
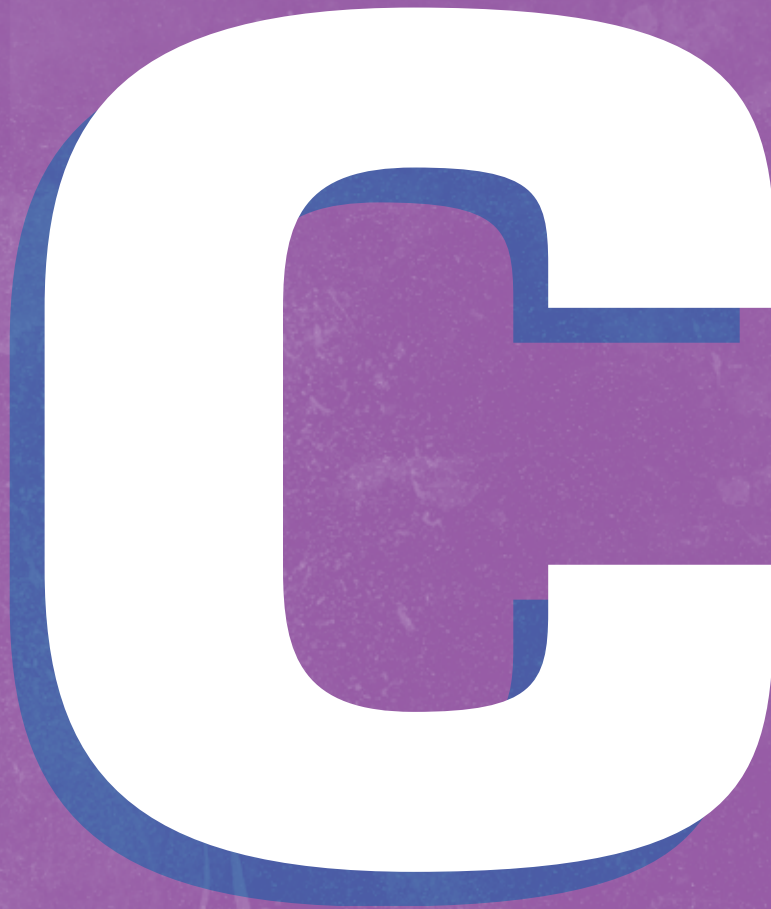



Book Review Discussion Questions



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Book reviews cover the content, themes and worldviews of fiction books, not their literary merit, and equip parents to decide whether a book is appropriate for their children. A book's inclusion does not constitute an endorsement by Focus on the Family. You can request a review of a title you can't find at reviewrequests@family.org.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

Cabin Fever



This realistic, humor book by Jeff Kinney is the sixth in the “Diary of a Wimpy Kid” series published by Amulet Books, an imprint of Harry N. Abrams Inc.

Cabin Fever is written for kids ages 8 to 12.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. What has Aunt Navarre taught Babylonne about the world? Does Babylonne believe there’s any good in the world? What does she think about herself? How do her thoughts change after she meets Isidore? What does he think about the world, and what does he tell her? What do Greg and Rowley accidentally do that makes them fear the police? When Greg gets caught, why doesn’t he get Rowley in trouble, too? When have you kept a secret because you thought the truth might get you in trouble? When have you kept a secret because you thought the truth might get someone else in trouble? Looking back on your secret keeping, would you have done the same thing given the outcome?
2. What are some of Greg’s big ideas in this book? Why do they usually fail? If you knew Greg, what

would you suggest he do to use his creativity in a more productive way? To whom could he go for help and advice?

3. What does Greg’s school do to ensure students are safe from bullying and injury? In what ways are these plans helpful? In what ways do they keep kids from being kids? Think about some of the rules you have at home and at school. Which ones are good for you? Which don’t seem to work or have problems? Explain.

2. What qualities do Daniel and Will possess that help them survive for so long without their parents? How do they change and grow during their time alone? How long could you survive in the wilderness? How might you learn what you needed to know to survive? If you were Daniel or Will, what would you have done differently to survive the winter?
3. Why do Daniel and Will tell each other Bible stories? How do these stories encourage them in their difficult circumstances? How has a Bible story encouraged you during a difficult time?
4. How do Will and Daniel feel when their parents show their pride in what the boys have done with the farm? Why is it important to praise, thank or show appreciation to others? To whom can you show some sincere appreciation today?

Cabin on Trouble Creek



This historical fiction novel by Jean Van Leeuwen is published by Puffin Books, a division of the Penguin Young Readers Group, and is written for

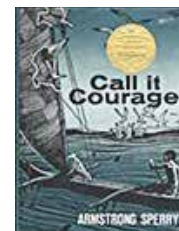
kids ages 9 to 11.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. What are some valuable lessons the boys have learned from their parents? How do these insights help them even when the Pa is gone? What are some valuable lessons the boys learn from Solomon? How do these insights help them even when the Indian is gone? Why is it important to remain teachable?

Call It Courage



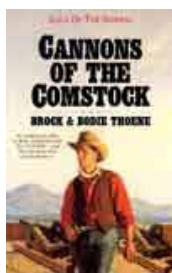
This adventure book by Armstrong Sperry is published by Simon & Schuster Children’s Publishing and is written for kids 8 to 12.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. What would you do first if you were shipwrecked on an island?
2. Have you ever been in a situation where others teased you because they didn't think you were brave enough or smart enough? What did you do? Did Mafatu care too much or too little about what others thought of him?
3. Do you think Mafatu's decision to venture out on his own was brave or ignorant? What would you have done in his place?
4. What is contradictory about the meaning of Mafatu's name ("stout heart")?
5. How would you treat Mafatu if you were a member of his tribe? Why?
6. Do you think you could have survived the Mafatu's journey?
7. Name a few people you consider brave. What makes them brave?
8. Describe a time when you felt brave.

Cannons of the Comstock



This historical Western fiction book is the fifth in the "Saga of the Sierras" series by Brock and Bodie Thoene and is published by Bethany House Publishers.

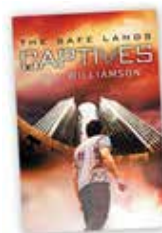
Cannons of the Comstock is written for people ages 15 and up.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. How does Tom's sister-in-law, Emily, feel about the people in her church who agree with the Confederate cause instead of the Union stand? What makes the congregation take sides against each other? Could Pastor Swift have kept people from leaving their church? Emily's sons, Jed and Nate, miss their friends who have left the church. How could they have remained friends with the other boys?
2. How does Pastor Swift try to keep politics out of his church? Why doesn't his plan to keep people from talking about politics work? Why do some Christians think slavery is okay? Why do other Christians oppose it?
3. What happens to Nate when he tumbles into the Chinese underground? How is the Chinese slavery operation different from the Southern plantation system? Why does Nate have hope while the other slaves do not? Was a belief in Jesus common in slave circles? What Bible verse would you cling to if you were a slave like Mont?
4. Is California directly involved in the Civil War? Why is California an important part of the Union victory? What might have happened if the Confederate sympathizers had been able to form a Republic on the Pacific? How would that have helped the Confederates? How would it have hurt the Union army?
5. Where do many of the California settlers come from? Are there any characters in the book that may have disagreed with slavery but agreed with the Confederate cause of protecting individual state power?

Captives



This sci-fi novel by Jill Williamson is the first in the "Safe Lands" series published by Zondervan. *Captives* is written for kids ages 15 to 19.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. How do the residents of Glenrock respond to the glamorous lifestyle of the Safe Lands? Why do some embrace the culture, while others keep their distance from the new luxuries and experiences?
2. What are some of the consequences Safe Landers experience because they've chosen to live lives of promiscuity and substance abuse? What are some problems you see in our society because of these same types of destructive behaviors?
3. Why does Omar help the Safe Landers capture his people? What happens as a result of his intense desire to fit in and receive personal honor? How do his friends and family respond to him in the end?
4. What's your opinion on body enhancements, such as plastic surgeries or extreme physical modifications? Would you want enhancements if they were readily available, as they are in the Safe Lands? Why or why not?

The Capture



This fantasy book is the first in the “Guardians of Ga’hoole” series by Kathryn Lasky and an Apple Series book published by Scholastic, Inc. *The Capture* is

written for kids ages 9 and up.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. Why do the owls at St. Aggie’s forbid asking questions? What negative results do they say questioning causes? Have you ever heard anyone suggest that asking too many questions would distract you from finding the truth? Did you stop asking questions? How did it make you feel? What would happen if people weren’t allowed to ask questions?
2. What is moonblinking? What are some of the techniques the leaders at St. Aggie’s use to confuse and brainwash the young owls? Why do they do it? How does moonblinking erase individuality? Do you see examples of “moonblinking” and its consequences in your school or your country? Explain your answer. How can you, like the young owls, stay “right side up in an upside-down world”?
3. How do Soren and Gylfie distract each other to keep from getting moonblinked? Why is it powerful to hear and repeat stories from the past? How do these tales teach and encourage us? Do you agree with Soren’s dad,

that sometimes even legends that aren’t true can make us become better people? Give an example. What stories from your ancestors, American history, the Bible or other sources have inspired you? Explain.

4. Why does Grimble continually stress that the young owls must believe if they want to fly? Why is it important to approach life’s challenges confidently? In what or in whom do you believe that gives you strength and assurance?

Captured in Colombia



This mystery adventure book is the third in “The Parker Twins” series by Jeanette Windle and is published by Kregel Publications. *Captured in*

Colombia is written for kids ages 9 to 13.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

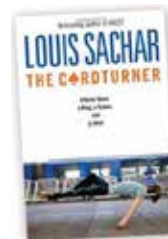
If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. Estrella believes that her American father abandoned her. How does this influence her feelings about Americans? How do her false beliefs about her dad lead to her involvement with the guerrillas? Sometimes a person’s wrong beliefs can lead him to make bad choices. Can you think of an example of this in your life?
2. Doña Rosa and her husband, Don Eduardo, offer to give Estrella a home. The first time, she left them. Why does she originally leave them? How do this

couple’s actions demonstrate forgiveness?

3. Justin has a hard time forgiving Estrella for betraying them. Is it ever hard for you to forgive? What does the Bible say about forgiveness (Ephesians 4:32)?

The Cardturner



This humorous, realistic fiction book by Louis Sachar is published by Delacorte Press, an imprint of Random House Children’s Books and is written for

kids ages 12 and up.

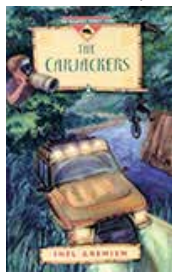
Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. When Alton and Leslie start talking about what they’ll buy when they inherit Uncle Lester’s wealth, they rapidly move from a new computer to wanting a new house with a pool, hot tub, new car, and so on. Alton says, “That’s the trouble with money.” What did he mean by this? Do you agree with him? Find passages in the New Testament that talk about money. What is the difference between having money and loving money?
2. Alton says he feels ashamed about his father losing his job and decides not to tell Cliff. Why do you think he feels shame? What would you say to a friend in a similar situation to help him cope?

- Is Cliff a good choice of friend for Alton? Why or why not? How do you choose your friends?
- Was Trapp a good influence on Alton? What were his admirable traits? What characteristics would you consider negative? Consider one of your relatives who has influenced you. What were this person's admirable traits? What characteristics would you consider negative?
- Talk about Alton's trip to Chicago with Toni. What are some possibilities for things to have gone wrong with a trip like that? How does Alton justify his deceit? What does it mean to duck smoothly? Outside of bridge, how is this term different from lying? Do you agree with how it was used?
- Because of misinformation from his mother, Alton asks Trapp some embarrassingly stupid questions. What did you learn about gossip from this story? What does the Bible say about gossip?
- The author includes the Steinbeck quote from Cannery Row twice (see the end of Chapter 59). Does this quote have any significance to the story? Do you think it's true? How would you argue against it?

The Carjackers



This second pre-teen mystery in the "Rugendo Rhinos" series by Shel Aresen is published by Kregel Publications. *The Carjackers* is written for kids ages 8

to 10.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

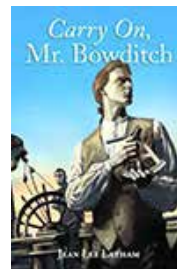
If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

- Dean and his friends accidentally set off a car alarm and let the adults think a thief was involved. Finally, the children confess. Do you think withholding information is a form of lying? Why or why not?
- How do you feel about the boys shooting a dove and then, while it was still alive, decapitating it?
- Does it make a difference to you that the boys ate the bird for meat and weren't shooting it just for sport?
- The boys learn where the stolen car operation is, and one of them suggests getting their parents involved. Instead, they decide to spy without telling their parents. Should you ever go into a dangerous situation without consulting your parents?
- The boys want to take a picture of the criminals in action. Dean sneaks in, takes his father's prized camera, along with its expensive telephoto lens, and hides it in his backpack. Does the fact that he's using it to capture a criminal, which will help other people, make it OK to take it without permission? Is it ever acceptable to do something wrong if it helps someone in the end?
- A Swedish soccer team with expensive uniforms and equipment competes against the missionary school soccer team. Were the Rhinos correct in assuming a soccer loss based on the other team's appearance? Can you think of an example where you judged a situation based on

appearances and were proved wrong?

- One of the children tells the others where the bad guys are located. The boy gets caught, and the carjackers beat him up. He then talks about a sermon that says Christians should be happy if they suffer for doing what is right. Have you ever suffered for doing right? Explain your answer.
- This book gives readers a look at what it is like for children of missionaries living in other countries. If you have a missionary-related experience, what are ways you think the book's description is realistic? Are some parts unrealistic? If you have no experience in a missionary setting, what did you find interesting about missionary work?

Carry On, Mr. Bowditch



This historical, coming-of-age book by Jean Lee Latham is published by Houghton Mifflin and is written for kids ages 10 to 14.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

- Nat, a real figure in American history, is considered the founder of modern maritime navigation. He always finds a way to learn what he wants to know, despite his circumstances. What are some ways a person can improve or be educated, even without a lot

of money or time? Can a person ever be too old to learn?

2. Nat frequently points out that sailing has everything to do with mathematics. What are some careers today that require a strong knowledge of math?
3. What talents has God given you that you feel you should develop?
4. How could you use your skills to teach others?

Cascade



This fantasy book by Lisa T. Bergren is the second book in the “River of Time” series and is published by David C. Cook. *Cascade* is written for kids ages

13 to 18.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. Gabi states several times in the book that she must approach conflicts with an “us or them” mentality. How does this affect Gabi’s and Lia’s actions? When have you used this type of mentality? What does the Bible say about this way of thinking?
2. What is Gabi willing to give up in order to stay with Marcello? What does she expect from her family because of her desire to stay in medieval Italy? What decisions have you made that could affect your family?
3. When Gabi is in the cage facing death, what does she think

about? Describe a dangerous or deadly situation that you have had or someone you know has faced. Did facing that situation, or knowing someone who has faced it, affect your view of life? How could such an experience change your life?

4. When Gabi and her friends are exposed to the plague, what does she do to prevent it from spreading? What is the result of her efforts? Gabi insinuates that in the future, when the plague becomes an epidemic, God sits back and allows thousands of people to die. What does the Bible say about where God is when bad things happen? When has God felt distant to you? Explain.

The Case of the Autumn Rose



This mystery novel is the first book in “The Davis Detective Mysteries” series by Rick Acker and is published by Kregel Publications. *The*

Case of the Autumn Rose is written for kids ages 9 to 12.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. What would you do if you were part of the Davis Detective Agency and your mother did not want you to take a case?
2. Describe what integrity means to you. Be sure to give examples. Can you think of anyone who

demonstrates integrity in your life? How is integrity a reflection of God’s character?

3. Do you think leaving information out of your explanation to someone who asks you a question is lying? Why or why not? What does God’s Word say about lying?
4. Do you think your parents would have let you take the Case of the Autumn Rose? Why or why not? Have your parents ever kept you from doing something out of concern for your safety? How did you feel at the time? Did you obey? What were the consequences of your decision?
5. At what point in the story do you think your parents would want you to back out of the case? At which point would you back out?

The Case of the Dinosaur in the Desert



This fourth mystery book in “The New Sugar Creek Gang” series by Pauline Hutchens Wilson and Sandy Dengler is published by Moody Publishers. *The*

Case of the Dinosaur in the Desert is written for kids ages 8 to 12.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

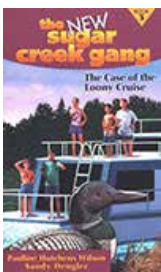
If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. Who wins the dinosaur-drawing contest? With whom does Lynn want to share her prize? What does Lynn do when she realizes the whole gang can’t go on the

dig with her? How difficult is this decision for her? What would you do in her place?

- Why is Les disappointed once he arrives at the archeological dig? What are some things that are difficult for Les there? What is one thing that you expected to be amazing, but it wasn't? What did your disappointment cause you to do? How did Les adjust to his new surroundings?
- What excuse does Les give for eavesdropping? Why is eavesdropping inappropriate behavior? What should Les have done instead of listening?
- How does Les feel after he hears the false accusations against the Sugar Creek Gang? How do he and the gang choose to treat Dr. Royer? What compels them to treat her well, even as she is treating them poorly? How does doing this change Dr. Royer?
- How does Les' treatment of Dr. Royer eventually impact Brian? How does Brian change? What does the Sugar Creek Gang find in God's Word that helps them to do what is right? What do people notice about these kids? Of all the things you do, which of them please God? How might this behavior help others change, too?

The Case of the Loony Cruise



This fifth mystery book in "The New Sugar Creek Gang" series by Pauline Hutchens Wilson and Sandy Dengler is published by Moody Publishers. *The Case of the*

Looney Cruise is written for kids ages 8 to 12.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

- What does Les think about Lisa when she lights a cigarette? What kinds of things do kids do today to look cool? What influences their choices? What influences your choices? How do you behave around others? How can you make your behavior better reflect Christ?
- What activities does Lisa think are necessary to have fun? How can you protect yourself from becoming involved in these behaviors? Do you know what you will say or do when you're confronted with these behaviors? Read Proverbs 22:3 and discuss the wisdom of being prepared for temptation. Does being a Christian mean you cannot have fun? What kinds of things do you do to have fun without breaking God's laws?
- What does Mike say God has done by putting Lisa and the Sugar Creek Gang together? What does Mike's attitude teach you? Can you think of a situation where you were put with someone that you didn't really like? What did God teach you about loving others through this situation?

The Case of the Monster in the Creek



This sixth mystery book in "The New Sugar Creek Gang" series by Pauline Hutchens Wilson and Sandy Dengler is published by Moody Publishers. *The Case of the*

Monster in the Creek is written for kids ages 8 to 12.

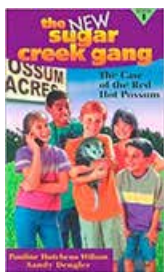
Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

- How did Lynn and Tyler handle the encounter with the stranger differently? Why does Tyler choose not to obey what he knows is right? What are the consequences? What should you do if you are approached by a stranger?
- What goal has Lynn set for herself? What is she willing to do in order to achieve that goal? Do you have any long-term goals? What kind of discipline or commitment will it take for you to achieve your goal?
- What happens to Tyler as a result of his disobedience? How have you disobeyed your parent (us)? What are some of the consequences you have experienced because of disobedience? What blessings have you reaped for doing what is right?
- What are some of the false assumptions and judgments made by the characters in this book? Have you ever made a false assumption about someone

or something? What was the result? What does God say about drawing conclusions about people without knowing all of the facts?

The Case of the Red Hot Possum



This first mystery book in “The New Sugar Creek Gang” series by Pauline Hutchens Wilson and Sandy Dengler is published by Moody Publishers. *The Case of the Red*

Hot Possum is written for kids ages 8 to 12.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. How does Les feel when Tiny first leads them in prayer? Where does he say prayer belongs? Have you ever been too uncomfortable to talk about your faith outside of church? When does God say you should talk about your faith?
2. What is Bits’ attitude toward her father? Why does she feel this way? How does her attitude compare to the biblical command to honor your parents?
3. What does Mr. Henderson call Archibald Sluski? Why is this term derogatory? Do you think it is right to make fun of or call someone names because they are physically or mentally challenged? Why do some people do that? What does God’s Word say about loving those who are different from you?

The Castle in the Attic



This fantasy book by Elizabeth Winthrop is the first of two books about “The Castle in the Attic” and is published by Yearling, an imprint of

Random House Children’s Books, a division of Random House Inc. *The Castle in the Attic* is written for kids ages 10 to 13.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. How does William feel when Elinore decides to move back home to England to be with her family? When has someone close to you made a decision to leave? How did the decision and your feelings affect your relationship with that person? How is the relationship now?
2. Why doesn’t William want to tell his parents or friends about Sir Simon? What do you do when something happens that you’re not sure you want to tell others about?
3. What are some of the obstacles William encounters on the journey back to Sir Simon’s kingdom? What are some of the obstacles you have encountered in life when you have been trying to accomplish something?
4. When has someone you know shown courage? What did it look like? What can you do to become braver?

The Catcher in the Rye



This coming-of-age book by J.D. Salinger is published by Little, Brown and Company, a division of Hachette Book Group, and written for kids

ages 14 years and up.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. Holden is upset that Mr. Haas, his former headmaster at Elkton Hills, avoided socially awkward parents and instead spent all his time charming parents who were good looking and well dressed. Why does Holden label this behavior as phony? Why might this be an easy trap to fall into? Have you ever treated someone better because of his or her outward appearance or wealth?
2. What good things does Holden say about Stradlater when Ackley is saying negative things about him? What is the difference in the way Holden treats the socially awkward Ackley and the way Stradlater treats Ackley? In what ways does Holden think Stradlater and Ackley are similar? How does Holden treat Ackley and Stradlater when they are annoying him? When Holden goes to town with Mal Brossard, why does he invite Ackley to accompany them, even though he does not enjoy Ackley’s company? Is Ackley equally generous with Holden? How do you talk about and treat your friends? Do

you treat them in a similar way as Holden treated his friends?

3. Why does Holden lie to Mrs. Morrow about her son Ernest? How does he stop himself from telling more lies to Mrs. Morrow on the train? What might have compelled him to do this? Have you ever found yourself in a situation like this? Explain.

Catching Fire



This science fiction novel is the second book in “The Hunger Games” series by Suzanne Collins and is published by Scholastic Press, an imprint of

Scholastic Inc. *Catching Fire* is written for kids ages 9 and up.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. Why do Katniss and Peeta provide alcohol to Haymitch? Are they helping him or enabling him? Explain your answer. What does Haymitch give to Katniss after she learns she must participate in another Hunger Games? How does the alcohol affect her body? Why does Peeta finally pour out all the alcohol?
2. Why are the second Hunger Games more difficult than the first for Katniss? What difference does it make that the tributes know each other? How does familiarity with the tributes impact the viewers in the Capitol? How are they starting to see the district residents? When

someone sees another person as human, how does that change the way he treats that person? Explain your answer.

3. What is Katniss’ initial plan for escaping from the Capitol leaders? What makes her decide to stay and fight for the districts? Does she make the right decision? Why or why not?
4. Why does Katniss ponder things such as suicide and murdering her friend Peeta? What does she fear will happen to them if they continue to live? Why do Katniss and Peeta each think the other should win the Games? Why does Katniss fear that the Capitol will torture her or Peeta? How do you think you would react, and what would you do if faced with these difficult choices?
5. Which characters in this book value human life? Which do not? What would you do if you were forced to kill or be killed? What if the lives of your family and friends were at stake? How does God view all human life?
6. Why do Katniss and Peeta have nightmares? How do they cope with them? How do other champions deal with the trauma caused by their memories of the Games? Are you ever haunted by events or decisions from your past? What are some healthy ways to deal with painful memories?
7. Why do Peeta and Katniss want to enter their second Hunger Games without any allies but each other? Could they have survived without the alliances Haymitch set up for them? Do you ever have a hard time trusting others or letting them help you? Why or why not? What bad things can happen when you trust others? What good things

can happen? How can you know who is trustworthy? Why is teamwork valuable?

8. What’s your impression of the Panem government? How do you feel about Katniss’ decision to defy it? What does the Bible say about how we should respond to the governing bodies in our land? In what circumstances can you justify not doing what the law tells you to do?
9. Which ones are your favorites, and why? Does it seem unrealistic that people, like those in the Capitol, could be entertained by watching others die? Why or why not?
10. In what ways are Katniss and her fellow tributes resourceful in the arena? How do they use their skills, their wits and the items they find to their advantage in the Games? In what ways are you resourceful in your life? What skills, knowledge or relationships can you harness in creative ways to benefit your world?

Catching Santa



This holiday adventure is the first book in “The Kringle Chronicles” by Marc Franco and is published by Pants on Fire Press. *Catching*

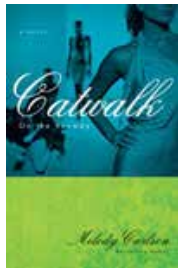
Santa was written for kids ages 8 years old and up.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. Why is it so hard for Fleep to believe in Santa? Do you find it hard to believe in something you can't see? Explain your answer. How do you know God is real?
2. What are some of your family's Christmas beliefs and traditions?

Catwalk



This contemporary Christian book is the second in the “On the Runway” series by Melody Carlson and is published by Zondervan. *Catwalk* is written

for girls age 13 to 16.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. As a Christian, what would you find difficult to be around in the fashion industry?
2. After hearing Pastor Kris' sermon on forgiveness, Erin chooses to extend forgiveness to and to ask for forgiveness from various people. Was she right in doing so? Was the sermon intended for her as she thought it was? Why might she have thought this?
3. How does Paige think about herself? Is a princess attitude the best map for how a person should act? How does her attitude get her in trouble?
4. How does Erin feel about the way her sister acts? If she finds it hard to watch, why does she try to rescue her from the consequences of her behavior? What could Erin do differently in her relationship

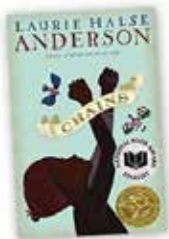
with her sister? How could doing that make their relationship better or worse?

5. What did Paige do wrong at the airport? How could she have handled the situation differently?
6. Why is it illegal to take medicine that is prescribed for someone else? What should Paige have done, instead of taking the sleeping pills?
7. Has Erin compromised her Christian values in order to be a part of the fashion industry? How might God have placed Erin in her position for a reason? What might the reason be?
8. The fashion industry is often considered glamorous. Did this book help you to see another side of that industry? Explain.

back on the path of action and bravery? How does she feel after she's prayed for help?

2. What eye-opening book does Isabel read? Why does the bookseller tell her that Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* is filled with dangerous words? How do these words impact Isabel?
3. What does freedom mean to you? What would be the hardest thing about having to serve someone else? What aspect(s) of freedom would you miss most if you suddenly became a slave?
4. Which characters see Isabel as property? Which see her as a person? How does the latter group treat her differently? What do they see in her?
5. What does the old man at the water pump mean when he talks to Isabel about crossing the river Jordan? What rivers, real and figurative, must Isabel cross? Which biblical characters crossed the Jordan River, and why did they cross it?
6. In what ways is Isabel in chains? In what aspects of her life does she realize she can still make her own decisions? What does she mean when she says Madam can't hurt her soul unless Isabel gives it to her?
7. Should Isabel have deceived Madam to help the Patriots? What does the Bible say about lying? Are there ever times when deception can be justified? Explain your answer.

Chains



This historical fiction book is the first in the “Seeds of America” series by Laurie Halse Anderson and is published by Simon & Schuster for Young Readers,

an imprint of Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing Division. *Chains* is written for kids ages 10 and up.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. To whom does Isabel look as examples when she needs courage? What courageous acts does she perform? What draws her out of her depression and puts her

The Chance



This Christian romance novel by Karen Kingsbury is published by Howard Books, a division of Simon & Schuster. *The Chance* is written for adults but is

read by teens.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. How would you characterize Ellie's faith as a teen and young adult? Does being Christian mean that you won't have big problems? How would you characterize her faith by the end of the book?
2. Caroline tells Ellie, "Unforgiveness is the worst kind of sick." What does that mean? How does life change for Ellie after she forgives her father? Tell about a time when you had difficulty forgiving someone. What does the Bible say about forgiveness (Colossians 3:13)?
3. What do you notice about the importance of communication throughout *The Chance*? How might events have been different if, for example, Ellie had received letters and phone calls from Nolan and her mother? What do you risk in trying to determine what other people are thinking? Have you ever jumped to wrong conclusions because you erroneously thought you knew what someone else was thinking?

4. As a teen, Ellie prays for her parents to stop fighting and to be in love again. But that doesn't happen, so she considers prayer ineffective. Do you agree? Have you ever had a prayer go unanswered? Looking back, what might have been God's answer?
5. When C.J., the father of Ellie's child, dies in Iraq, Ellie does not go to his memorial service. How is that a selfish decision? Do you think his family would have liked knowing that he had a child?
6. Ellie tells her daughter that "two people can think they love each other when really it's too soon to know if love is there or not." How can you determine whether a lasting love exists? Is the feeling of love a valid reason to engage in premarital or extramarital sex? Name two or three consequences Caroline and Ellie suffered for their wrong decisions.
7. In this case, Nolan's obsession with Ellie is met with Ellie returning his love. If Ellie did not return Nolan's love, how might Nolan's obsession with Ellie have been unhealthy for him?

Changing Faces



written for teens.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

This contemporary fiction book is the first in the "Real TV" series by Wendy Lawton and is published by Moody Publishers. *Changing Faces* is

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. As Olivia and Jane try to rebuild their friendship, Jane says that just listening to Aubrey's mean comments about Olivia (even if she didn't agree) was enough to subtly change her attitude toward Olivia. Have you ever seen that happen — someone else's negative opinion started making you feel more negative, too?
2. Has God ever put you in a position (like Olivia at the shelter) where you feel uncomfortable? What did you learn from the experience?
3. Would you ever want to be on a reality show? If so, which one? Why?
4. Have you ever dealt with a bully, or someone who was jealous of you, the way Olivia has to deal with Aubrey? How did you handle it?
5. Do you ever feel, like Olivia, that you could be "mercy challenged" or that your desire for personal gain is stronger than your desire to help others? What could you do to change that?

Charlie and the Chocolate Factory



This tween book by Roald Dahl is published by Puffin, a division of Penguin Books, and is written for kids ages 8 to 12.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. Grandpa Joe tells the story of Prince Pondicherry, a young ruler from India, who paid Wonka to build a chocolate palace for him. What does Wonka advise the Prince to do with his palace? What does Prince Pondicherry do instead? Why should he have listened to Wonka? What good advice has someone given you that you chose not to listen to? What happened?
2. Why did other chocolate makers send spies to steal Wonka's recipes? How did Wonka react to this betrayal? Why does Wonka say he can't trust adults with his factory? If some people from a group, such as adults, are not trustworthy, does that mean everyone in the group is not trustworthy? What would you have done if you were Wonka?
3. Augustus, Violet, Veruca and Mike ignore various warnings. How can you help friends stay out of trouble once they've been warned about something? How can friends help you?
4. Why did Wonka hold the contest with the Golden Tickets? What special prize does Charlie earn through his good behavior? What admirable qualities does Wonka say that Charlie exhibits? (He is good, sensible and loving.) Tell about a time when you were rewarded because of your good behavior.

Chasing the Prophecy



This fantasy novel written by Brandon Mull is the third book in the "Beyonders" series published by Aladdin, a division of Simon & Schuster publishing. *Chasing the Prophecy* is written for kids ages 8 to 12.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. Jason and his friends face impossible odds throughout the story. How do they keep going when they know there is little chance of success? What motivates you to keep working toward an impossible goal?
2. There are many different races in Lyrian besides humans — the Aram Kabal, displacers and drinlings. Which of each race's qualities are most humanlike? Which did you prefer? Explain.
3. Jason and Rachel must both deal with the death of close friends. How do they do this? Have you ever had anyone close to you die? How did you deal with your sadness? How could you help a friend who is sad?
4. Ferrin helps Rachel by having her clearly evaluate what price she'll have to pay and what rewards she'll be given for her choices. Have you ever looked at a problem in your life this way? How might this kind of questioning and evaluating help you make a tough decision?

5. Galloran says that faith is a tool that can keep someone going while they look for the truth. How would you define faith? How does the Bible define faith in Hebrews 11:1?

The Chestnut King



This fantasy story by N.D. Wilson is the third book in the "100 Cupboards" series published by Random House Children's Books, a division of

Random House Inc. *The Chestnut King* is written for kids ages 9 to 12.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. How would you describe Henry in the beginning of the "100 Cupboards" series? How does he change and grow? What events or circumstances bring about these changes?
2. Describe Fat Frank. What kind of Chestnut King will he be? Explain your answer.
3. What role does family loyalty play in this book? How do Henry and his family work together to destroy the witch-queen?

A Child Called It



This autobiography by Dave Pelzer is the first in a series of books about his life and is published by Health Communications Inc. *A Child*

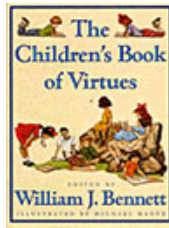
Called It is written for adults but is sometimes included in high school reading lists.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. What would make a mother behave like this toward her child? How would you feel if your mom or dad suddenly started treating you this way?
2. How does Dave survive the years of torture and abuse? What are his feelings about God at the time? What does he ultimately discover about God's presence in his life?
3. Why does it take so long for anyone to help Dave escape his torture? How can you help someone who may be suffering from physical or emotional abuse? Why is it important to treat everyone with respect and dignity?

The Children's Book of Virtues



This story collection by William J. Bennett is published by Simon & Schuster and is written for kids ages 5 to 10.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. Why is it important not to give up when you face difficulties?
2. What did you learn about manners from the stories in this book? Why is it important for you to learn good manners and demonstrate them to others?
3. Characters, such as the animals in "The Little Red Hen," the king in "The King and His Hawk," the father in "Someone Sees You" and the shepherd in "The Boy Who Cried Wolf," made some bad choices. What were they, and what lessons did they learn from their choices?
4. Characters such as Peter in "The Little Hero of Holland," the knight in "St. George and the Dragon," the young sister in "The Indian Cinderella" and the woodcutter in "The Honest Woodman" made good choices. What were they, and how were they rewarded for their choices?
5. How did the main characters in "The Little Hero of Holland," "St. George and the Dragon," "The Legend of the Dipper" and "Little Sunshine" help others?

6. What does the Bible say about helping other people?
7. Which story or poem did you like best? What did you learn from it?

The Chocolate Touch



This humorous tale by Patrick Skene Catling, with illustrations by Margot Apple, is published by Morrow Junior Books, part of

William Morrow and Company Inc., and is written for kids ages 8 to 12.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. What Greek myth was the inspiration for *The Chocolate Touch*? What did the king in that story want most, the way John wanted chocolate?
2. What lessons does John learn from his chocolate touch? When have you had a strong desire for more and more of something? What was it you wanted so badly? What happened as a result of your greed?
3. Why does John blame the storekeeper for his chocolate troubles? When have you tried to place blame on other people for a problem you caused, and why? What does it mean to take responsibility for your actions?
4. What does the shopkeeper say is the cure for greediness? How can being unselfish and thinking

of others keep you from being greedy?

The Chocolate War



This contemporary drama is written by Robert Cormier and published by Alfred A. Knopf Books, Laurel Leaf Books, and Ember Publishing, all

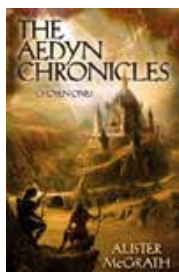
divisions of Random House publishing. *The Chocolate War* is written for ages 12 and up.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. Why do you think Jerry continues to refuse to sell the chocolates even after his assignment for The Vigils is completed? What do you think motivates Brother Leon's actions throughout the story? Why do you think he tries to use The Vigils in the chocolate sale? How did you feel about Brother Leon, knowing that he watched the boxing match?
2. How would you feel if you were awarded praise, as The Goober was, for something you didn't do? Would you tell the truth or would you accept the accolades?
3. What cause or idea do you have in your life for which you'd be willing to take a stand? How could you enlist others to help you with your cause? How could you continue standing up for it, even when nothing seems to change?
4. How do the boys view women/girls in the story? How do the media portray women in television and movies? How should women/girls be viewed?

Chosen Ones



This fantasy book is the first in the "Aedyn Chronicles" series by Alister McGrath and is published by Zonderkidz, a division of Zondervan

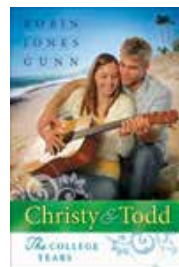
Publishers. *Chosen Ones* is written for kids ages 9 to 12.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. Peter lies to Julia's captors in an attempt to save her life. Is lying OK in this type of a situation? Can you think of a situation you might find yourself when lying would be the appropriate thing to do, or is it never appropriate? What does the Bible say about lying?
2. What does Julia overhear? What is her assumption about Peter after hearing just part of a conversation he has with the evil overlords? How does she initially feel? What does she learn about Peter's motives? Why is it important to get the whole story before making judgments about what a person says or does? Why is it important not to eavesdrop?
3. Who calls Peter and Julia to Aedyn? Why does the monk call them to Aedyn? Are they a part of the prophecy?
4. How does God call Christians to live? Does He call some Christians to do certain things and other Christians to do different things? Explain.
5. How do Peter and Julia react differently? Why do you think Julia wanted to serve the enslaved people of Aedyn? Why do you think Peter wanted to become a powerful prince? How do Peter and Julia keep or change their individual perspectives?
6. What kind of attitude should Christians have according to Matthew 20:25-26? Which one of the children in the story exemplifies this idea?
7. What do Peter and Julia do to free the slaves in Aedyn? How do their actions help prepare the way for the Chosen One? Did they do all of this to prepare for the Chosen One? Does God use people to bring about His plans on earth whether they are aware of it or not? Do you feel like God has used you for someone else's good?

Christy & Todd: The College Years



This Christian romance novel by Robin Jones Gunn is a compilation of the three books in "The College Years" series. It is published by Bethany House and written

for teens ages 13 to 17.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. Why is it important to set physical limits when dating?
2. Though it sometimes frustrates Christy, she waits on the Lord to deepen her relationship with Todd. When have you needed to wait on the Lord? How did you learn to trust Him when dealing with others? How are waiting on the Lord and manipulating your situation to get what you want different?
3. Christy wants her relationship with God to be more important than her earthly relationships — even her relationship with Todd. Why is it important to Christy to have God at the center of her marriage? What do you think should be at the center of a godly marriage? Explain.
4. Christy's Uncle Bob and Aunt Marti struggle in their marriage after Bob becomes a Christian. Why is it important to marry someone of the same faith? Read 2 Corinthians 6:14-18. What does this passage say about being “yoked” with unbelievers?

The Christy Miller Collection, Volume 1



This contemporary Christian book is made up of the first three books in the “Christy Miller” series. Written by Robin Jones Gunn, it is published by

Bethany House Publishers, a division of the Baker Publishing Group. The Christy Miller Collection is written for kids ages 12 and up.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. Summer Promise

How does Christy feel after her first day on the beach? How does Christy feel after Aunt Marti makes her over? Tell about a day when you felt bad. Who helped you feel better? Why does Christy want to be like Alissa? Does Alissa want Christy to be like her? What does Alissa mean when she says that Christy doesn't know how good she has it? Who are you more like, Christy or Alissa? Who do you want to be more like? What does Todd give Christy when he drops her off after their day at Disneyland? Why does this upset her? Would it upset you? When Christy wakes up the next day, she realizes she has to do something. What is it? How does she feel afterward? What regrets do you have? Why does Christy apologize to her aunt? Christy meets two radically different types of people during the summer. Shawn and Alissa drink alcohol and have casual sex. Todd's friends go to Christian concerts and worship God around bonfires. To which group of people is Christy most attracted? Why was it important for Christy to be around Christian friends? How do these friends help her grow? Why is it important to surround yourself with Christian friends? Does going to church make Christy a Christian? How could she know that she is going to heaven? What makes you a Christian? What does this commitment to God mean for your future?

2. A Whisper and a Wish

What does Christy discover about her relationship with Paula after she returns to Wisconsin? How does she feel about this? How are Christy's new friends in Escondido similar to Paula's new friend? How do you feel when a close friend gets a new friend? What can you do about it? How is the situation with Christy and her new friends similar to that of Katie Christian and Peter Pagan in her Sunday school class? What happens to Christy when she follows the bad influence of her friends? Read I Corinthians 15:33. What does this verse say about how the wrong people can hurt you? What word does Christy practice saying over and over again after she gets back from Palm Springs? Why does she do this? What kinds of things does Todd encourage her to start saying yes to? What things does God want you to be saying yes to? Why is Christy hesitant to tell Aunt Marti about Brittany's eating disorder? What should you do if a friend has a problem that endangers his or her health?

3. Yours Forever

What is Rick trying to do by encouraging Christy to try out for the cheerleading squad? After Christy becomes a cheerleader, Rick tells her that she is becoming more like his type of girl and that he can wait until she's got it all together. What does Christy say in response? What Scripture passage does she refer to? Why does Christy get upset with Todd? What does she realize later when Todd shows her a picture from the prom? Why does Renee pick on Christy? Why does Teri stand up to Renee? Have you or a friend ever been picked on? How did you stand up for each other? Why should Christy trust

her parents' decision to not allow her to attend prom? Who are Christy's parents looking out for? Who is Christy looking out for? In the end, was Christy right, or did her parents make the right decision?

Cinder



This Christian romascience fiction book by Marissa Meyer is the first in the "Lunar Chronicles" and is published by Feiwel and Friends, a division

of Macmillan Publishers. *Cinder* is written for kids ages 12 and up.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. How does Adri treat Cinder? How does her cruelty affect Cinder? Has anyone ever made you feel useless, unwanted and unloved? Explain. How did you get over these feelings?
2. Why is Cinder discriminated against? How are cyborgs treated? Have you ever been treated poorly because of having something different about you? Explain. Have you ever treated someone else poorly because there was something different about him or her? Explain. How does God want you to treat all people?
3. What does Kai mourn when the emperor dies? Why might Kai think he has lost his youth and his freedom? Tell about an experience you've had where you were

placed in a position of responsibility beyond what you were capable of doing. What could you have done differently?

4. In what ways does Kai feel too inexperienced to be an emperor?
5. Do you think he would make a good emperor? Explain why or why not. When have you let your feelings of inadequacy keep you from doing what was right or what was best? What can we do to help you feel more confident in what you need to do?
6. What is Cinder willing to do to save millions of lives? Would you be willing to sacrifice your life to save countless others? Who made the ultimate sacrifice to save all of humankind? How did Jesus make this sacrifice?

City of Ashes



This contemporary (urban) dark fantasy by Cassandra Clare is the second in the "The Mortal Instruments" series and is published by Margaret K. McElderry

Books, a division of Simon & Schuster Publishing. *City of Ashes* is written for ages 14 and up.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. Jace goes to the werewolf bar to have a drink and stir up trouble. People often use drugs or alcohol to mask their problems. Consider other ways Jace could have tried

to handle his problems. What would you have done?

2. Clary views Luke as her father. What role does a dad play in his daughter's life and how does Luke fulfill this role?
3. The Inquisitor suspects Jace of being in league with Valentine because of their relationship. Should children be considered guilty of their parents' sin? Why might people do this? Why are people often judged by their relationships, whether they are family or friends? Should people be judged based on the friends they hang around? What is the difference between being judged by what your parents have done and being judged by what your friends do?
4. Valentine quotes Daniel's prophetic words, "mene mene tekel upharsin." Read Daniel 5:25-28 to learn what the words mean. How do you think they applied to Valentine?
5. Luke admits to Clary that he loves her mother but has never told her. In what ways did his actions demonstrate his love? Which is easier for you, to say the words or demonstrate your love?
6. What problem does Clary's rune for "fearless" cause? Fear is a powerful emotion. How can fear be good for us? How can fear keep us from doing God's will?

City of Bones



This contemporary (urban) dark fantasy by Cassandra Clare is the first book in “The Mortal Instruments” series and is published by Margaret

K. McElderry Books, a division of Simon and Schuster Children’s Books. *City of Bones* is written for ages 14 and up.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. Humans are referred to as “mundane.” What does that word imply about how the Nephilim view humans? What is God’s perspective regarding humans? What does the Bible say about our relationship to angels?
2. Throughout the book, human eyes are often deceived by magic — seeing things differently than how they truly are. What can deceive our eyes today? What roles do television and computers play in your daily life? How do advertisers and the media manipulate information?
3. Clary ran from her apartment during an argument instead of coming to an agreement with her mother. What is God’s desire for your relationship with your parents? How would you have handled the situation differently?
4. Jace has closed himself off emotionally because he believes that to love someone is to risk being destroyed. How does his lack

of commitment affect his relationship to others? How does he change his perspective in the story? How do you view love?

5. Why do the Shadowhunters view themselves as superior to Downworlders and humans? Have you seen this kind of prejudice in your life? Have you seen it in the world?
6. Clary’s mother lied about the magical world. What was her motive? How would you have felt if you were Clary? How could Clary’s mother have handled the situation differently?

City of Fallen Angels



This contemporary (urban) dark fantasy by Cassandra Clare is the fourth in the “The Mortal Instruments” series and is published by Margaret K. McElderry

Books, a division of Simon & Schuster Publishing. *City of Fallen Angels* is written for ages 14 and up.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. Keeping someone’s confidence is a good thing, but how could much of the story’s conflicts have been avoided if either Jace or Clary had told an adult about Jace’s death at Valentine’s hands?
2. Read Exodus 34:7. What does God mean when He said He would punish the children for the sins of their parents? How does Isabelle’s father’s adultery

affect Isabelle? How does it affect the decisions she makes? Is this the same thing as what God mentioned in the Old Testament about His punishment? How do Jesus’ death and resurrection change things?

3. Can you think of a time when you, like Maia, were hurt by someone you cared for deeply? How can understanding the motives behind someone’s actions lead to forgiveness, as Maia forgave Kyle?
4. As a vampire, Simon is unable to even say God’s name. If you are a believer in Christ, is there anything that can separate you from His love? Read Romans 8:38-39. What does the Bible say?

City of Glass



This contemporary (urban) dark fantasy by Cassandra Clare is the third in the “The Mortal Instruments” series and is published by Margaret K. McElderry

Books, a division of Simon & Schuster Publishing. *City of Glass* is written for ages 14 and up.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. Jace asks Simon to lie to the Lightwoods in order to protect Clary. Would you lie to protect a friend? What does the Bible say about lying?
2. The Clave believe that Jace is Valentine’s son, so they don’t

trust him. Is he like his father? What has he done in this story that shows he isn't like his father? Is it fair to judge people based on the actions of their family? Explain. What things do you feel you're judged on, good or bad, because of your family?

3. Clary often does things without thinking, such as creating a portal to Alicante when no one can enter illegally. What would have happened if Luke hadn't saved her? What are some of the rules in our home? How do they protect you?
4. Aldertree, the Inquisitor, says that great leaders tell stories to get people to do what they want. What role does public perception play in this story? What role does it play in our world?
5. Valentine believes he is acting for the good of the Nephilim. Where does his logic fail? What does Raziel say is the difference between the first Shadowhunter's motive and Valentine's?

Civil War on Sunday



This fantasy adventure novel by Mary Pope Osborne is the 21st book in the "Magic Tree House" series and is published by Random House. *Civil War on*

Sunday is written for kids ages 5 to 8.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. What does Clara Barton call the men she rescues from the battle? What do you think she means? How can you treat people like family, even if you're not biologically related?
2. Why does Jack hesitate to help the boy in gray? Why does Clara want to help the boy in gray? Have you ever heatedly disagreed with someone? How might you find it difficult to help someone you disagreed with so intensely?
3. What is happening while Annie, Jack and Clara look for wounded soldiers? What are they risking by being there? Why is it important for someone to do what they were doing?
4. Why does the slave ask Jack if he can tell the future? Can anyone tell the future? Who is the only one who can tell the future? Why should you put your trust for the future in God's hands?

Claudia and the Phantom Phone Calls



This tween chick-lit book is the second in the original "The Baby-Sitters Club" series by Ann M. Martin and is published by Scholastic Press, a

division of Scholastic Inc. *Claudia and the Phantom Phone Calls* is written for kids ages 9 to 12.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. What steps did Kristy, Mary Anne, Claudia and Stacey take to protect themselves — and those they baby-sit — from the Phantom Caller? Why were they afraid of this burglar? What can you do when you're afraid of a possible threat?
2. Why does Mary Anne's father refuse to allow her to baby-sit? How do those in the club respond to his decision?
3. What does Claudia find frustrating about her sister Janine? What advice does Mimi give Claudia about sisters? Tell about a time when you were frustrated with your siblings. How is Claudia's situation similar to yours? How is it different? Does Mimi's advice work for you? Explain.
4. Did Alan and Trevor intend to scare the girls? What could they have done differently to avoid the trouble they caused?

The Clique: Massie



This second slice-of-life/school life book in the "Clique Summer Collection" series by Lisi Harrison is published by Poppy, Little, Brown and

Company, Hachette Book Group. *The Clique: Massie* is written for kids ages 10 to 13.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. Did you like Claire?

2. What do you think of the way she takes out her revenge on Massie?
3. Claire, Massie and the other girls do a lot of lying, both to adults and to each other. Did that bother you? Why or why not?
4. Why do think some girls do mean things to other girls — purposely embarrassing them or spreading lies about them?
5. Have you ever been treated this way?
6. How did it feel?
7. Have you ever treated anyone like this?
8. If someone was cruel to you, the way Massie and her friends were to Claire, what might be a godly way to handle the situation?
9. In one part of the book, the girls talk tongue-in-cheek about voting Claire off the island. What do they see as her worth or lack of worth?
10. At the slumber party, Massie asks, “Would you rather be completely and utterly friendless or be someone with tons of friends who secretly hate you?” Both Claire and Massie struggle with this question throughout the book. What would your answer be, and why?
11. Do any of the adults in this book get the respect they deserve? Explain your answer.

Cliques, Hicks, and Ugly Sticks



This coming-of-age novel by K. D. McCrite is the second in the “Confessions of April Grace” series published by Tommy Nelson, a division of

Thomas Nelson Inc. *Cliques, Hicks, and Ugly Sticks* is written for kids ages 7 to 12.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. Consider what Ian says to April Grace about people who are in cliques and make fun of others. Have you ever been on the receiving end of this sort of treatment? Have you ever been in a clique? Who does a clique include? How does a clique leave people out? What might be a godly way to respond if someone wanted you to be a part of a clique? Why would it be hard to say something like that?
2. April Grace says that her Sunday school teacher expects her class to sit still and pay attention, just like she’s a “real” teacher. What is your Sunday school like? Do the students behave? What is one way your Sunday school could be improved? What is one way you could help your Sunday school teacher?
3. April Grace says Lottie needs a good dose of church because she’s been mean to people. Is April Grace ever mean to people?

Read Matthew 7:4. How does this apply to April Grace?

4. Myra Sue continues to idolize Isabel, as she did in the first book. How is this a danger for Myra Sue? How is it problematic for Isabel? Does Isabel recognize the influence she has on Myra Sue? Explain. Who is someone you’d like to be like? How do you keep from idolizing this person?

Cloak of the Light



This science fiction book is the first in the “Wars of the Realm” series by Chuck Black and is published by Waterbrook Multnomah Books. *Cloak of the Light*

is written for kids ages 12 and up.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. In the first chapter, Drew learns the hard truth that life isn’t fair. Talk about a time when you thought life was not fair. Why do we often think life should be fair?
2. Jake passes along some words from Drew’s dad: “Mistakes that cost lives can’t be fixed. All you can do is live the rest of your life in such a way that the fallen are honored.” Do you believe Jake is right? Explain. How would you honor someone with your life? After the car accident, how does Ben help Drew through his grief and guilt?
3. When Sydney prays, an aura around her is visible to Drew,

and her prayers give strength to the light invaders. In what ways, if any, did this book affect your view of prayer? Is prayer effective even when we don't see results? Explain why you think this.

- Note: (The author has created additional discussion questions at the back of this book.)

Code



This mystery/thriller novel by Kathy Reichs and Brendan Reichs is the third in the "Virals" series and is published by G.P. Putnam's Sons, a division of

Penguin Young Readers Group, The Penguin Group. Code is written for kids ages 11 and older.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

- The kids seem to keep just about everything secret from their parents. How is that dangerous? Why do they do this? How would you describe their relationship with their parents? How would you describe our relationship? How can we make it better?
- As a newcomer to Charleston and the wealthy, private school she attends, Tory has had to deal with bullying from a trio of girls at school. Apart from using her flaring abilities, what method worked best for her coping with the girls she calls the Tripod? Do you agree with her choices?

- Do you see anything troubling about a 14-year-old girl hanging out alone with three older boys? What circumstances might arise from this kind of situation?
- What would you do if you arrived at an unchaperoned party serving alcohol to minors? When Tory sees her best friends getting wasted, she says she doesn't want to judge them. What does that mean? How might her loyalty be misguided?
- Bolton is a prestigious school with many wealthy students. Tory seems to dislike just about everyone at the school. She calls them "trust-fund brats." Do you think her assessment is a fair one?
- Tory is able to invade minds to see what they are thinking. She cautions herself to be aware of when she is communicating and when she is being invasive. Why would it be wrong to be able to know what others are thinking? What would life be like if you knew what others were thinking?
- At the end of the book, we learn that the Gamemaster had been a Marine in Iraq and had experienced some horrific events that led to profound personality changes. Is Tory right in thinking that his war experiences are no excuse for his crimes? Are all war veterans like the Gamemaster? How might the book have had a more balanced view of war veterans?

The Compound



This science fiction book by S.A. Bodeen is published by Feiwel and Friends, a division of Macmillan. *The Compound* is written for kids ages 12

and up.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

- How do different members of the Yanakakis family react to losing Eddy? Does Rex's reaction seem appropriate? What consoles Lexie after her younger brother is lost? How does Eli say he would have felt if Lexie had not made it to the compound? How would you describe the sibling relationships in the Yanakakis family? How does Eli's attitude toward Therese and Lexie change over time?
- What does Therese say about the way Eli treats her in comparison to the way Eddy treated her? What does Eli admire about Eddy? How did Eddy treat his classmates? How does Eli contrast his own past behavior with Eddy's?
- What does Eli say he envies about the characters in the book *On the Beach*? What does Eli believe about the value of life?
- Does Rex love his children equally? What purpose does Rex have in mind for his younger children, whom he calls the Supplements? In the Bible, Mathew 19:19 says that you

should love your neighbor as much as you love yourself. What goes wrong when Rex tries to teach his older children to care for themselves at the expense of others?

Corrie ten Boom



This biography by Kaylena Radcliff is part of “The Torchlighters Biography Series” published by the Christian History Institute. *Corrie ten Boom* is writ-

ten for kids ages 8 to 12.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

- How do Corrie and her family members feel about lying to the Nazis and disobeying their rules? What compels them to hide Jews even though they know they're putting themselves in great danger? Whose authority do they ultimately choose to obey? What would you have done if you were in their place?
- How can Betsie talk so much about forgiveness and thankfulness in such horrible circumstances? How does Betsie's faith influence Corrie? How is Corrie able to forgive the German guard? When has God given you a special measure of strength amid a difficult situation?
- Why do the Nazis do such horrible things to the Jews and those who support the Jews? What are some reasons people

- behave hatefully toward others? How does God want His people to treat those with whom they disagree?
- How do Corrie and her family make a difference, even though they know they can't stop the war or Jewish persecution? When have you thought you couldn't make a difference because you were just one person, or too small or too weak, etc.? Think of some situations, in the Bible, in history or in modern times, where God used one person who wasn't famous to make a big difference.

Counselor



This contemporary fiction book by Ann Aschauer is published by Pleasant Word and is written for people 17 and up.

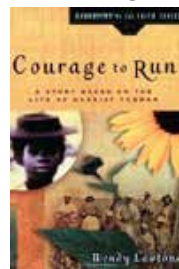
Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

- Why did Liz need to ask Jesus to be her Savior? Can Jesus really be a friend like J?
- Is Christianity a relationship or a religion? What do you think it means to fall in love with Jesus?
- Is there power in prayer? Support your position with examples.
- Talk about the wisdom of being unequally yoked — what is it, and why is it important to consider when dating?

- What are the false hopes that popularity and acclaim build in a person's ego? As a Christian, where should you get your self-worth? What can combat any sense of insecurity that living at a secular university, or just living on your own, brings?
- Is dating a non-Christian a good way to introduce someone to the Lord? What would be a better choice?
- How will life at a secular college be different than living at home? How hard do you suppose it will be to make the right choices as a Christian? What are some strategies you can use to help you when people come against your Christian beliefs? What can we do right now to prepare you for those challenges?

Courage to Run



This historical fiction is part of the “Daughters of the Faith” series by Wendy Lawton and is published by Moody Publishers. *Courage to Run* is

written for girls ages 8 to 12.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

- When Minty's owner hires her out, Minty hates her situation, but she doesn't think she will ever be brave enough to run away. Why does Minty think she needed to be brave to run? Describe a time when you were faced with a situation that

- required courage. What did you do and why?
- When Minty runs away from the wealthy family, she later returns on her own accord. Why does she return? Did it take more courage to run or to return and why? Do you think you could run away from home, traveling through a couple of states on your own while people are searching for you?
 - Why do slave owners prohibit their slaves from learning to read or swim? What might the slaves have done if they could read? What might the slaves have done if they could swim?

Cracker! The Best Dog in Vietnam



This historical fiction book by Cynthia Kadohata is published by Atheneum Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Simon & Schuster Children's

Publishing Division. The book is written for ages 10 and up.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

- How did Willie feel about giving up his dog? Where else could he have sent Cracker besides the Army? How is this sad situation turned into something good? When have you expected something bad to happen but it turned out better than you thought?

- How is the war different from what Rick imagined? When were you excited about something that wasn't as good as you thought it would be?
- Why does Rick want to fight in Vietnam? With whom does he discuss his decision to sign up for the Army? Whom would you talk to about a big decision?
- Why does Rick get into trouble with Sgt. U-Haul? How does he treat Rick after Rick is injured? What things might happen to someone that would change the way you felt about that person?
- How did Rick's relationship with Cracker change him? What might happen to Rick and Cracker now? Can loving something or someone change you?

The Crazy Christmas Angel Mystery



This third mystery/Christmas book in the "Cul-de-Sac Kids" series by Beverly Lewis is published by Bethany House Publishers, an imprint of Baker

Publishing Group. *The Crazy Christmas Angel Mystery* is written for kids ages 7 to 10.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

- Why was it a good idea for the kids to introduce themselves to Mr. Tressler rather than spy on him? (Parents may wish to point out that it can be dangerous to

approach a stranger's house. It may be better to meet new neighbors with your family.)

- What did Dunkum mean when he said that Christmas was a mystery God put together?
- What kind of Christmas gift could you make or activity could you do to bring a smile to someone who is your elder or suffering from an illness?

Cress



This science fiction book by Marissa Meyer is the third book in the "Lunar Chronicles" series and is published by Feiwel and Friends, a division of Macmillan

Publishers. *Cress* is written for kids ages 12 and up.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

- Kai is upset that cyborgs are forced into the draft, experimented on and often die as a result. What does he do to respond? Why is ending the cyborg draft unpopular with his people? Does Kai regret what he did? Have you ever had to make a decision that was morally correct but unpopular? Explain.
- How does Cress get through stressful situations? How is your personality similar or different from Cress'? How do you get through scary or unpleasant situations? When was the last time you had to do this? What does

the Bible say about calling on God in prayer when you are in need?

3. How does Cinder help Wolf after Scarlet is taken? Do you agree with Wolf that there is no worse violation than having your own body used against you? Explain. Why does Cinder use mind control? Should she do this? Why is it hard to watch someone else work through emotions? How should Cinder help Wolf without forcing him to do what she wants him to do?
4. As an act of vengeance for treating her poorly for so many years, Cinder uses her gift to manipulate her stepmother, Adri, into feeling remorse for how she (Adri) treated her (Cinder). Afterward, Cinder feels guilty about doing it. Have you ever been treated poorly and longed for revenge? Would getting revenge really make you feel better? How might it make you feel guilty like it does for Cinder? How might forgiveness be more powerful than revenge?
5. Kai asks Cinder if she has ever used her ability to manipulate him, and she tells him she never has and never will. She wonders if she will be able to keep her word. Have you ever made a promise that you were unable to keep? Has a promise to you ever been broken? What was the situation? What was the outcome? What does the Bible tell us about God's promises? How are they different than promises made by people?

Crossed



This dystopian romance is the second book in the “Matched” trilogy written by Ally Condie and is published by Dutton Books, a division of Penguin Group.

Crossed is written for ages 12 and up.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. What does Ky think will happen when a person dies? What do you think happens after death? How are your thoughts about death the same or different from Ky's thoughts that death will carry him someplace because there is someone to see at the end of this life? What does the Bible say happens after death?
2. What is the harm in Ky's holding Cassia as his source of comfort and truth? To whom do you turn when you need comfort? Where do you find truth? What driving force sustains Cassia? What driving force sustains Ky? Who or what gives you meaning and purpose?
3. Ky asks himself the question, How much do we have to show the people we love? When you love someone, is it necessary that the person knows every part of your story? Is it OK to not reveal everything about yourself? Explain.
4. Cassia ponders the invisible injuries people suffer, ones that mark the heart. She asks, “What is it

that keeps us moving?” How would you answer her? Have you ever had a catastrophic event? How did you do to cope?

5. Ky finally decides to let go of all his failures, pain and guilt — or at least try. How do you cope with inevitable failures and self-disappointments? How do you let go and turn it over to God?
6. Some of the romantic notions in *Crossed* lead one to believe that another person you love deeply will complete you. How can another person make you feel complete? How can others never fully compete you? From a Christian perspective, how do we understand the idea of Jesus completing us?
7. Trust is a major issue in *Crossed*. What surprised you about the way Ky lies to Cassia, though he said he loved her deeply? How do you know when it is OK to trust another person? Tell about a time when your trust in someone was broken. What lesson did you learn from it?

Curse of the Arctic Star



This mystery novel by Carolyn Keene is the first in the “Nancy Drew Diaries” series published by Aladdin, an imprint of Simon & Schuster

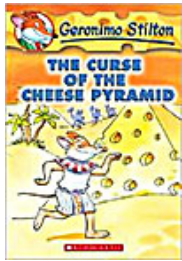
Children's Publishing Division. *Curse of the Arctic Star* is written for kids ages 8 to 12.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. Why do Nancy, George and Bess lie to Alan and others? Is it OK for them to lie? Explain. How does the Bible encourage honesty?
2. What skills make Nancy a good sleuth? Which of these skills do you have? How might some of them be useful to you in your everyday life?

The Curse of the Cheese Pyramid



This second humor, talking animals book by Geronimo Stilton in the “Geronimo Stilton” series is published by Scholastic Paperbacks. *The Curse of the Cheese*

Pyramid is written for kids ages 7 to 10.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. Parents could begin a discussion about Egyptian history with children. Caregivers will want to help kids sift through what is true and what isn't.
2. Was it necessary for Geronimo and his staff to lie about who was paying for Grandfather's around-the-world cruise? How might they have handled the situation better?

3. If you could travel anywhere on a great adventure, where would you go and why?

Curse of the Thirteenth Fey: The True Tale of Sleeping Beauty



This fantasy book by Jane Yolen is published by Philomel, a division of Penguin Young Readers Group, and is written for kids ages 10 and up.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. How did teamwork benefit Gorse's effort to open the gate? What causes Gorse to stop seeing Grey as a threat and start seeing him as an ally? How can you tell whether someone is truly a friend? How can you tell that one of your friends is truly a friend? How did the two of you meet?
2. How does the Feys' understanding of what happens when people die differ from yours? What is your understanding of what happens when people die?
3. The Fey aunts look down on Father because he can't fly. How should you treat those with abilities that differ from your own? What is one way that you are different from others? How do you hope others treat you when they learn of this difference? Who is someone in your class that has a

lot of differences from you? How should you treat him or her?

4. Why did Grey remain loyal to Prince Orybon? Would you be able to honor a promise to someone who had betrayed you? When did Jesus continue to serve those who had betrayed Him?
5. Gorse knows that if she does not make it to Talia's christening, her family will be in danger. In other words, her actions will have consequences not only for her but her family as well. What are some occasions when your actions have resulted in good or bad consequences for others?

CyberQuest: The Complete Virtual Adventures



This fiction book by Sigmund Brouwer is published by Thomas Nelson Publishers and is written for kids ages 9 to 12.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. Mok lives in a world without laws and “might makes right,” yet he shows compassion to people. Why do you think he behaves this way?
2. How would you have responded in each of the difficult choices Mok faces in the cyberadventures?

3. At the end, Mok is given a chance to live on the Mainside where he would be a wealthy corporate executive or go back to the slums to minister to his people. What would you do if you faced a similar decision?

Cypher the Mountain Giant



This fantasy novel by Adam Blade is the third in the “Beast Quest” series and is published by Scholastic Inc. *Cypher the Mountain Giant* is written for ages 8

to 10.

Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. Rockslides cut off the town of Colton from their supply routes. What do some of the men resort to in order to feed their families? What could they have done instead of stealing?
2. What do the townspeople believe is fair punishment for the crimes of the thieves? What does Tom insist they do? Whom do you think was right? Would you have forgiven the men if they had stolen from you? How was Tom rewarded for his mercy?
3. Elenna risked her life to save her pet wolf, Silver. What, or who, is important enough in your life that you would risk your life to save them?
4. In what way is Tom a hero? What are the qualities that make a person heroic? Is there someone you look up to as a hero? Explain.
5. Tom and Elenna have already faced many dangers when Aduro tells them the worst still lies ahead. If you were Tom and Elenna, how would his words have made you feel? Would your successes have made you more confident or would the knowledge you'd gained make you more afraid?