by relatives may be an issue?
 - Do you know how or why your name was selected for you? Have you ever looked up the meaning of your name? If such a meaning exists, is it immutable or has it shifted over time?
 - Do you think your name is a good fit for your personality? To what extent do you think one of those factors (your name or your personality) might influence the other? What typical behaviors of yours might be *In Character* or *Out of Character* (p. 139) for that definition, if you found one, or for your personal/familial meaning, if you didn't?
 - What happens when your name *isn't* a good fit for you? Maybe your name was a good fit at some point, but it no longer reflects the person you hope to be or feel you've grown into. (Nicknames can work the same way—sometimes we simply outgrow them!) Fauna and Erf very sensitively explore how our given names may not always endure as the best reflection of our true selves (pp. 216–217). Think quietly or journal privately about your name and whether you might make a different choice, should the opportunity present itself.
 - Think about your impact and legacy as a reflection of your choices and behaviors, not simply your name. Create an identity map for yourself, perhaps using a hub and spoke design or a pie chart. Map your key character traits, but also map the activities you participate in, the people who influence you, and the choices you make that bring you joy, since it's a combination of your character traits and your actions that truly make up who you are. As an extra challenge, can you use highly descriptive words for those identifying factors, like the Swifts might? (See the work of educator Liz Kleinrock in *Start Here, Start Now* for additional information on identity maps.)
2. Games are an exceedingly serious business to the Swifts, and “[i]t was typical of the Swifts to take a game and make it several times more complicated” (p. 121). Advanced Charades “was more like interpretive dance” (p. 121). A *Scrabble* match played out on an ornate, life-sized board (p. 179) proves to be “a deadly contest of wits” (p. 174). Swift House is thoroughly booby-trapped, creative and cruel insults are hurled competitively in a Mock-Up (p. 208), and the Reunion is itself an excuse for the family to embark on a once-every-ten-years treasure hunt. What was the last game you played? How could you (safely) change that game's rules to inject an element of surprise or unpredictability? Work in small groups to reimagine the rules of a familiar game, such as checkers, bingo, or Uno, and challenge your classmates in battles of creativity and wit. Try playing Scrabble if you've never done so; recreate the Swift's complex version of charades; or stage a kind version of a Mock-Up and sling compliments in a classroom face-off.