



A GRAPHIC NOVEL BOOK CLUB GUIDE



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START A GRAPHIC NOVEL BOOK CLUB IN YOUR LIBRARY

Interested in starting a graphic novel book club at your library but not sure where to start? This guide includes general tips for getting started plus title specific discussion questions to help make your first book club meeting a success!

This guide was created by Tina Lerno. Tina is a librarian for the City of Los Angeles and part of the library's digital content team. Before becoming a librarian, Tina earned a degree in art from UCLA and worked in the world of television animation doing color design on shows such as *Harold and the Purple Crayon*, *Jackie Chan Adventures*, and *The Boondocks*. Tina is the past chair of the Great Graphic Novels for Teens committee for YALSA and past co-chair of the Graphic Novels and Comics Round Table conference and conventions planning committee. She has advocated for comics at San Diego Comic Con, New York Comic Con and Los Angeles Comic Con, where she spoke about the need for comics advocacy in libraries.

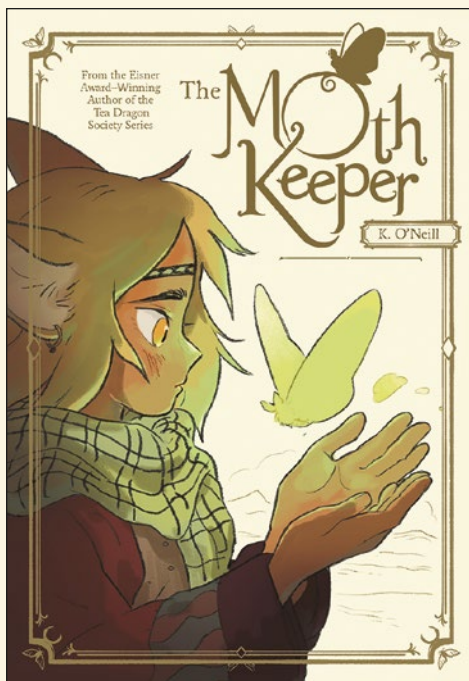
TIPS FOR GETTING STARTED

- **Think of your goals for the discussions and be prepared to scale back if the kids aren't as engaged as you would like.**
- **Set ground rules for the discussion. Does everyone get a turn to answer each question?**
- **Be prepared to answer all the questions yourself.**
- **Always keep the sessions short—an hour or less.**
- **Jot down notes as you read to help remember the story.**
- **Have a portion of the time dedicated to a more physical activity such as drawing or acting out a scene from the story.**

**NEED HELP
PICKING YOUR
FIRST BOOK?
READ ON FOR
SOME IDEAS!**



THE MOTH KEEPER



ABOUT THE BOOK

Anya is finally a Moth Keeper, a protector of the lunar moths that allow the Night-Lily flower to bloom once a year. Her village needs the flower to continue thriving, and Anya is excited to prove her worth and show her thanks to her friends with her actions. But what happens when being a Moth Keeper isn't exactly what Anya thought it would be?

Night after night, it is lonely in the desert with only one lantern for light. Still, Anya is eager to prove her worth, to show her thanks to her friends and her village. But is it worth the cost? When Anya glimpses the one thing that could destroy what she's meant to protect, her village and the lunar moths are left to deal with the consequences.

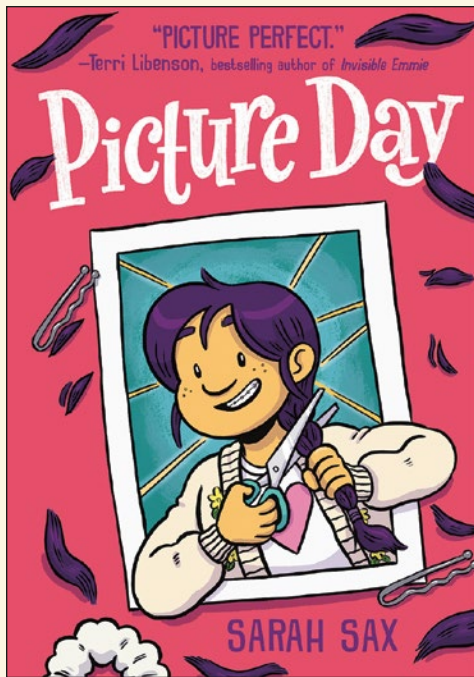
K. O'Neill brings to life a beautifully illustrated fantasy with lush, gorgeous art and intricate world-building. A story about coming of age and community, *The Moth Keeper* is filled with magic, hope, and friendship.

Themes: Fairy Tales & Fables, Fantasy, Responsibility, Friendship, Self-Esteem

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Storytelling plays a big part in *The Moth Keeper*. What are some of the ways that telling stories brings people together?
2. Does working with a partner, like Anya does with Estell, make a task more fun? Do you prefer working alone or as part of a team?
3. The artwork in *The Moth Keeper* uses color very effectively. How did the colors make you feel? Warm or cold? Happy or sad?
4. It seems like Anya has had to make some big choices in her life. Have you ever had to make a choice that was scary?
5. Daytime and nighttime are so separate in this story. Which do you prefer? If you could choose to live permanently in day or night, which would you pick, and why?
6. Can you describe what Anya feels when she sees the people in the daytime?
7. Describe a favorite daytime activity and a favorite nighttime activity.
8. Do you have a favorite animal? Are they active during the day or night?
9. The people in the villages are all part animal. How is this shown?
10. Would you want to be part animal? If so, which animal?
11. Have you ever been afraid of the dark? Did you think Anya did a good job of trying to make herself less scared? What would you have done?
12. Do you have any unanswered questions about *The Moth Keeper*?

PICTURE DAY



ABOUT THE BOOK

Seventh grader Viv never looks forward to picture day. It's just another day where she wears a boring braid and no one notices her. (Her two best friends, Milo and Al, don't count, of course.)

But enough is enough. This year, she's taking matters into her own hands. Literally. Viv grabs a pair of scissors, her phone for live-streaming, and, well, bye-bye braid.

Suddenly Viv is an overnight influencer at Brinkley Middle School. Everyone wants her help planning their next big moment—from haircuts to dance proposals, activist rallies, and mathlete championships. She hardly even has time for her friends anymore. It's exactly how she dreamed of reinventing herself . . . right?

In the tradition of modern classics like Vera Brosgol's *Be Prepared*, Svetlana Chmakova's *Awkward*, and Kayla Miller's *Click*, *Picture Day* brings answers to perennial questions of what it means to be true to yourself—and a true friend.

Themes: Friendship, Coming of Age, Self-Esteem, Peer Pressure, Reluctant Readers

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In *Picture Day*, Viv does something drastic right before a big event. Is that something you would do? Does it sound scary or thrilling?
2. What are some pros and cons of using social media?
3. Do you feel like you were forced to use social media before you were ready?
4. The friends get into a big fight and stop hanging out. What could Viv have done differently to avoid the blowup?
5. Are there people in your life you could ask to help with an idea or project?
6. Viv's mom is very supportive. Do you think the adults in your life would freak out if you did something so drastic?
7. Milo looks up to his older brother and turns to him for guidance. Do you have a mentor in your life?
8. The artwork in this book is bold and bright. How does it aid in storytelling? Do you need both art and text to have a complete picture of the story?
9. Were you satisfied with the ending? If you weren't, how would you have resolved things?

GRACE NEEDS SPACE!



ABOUT THE BOOK

Grace is SO EXCITED to fly a freighter from her home space station (and away from her BORING mother Evelyn) to a faraway moon! Plus, she'll get some quality time with her FUN mom Kendra—something Grace definitely needs. Finally, a real adventure that Grace can get excited about while the rest of her space station friends go away for their summer vacations.

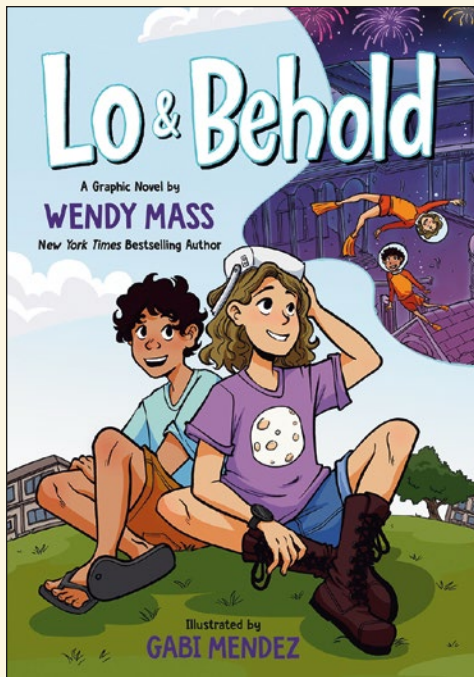
But when Kendra is too focused on work, Grace's first big trip suddenly becomes kind of lonely. Grace had so many plans for fun. But all it takes is one quick decision to explore the moon by herself before Grace's adventure suddenly becomes not so out of this world at all. With her mom mad at her, Grace wants nothing more than to return home. Then their ship breaks down. Will Grace be able to get through to her mom and save their trip in the end?

Themes: Acceptance & Belonging, Responsibility, Family & Relationships, Cooperation & Teamwork, Space

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Do you think it would be lonely living on a space station? What do you think would be fun about it? What do you think would be difficult?
2. Grace thinks her time with Ba will be spent differently, and she is very disappointed. Have you ever been in a situation where things didn't go as planned? Did you get mad? Sad?
3. Grace wanders away from her parent and then joins a school group on a field trip! Why do you think she does this? Would you be scared?
4. Grace gets into trouble for her unplanned field trip. Do you think she was fully at fault, or does it feel like her mom should have been paying more attention?
5. Grace's parents share custody of her after a divorce. How does Grace feel about the arrangement?
6. Would you like to live in space or on a spaceship? Why or why not?
7. Does the artwork capture what you think space and living in space might be like?
8. Were you satisfied with the ending? If you weren't, how would you have resolved things?

LO & BEHOLD



ABOUT THE BOOK

When you're named after a 250-year-old tortoise, you grow up believing life is full of possibilities and wonder. But ever since Addie's family got turned upside down, those things have been harder for her to see.

The last thing Addie wants to do is make a new friend, but when her dad's summer job takes them across the country, she meets Mateo and finds herself caught up in an exciting project. With the help of a virtual reality headset, she's suddenly scaling castle walls, dodging angry kittens, and seeing the world in whole new ways. Plus, she has an idea that could be bigger than anything she's imagined before, but can she right some wrongs first . . . or is it too late?

Themes: Family & Relationships, Friendship, Girl Interest, Contemporary Issues/Social Problems, Forgiveness

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Trees play an important part in this story. Do you have a favorite tree or favorite place in nature to visit?
2. Tortoises also play an important part in this story. Do you have a favorite animal or a favorite toy that has helped you?
3. Does the art help propel the story? Does it set the mood and help you better understand the characters and their stories?
4. The job of futurist sounds really fun! What kinds of things do you see in our future? Can you make a prediction for ten years in the future, about yourself and about technology?
5. What do you think of "paying it forward"? Would you do something like Mateo did and put dollar bills in books? What are some other small ways to make a big difference?
6. Having a secret or concealed family situation can be a big burden to carry. Do you think drawing or writing in a journal helps? Does it help Addie?
7. Are there people in your life you could ask to help with an idea or project?
8. Were there events in the book that left you with unanswered questions? Did you guess what happened with Addie's mom? Or Mateo's brother? Did the artwork help to explain the events?
9. Were you satisfied with the ending? If you weren't, how would you have resolved things?
10. Have you ever wanted to go to the moon? What big dreams do you have, and do you see yourself following through? How could you? Is it okay for a dream to just be that?

NEXT STOP



ABOUT THE BOOK

Pia is a soft-spoken middle schooler whose life is turned upside down after the loss of her younger brother, followed by her parents' decision to move to a new town. In an effort to get her mind off the troubles at home, Pia goes on a bus tour with a family friend, stopping at weird and wacky roadside attractions. The final destination: a mysterious underground lake. The locals say it has magical powers; Pia won't admit she believes in it, but she's holding on to hope that the waters may hold the answer to mending her broken family.

The trip is much more than the final stop. The friendships that Pia makes along the way are just as valuable as the destination itself. *Next Stop* explores grief, resilience, and learning how to laugh again. Debbie Fong weaves together an incredibly strong debut filled with humor and heart, with a splash of mystery and magic.

Themes: Coming of Age, Asian/Asian American Interest, Death, Dying & Grief, Growing Up, Girl Interest

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Would you go on a trip like this alone? What would be the most exciting part?
2. What would be the scariest part?
3. What would you pack to remind you of home?
4. If you could go on a road trip like Pia does, where would you want to go?
5. As the bus gets closer to the lake, we start to see magical changes to the landscape and the people. Did you find this an enjoyable part of the story? Why or why not?
6. Some of the places the tour bus goes are strange and funny. What's the weirdest thing you have seen on a trip?
7. The people on the bus become like family to Pia. Can you talk about a person in your life like that?
8. Pia was close to her parents, but after the tragedy, they were very distant. What is an example of a way they try to reconnect?
9. When Pia cuts her hair, she says, "I didn't want to look like me." What do you think she meant?
10. Pia and her family go through an unimaginable tragedy. Why do you think the author wanted to write such a sad story?
11. If you could make a wish at a magic place, what would you wish for?
12. Pia learns a board game called Go from one of the passengers and then teaches it to her dad. Have you learned something at school or camp that you shared with your family later?
13. The artist shows her process at the end of this book. Can you use this process to create your own comic strip?

KIRA AND THE MAYBE SPACE PRINCESS



ABOUT THE BOOK

There's nothing cooler than Magical Girls—pretty superheroes fighting villains with the power of friendship and glitter? What could be better than that! This year in middle school, Kira is going to be cool and popular and have SO many friends because she's going to be a MAGICAL GIRL! . . . Or not.

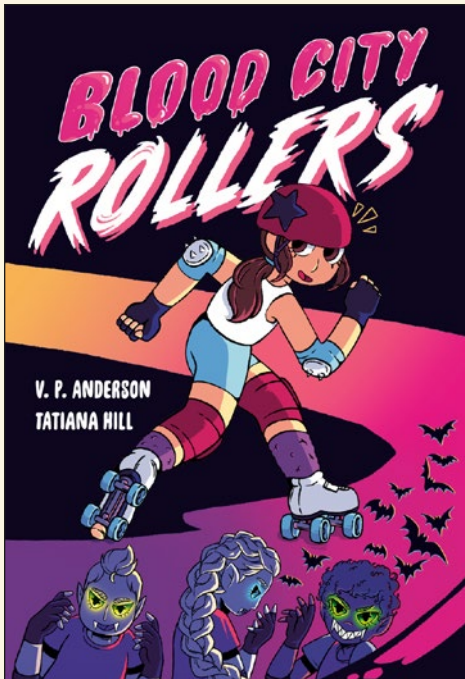
Frustrated beyond belief, Kira makes a wish on a shooting star that her life will change—and when Catacorn, a cat-unicorn-space-princess, crashes into Kira's backyard, it seems her wish has come true . . . kinda . . . maybe . . . oh no. Is Kira's dream of being a Magical Girl really possible . . . or is Catacorn not really what she promises to be?

Themes: Acceptance & Belonging, Adventure, Courage & Honor, Friendship, Fantasy

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Kira wishes on a shooting star for her life to change. What magical thing would you wish for?
2. Kira has a rivalry with Tulip, or so she thinks. Have you ever had a friend that didn't feel like a friend? What did you do?
3. Nothing is quite what it seems in this story. What one thing would you have done differently if you were Kira?
4. What if you were Catacorn? What could you say or do differently?
5. Is Kira to blame for her lack of friends? Is she a likable character?
6. Do you think it would be fun to have a magical sidekick? Would they be helpful?
7. Kira hates her new costume. Would you have worn it? Why or why not?
8. While Baleen is the enemy, she shows kindness to Kira. Have you ever had a friend who was more like an enemy or an enemy who really wasn't that bad?
9. The artwork in this book is very fun and sparkly. How does it aid in storytelling? Do you need both to have a complete understanding?
10. There is a hint at the end of this book that there may be a sequel. What do you predict will happen to Kira?
11. The artist shows her process at the end of this book. Can you use this process to create your own comic strip?

BLOOD CITY ROLLERS



ABOUT THE BOOK

Ice-skater Mina is on a one-track path to Olympic gold and glory—that is, until she totally wipes out at her biggest competition, and is kinda-sorta-kidnapped by undead kids on roller skates. *Sucked* into the high stakes world of paranormal roller derby, she finds herself “recruited” by a squad of vampires who need a human player to complete their team—just in time to save the league from losing it all.

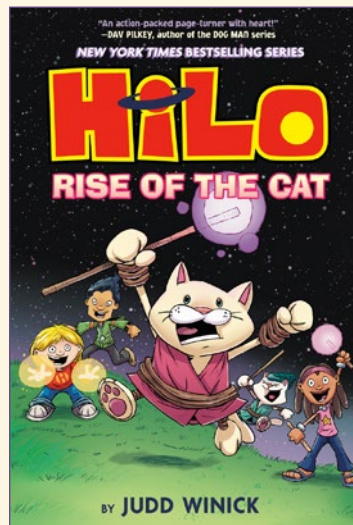
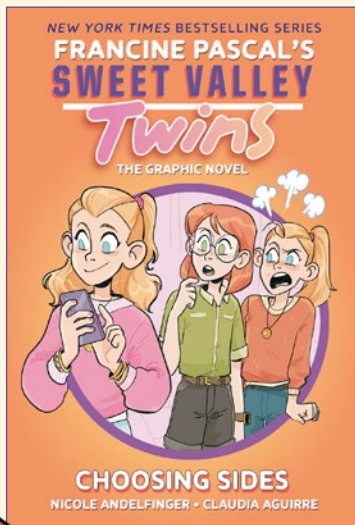
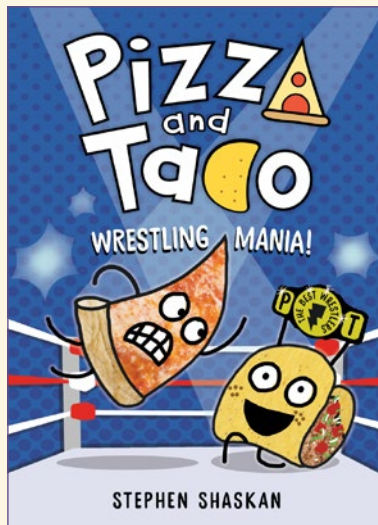
Between learning to play derby well enough to kick butt on the track, crushing hard on the dreamy team captain, and navigating the spooky rules of the supernatural, how can Mina go from striving to be a ten alone, to becoming one of nine chaotic bodies forming a perfectly-imperfect team? Forget being the *best*. Will she be *enough* to help her new friends survive the season?

Themes: Supernatural, Sports, LGBTQ

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. The “real world” is depicted very differently to the “vampire world.” What kind of moods were set with the different color palettes?
2. Mina says early on that “It’s not enough to love a thing . . . I have to prove I’m good enough to do it for a living.” If you could have any career based on what you love, what would you do?
3. Roller derby plays a big part in this story. Would you try it as a sport? Why or why not?
4. Bella seems to really have it in for Mina. Why do you think that is?
5. This book has a lot of loose ends. What do you hope to see in the second book in this series?
6. Mina had these “MinaVision” moments. What do you think they are?
7. Mina’s parents seem indifferent to her needs. What could she say to help them understand her better?
8. Mina finds friendship and support from her new teammates. Why do you think she had an easier time with them than at the ice rink with her fellow skaters?
9. What type of creature do you think Bruise was?
10. What would your roller derby name be?
11. When Mina goes back to the mall, her friends are gone! Where do you think they went?
12. So far in the story, we’ve seen vampires, witches, and ghosts. What other creatures might fit in this world?

MORE GRAPHIC NOVELS TO ADD TO YOUR BOOKSHELF



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