

Book Review Discussion Questions



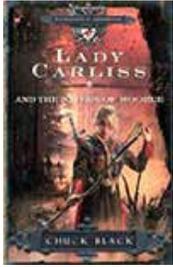
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Book reviews cover the content, themes and worldviews of fiction books, not their literary merit, and equip parents to decide whether a book is appropriate for their children. A book's inclusion does not constitute an endorsement by Focus on the Family.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

DISCUSSION TOPICS

Lady Carliss and the Waters of Moorue



This medieval fantasy book is fourth in the “The Knights of Arrethtrae” series by Chuck Black and is published by Multnomah Books, a division of Random House, Inc., New York.

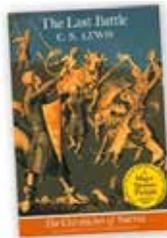
Lady Carliss and the Waters of Moorue is written for kids ages 10 to 14.

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:

- Both Dalton and Carliss face many trials as a result of their status as Knights of the Prince. In the Bible, Jesus says that Christians will face struggles of various kinds. What is the best way to prepare for them? What does God give believers to help face obstacles?
- Carliss senses that there is something wrong with Salina’s story, and she doesn’t like the way Salina treats Ganoaf. Why does Carliss help Salina find her family anyway?
- Carliss first sees Ganoaf when he is being heckled by some young children. What does Carliss do? Why does Carliss treat Ganoaf the way she does? What does she find out about Ganoaf later in the story?
- The Waters of Moorue provide people with a way to escape. What are some modes of escape teens use today? Do they produce positive or negative effects? What types of things do you like to do to relax and “escape,” whether it be reading or watching television?
- Carliss has to decide between saving Dalton and saving the prisoners being held in Moorue. How does she make her decision? Was the decision she made the right thing to do? What would you have done in that situation?

The Last Battle



This fantasy adventure is the seventh and final book in “The Chronicles of Narnia” series by C.S. Lewis and is published by HarperCollins Children’s Books,

a division of HarperCollins. *The Last Battle* is written for kids ages 8 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:

- Puzzle believes that he is not as smart as Shift. Is this true? Does Shift use his cleverness to do good things? How does Shift treat Puzzle? How does he fool Puzzle into imitating Aslan?
- Shift says that the Calormene god Tash is the same person as Aslan. Why do the animals think this can’t be true? What are the differences between Tash and Aslan? Why is it important for you to understand who Jesus is, and the difference between God the Father and false gods?
- Why do all the dwarfs except Poggin turn against Tirian? Whom do they fight for in the last battle? What do the dwarfs see when they go through the stable door? What does Aslan say about their unbelief?
- Why is Susan not in Aslan’s country with everyone else? What does Susan currently believe about Narnia? What kinds of things does Susan enjoy now?
- A Calormene soldier named Emeth arrives in Aslan’s country. Whom has Emeth served his whole life? What does Aslan say to Emeth about his past actions? Can anyone who loves what is good be a servant of Tash? Can anyone who loves evil also serve Aslan?

Last Breath



This Christian suspense novel is the second book in “The Rayne Tour” series by Brandilyn and Amberly Collins and is published by Zondervan.

Last Breath is written for kids ages 13 to 18.

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

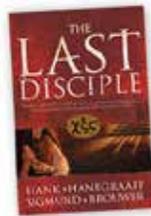
If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. How does Rayne show her love for her daughter? How do Rayne’s actions impact Shaley and her relationship with her mother? How does God show us the same kind of love?
2. Why does Gary go along with the demands of the Westrock Gang? Are his motives honorable? How does his decision affect his grandmother? How does his decision affect Rayne? What would you have done in his place? Have you ever had to make a difficult choice to protect someone you loved?
3. Why does Gary decide to leave Rayne behind? Do you agree with his choice? Why or why not? How does God turn the situation around for good?
4. What causes Shaley to go to God for help? Why do you think we most often go to God in times of trouble? How often does God’s Word say we should pray? Why do you think God wants us to talk to Him in all circumstances?

How have you experienced the power of prayer in your own life?

5. How does Shaley confront her father? What makes her trust him? How has he changed? What does God say about forgiving others? What causes Shaley to forgive or not forgive her father? Who have you had to forgive? How did forgiveness change your attitude?

The Last Disciple



This historical fiction novel is the first book in “The Last Disciple” series by Hank Hanegraaff and Sigmund Brouwer, and is published by Tyndale House

Publishers. *The Last Disciple* is written for people ages 18 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. Have you ever had to endure persecution of any kind for your belief in Jesus? Explain.
2. How would you react if police stormed your church or Bible study? What would you do if they threatened to arrest you unless you renounced the name of Christ? What if your life was at stake? Why did Leah and her group react the way they did?
3. How would your life be different if you weren’t allowed to worship in public? How might you live your life differently today if you were in a period of tribulation? What about John’s words

might comfort you or help you get through the day-to-day struggles?

The Last Invisible Boy



This emotionally realistic fantasy book by Evan Kuhlman is published by Ginee Seo Books, Simon & Schuster Children’s Books 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. Have you ever had something bad happen to you so suddenly that you felt like you’d been hit by a meteor? What happened? How did you handle it?
2. Are you interested in the meanings of names, like Finn is? What does your name mean? Do you like or dislike your name? Do you think it fits you? What name would fit you better?
3. Do you agree with Finn that every house has a story to tell? What stories would your home tell about you and your family?
4. After the big storm where Finn, his mom and his brother hide in the basement and Dad doesn’t come, Finn says he both deeply loved and deeply hated his dad. Have you ever felt two conflicting emotions at the same time? Why do you think Finn’s dad didn’t join the family during the storm?
5. What makes Melanie and Finn’s relationship special? What dream

- does he have for their future? What are your dreams? What kind of person do you want to be when you get older, as a parent or even a grandparent?
- Have you ever felt invisible? When? What did it feel like? What did you do about it?
 - Based on Finn's descriptions of his dad, was he a good father? What were some of the things he didn't do so well? What did he do right? How is Dad's remark about hitting curveballs applicable to Finn as Finn goes through the grieving process?
 - Why does Finn say moms are practical while dads help you build a spaceship to Mars? What are some differences between moms and dads? What are some things each of them does especially well? Why does God's ideal plan include both moms and dads? What are some dad qualities that Finn especially misses after his father is gone?
 - Where does Finn think his dad has gone after death? Where does he believe he will end up after he dies? Do you agree with him? Why or why not? What do you think will happen to you? Why do you believe this?
 - Have you ever lost anyone close to you? What did it feel like? How long did it take you to heal? What kinds of things remind you of him or her?
 - Do you agree with Finn, that those who have died need people to keep their stories alive? How does Finn keep his father's story alive? Do you know anyone who has died (a parent, grandparent or friend) whose story you can tell to others? What can others learn from what you say about your loved one?

- What are some things you fear? What does Finn's mom say about fear? How is fear like a monster? How can fear be like a bug? Where can we seek help when we are afraid? Did Finn choose to let his fears become monsters or bugs?
- What are some of the theories people offer about why Finn's hair and skin turn white? What do you think the reason is? What makes them finally start returning to normal?

decisions be guided solely by our feelings?

- "Words have power" is a phrase often repeated in *The Last Martin*. What do you think it means? Do you agree? What kind of power do some words have in your world (e.g., consider advertising words, mean words and legal words)?
- Poole learned how to be thankful from his father. Name one or two things you are grateful for.
- When Martin is in detention, his mother comes to take him home. She succeeds in overruling the teacher, but Martin refuses. Was there a better way for him to handle his refusal? Was his mother coddling him in this instance? How would you feel if your mother embarrassed you in front of an entire class? How would you respond?
- During the family meeting, Martin reveals that he is tired of constant worry over germs and potential dangers. Was he respectful when he gave his opinion? Why was his mother so defensive?
- When Martin returns from Fort Snelling, his father tells his mother that he has never been more proud of Martin. Why wasn't his father proud of him before? What did Martin do differently that made his father proud of him this time?
- The threat of death gives Martin a new sense of freedom. Why do Christians get to experience a freedom from death, too? What does the phrase "freedom from death" mean?

The Last Martin



This coming-of-age humorous book by Jonathan Friesen is published by Zondervan and is written for 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:

- When Charley needs help with his English paper, Martin agrees to help him by writing one page of a story for him. What problems does this create for Martin? What problems does it create for Charley? How is this a form of lying? How is it a form of stealing? What would you have done in Martin's place?
- Martin comments that he threw a prune and started a second prune fight. Even though he knew it was wrong, it felt so good. What is wrong with this kind of logic? What would our society be like if everyone acted out their feelings? Why shouldn't our

The Last Olympian



This fantasy adventure is the fifth book in “Percy Jackson and the Olympians” series by Rick Riordan and is published by Miramax Books, a division

of Hyperion Books for Children. *The Last Olympian* is written for kids ages 10 and up.

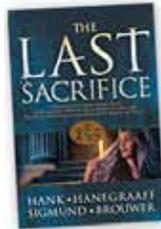
Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

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

1. What does the goddess Hestia (a.k.a. the last Olympian) mean when she says sometimes the hardest power to master is the power of yielding? How did she demonstrate this power and for what purpose? When have you had to practice the power of yielding? Was it difficult? Tell me about the situation.
2. Why is it important for Percy to learn about Luke’s childhood? Have you ever learned something about a person you didn’t like that helped you understand the person better? What happened?
3. What are the meanings of the phrases “fatal flaw” and “Achilles heel”? Which characters’ weaknesses are mentioned in the story?
4. Why does Hermes say he couldn’t change Luke’s fate? Why didn’t Hermes tell his son what to do so Luke could have avoided all the pain and suffering?
5. What is Percy’s final request of the gods? Why is it important

to him that the gods acknowledge their children? Have you ever felt like you didn’t get the proper respect or attention from one or both parents? What was the situation? How did you feel? What can I do to make you feel respected and loved?

The Last Sacrifice



This historical fiction book by Hank Hanegraaff and Sigmund Brouwer is the second in the “The Last Disciple” series and is published by Tyndale House

Publishers. *The Last Sacrifice* is written for kids ages 18 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. Although Vitas is portrayed as one of the good guys, he is willing to take part in immoral activities to carry out his benevolent deeds. One such occasion was when he and his brother rescued John from the ship at the end of the story. What did Vitas do correctly? What did he do that may not have been in God’s will? Does the final result justify the means?
2. Life in Rome during the first century was difficult for Christians. If Christians were persecuted for their belief in God here in America, how would your life be the same? How would you live differently?
3. At the end of this book, the authors mention their belief

that the Beast was Nero and the Tribulation period mentioned in the Bible took place in the first century. Do you agree? Explain.

The Last Song



This romance by Nicholas Sparks is published by Grand Central Publishing, a division of Hachette Book Group Inc., and is written for adults—although

some teens read it and some teachers use it in the classroom.

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 Ronnie assume her father did to end his marriage? How does she feel when she learns the truth, that her mother was the one who had an affair? When have you made incorrect assumptions about people in your life, and what happened when you learned the real story? What are some strategies for living a life with as few regrets as possible?
2. What kind of a father is Steve? How does he draw Ronnie back to him, despite her anger? What aspects of his character make him admirable?
3. How does Ronnie grow throughout the story? What are some pivotal moments for her? How does love for Will and for her dad change her? How does she find peace as her father is dying?

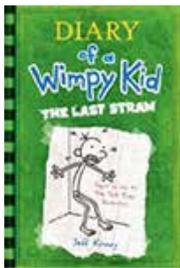
- How might this story have been different if Ronnie spent her summer hanging out with Blaze and Marcus? How do the people with whom you spend your time influence you? What are some characteristics of people who could harm you or keep you stagnant? What are some characteristics of people who help you change for the better?

- What word would you use to describe Greg's and his father's relationship? How important is his father's good opinion of him? How do you know this? How important is your parent's good opinion of you?
- How did Greg save his father from being embarrassed? Did he do it on purpose? Why did he take credit for helping his father?

Why might they put their hope in their government? Who does God want His children to put their hope in? Why is it important to place your hope in God instead of any government?

- What is June told about her brother's death? Why might she have believed what she was told? How important is an element of trust in one's belief? Why does June's trust in the Republic slowly dwindle? Why is it important to verify whatever you are told, especially with important matters? Why might God even tell us to test what He has said in His Word?
- How does June sacrifice for Tess? How does John sacrifice for Day? Why do they each make the sacrifice? What is one sacrifice that you've made for another person? How did Jesus sacrifice for you?

The Last Straw



This realistic book is the third in the "Diary of a Wimpy Kid" series by Jeff Kinney and is published by Amulet Books, an imprint of Harry N. Abrams, Inc.

The Last Straw is an illustrated novel 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:

- Which merit badge do Greg and Rowley try to get? What do they carve instead of wood? What does Greg realize he can do instead of carving? What does Greg make by getting the soap wet and squishing it into a shape? How does he get his first merit badge?
- What does Uncle Joe do with Greg during church? Why is Greg embarrassed that Uncle Joe held his hand? Who was Greg trying to impress? Tell about a situation you were in where you were trying to impress someone but couldn't.

Legend



This science fiction, dystopian book by Marie Lu is the first book in the "Legend" series and is published by the Penguin Group. *Legend* is written for kids ages 12

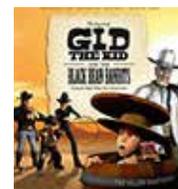
and up.

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:

- Who are the rebels in this story? Why might Day be considered the worst criminal in the Republic? What are the rebels fighting against? How is this rebellion doing what is right, and how are they doing what is wrong? In our country, what are the legal means people can use to change the government? As a Christian, when is it OK to not follow a man-made law? Whose laws should be followed above man-made laws?
- Think about world history. To what nation or time period would you compare the Republic's regime? What does the government provide people?

The Legend of Gid the Kid and the Black Bean Bandits



This first Bible allegory/Western book in the "Heroes of Promise" series by the Miller brothers is published by Warner Press, Inc. *The Legend of Gid the*

Kid and the Black Bean Bandits 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:

- Consider reading Judges 6:11-7:25 about Gideon. Then discuss

the similarities and differences between the Bible story and this picture book.

2. This story deals with bullies. Do you know any bullies? Have you ever been bullied? What did you do when you were bullied?
3. Gid was afraid. Have you ever been afraid? What did you do to get over your fears?
4. How do you think God can help you amid your fears?

The Legend of Ten-Gallon Sam and the Perilous Mine



This second biblical allegory/Western book in the “Heroes of Promise” series by the Miller brothers is published by Warner Press, Inc.

The Legend of Ten-Gallon Sam and the Perilous Mine is written for kids ages 4 to 7.

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 Sam let Delilah talk him into buying a new suit and hat?
2. Who could give Sam the wisdom he needed to make good choices?

Less is More



This contemporary fiction book is the third in the “Real TV” series by Wendy Lawton and is published by Moody Publishers. *Less is More* is written for

kids ages 13 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 Abby first meets Isabella, Abby feels at a loss to explain some elements of her Christian faith. How prepared are you to witness to nonbelievers? What things could you do to be better prepared?
2. Which of Isabella’s comments make her sound like she is a Christian? What does Coach Matthews explain to Isabella and Abby about Christianity vs. Isabella’s words? How have you challenged others to think through what they believe as Coach did? How can being familiar with the Bible help you do this?
3. How does Abby feel she looks? Why should Christians take good care of their bodies?
4. What did Damien nickname others? Have you ever had a nickname? Was it complimentary or derogatory? Have you ever taken a nickname too far? What were the consequences?
5. Why does Abby feel she’ll fail? What does Isabella point out? What do the girls do as their

secret weapon in the weight-loss plan? Do you ever use this secret weapon? How can you make prayer more a part of your life?

6. How does Coach Matthews play a major role in helping Abby witness to Isabella? Who is an adult who can help you in your witness to friends?

Lexie



This slice-of-life, realistic story by Audrey Couloumbis is published by Random House Children’s Books, a division of Random House

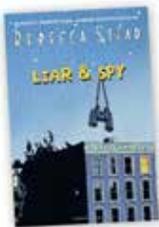
Inc., and was written for kids ages 8 to 12.

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 Ben react to his mother’s new relationship? How does Lexie react? How are Ben’s and Lexie’s feelings similar? How are they different? How would you feel?
2. How did Lexie discover the positive aspects of her stepbrothers-to-be?
3. What were some of the ways Lexie and her dad lived and behaved differently than Vicky and her sons? What sorts of difficulties might they experience as they blend their two families? What could they do to get to know each other better and learn to solve problems as a family?

Liar and Spy



This coming-of-age novel by Rebecca Stead is published by Wendy Lamb Books, an imprint of Random House Children's Books, a division of

Random House Inc., 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. Which characters are liars in this book? To whom are they lying, and what lies are they telling? In what situations in your life does it seem easier to lie than to tell the truth? How do these lies hurt you?
2. What are Safer and Georges each afraid of? How does their friendship help them come to terms with their fears? What does Georges do to help his school friends feel braver and happier? How can you encourage people who may be afraid or lacking in self-confidence?
3. What do you think of Georges' relationship with his parents? Why does he have such a hard time accepting his mother's illness? How do things change for Georges when he is able to share his concerns with his family and friends? What does he learn about seeing the big picture vs. living in the now?
4. What's your definition of bullying? What's the difference between harmless teasing and

bullying? As a Christ follower, how should you behave toward and speak to others?

Life as We Knew It



This contemporary apocalyptic novel is the first in an unnamed trilogy by Susan Beth Pfeffer and is published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt

Publishing. *Life as We Knew It* is written for ages, 7 to 12.

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

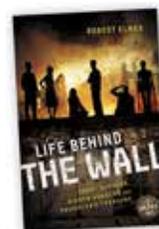
If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. What was Miranda's family's disaster plan? Does your family have a disaster plan? What items would be important to have on hand if something like what happened in Miranda's world happened?
2. How did the death of their friend Becky affect Miranda, Sammi and Megan differently? How would you react to a friend's illness or death? Who might help you walk through these emotions?
3. What are some products that you depend on every day (i.e., refrigerators, television, cars)? What would be easiest to give up? What would be the hardest?
4. Authors often put their own worldview into their writing. How might Miranda's mother's view of the president relate to Susan Pfeffer's personal views? How might her views of religion be

reflected in this book? Which character might be most like this author?

5. How were Megan and her faith portrayed? Was it an accurate portrait of Christians? Explain.

Life Behind the Wall



This historical fiction novel—a compilation of three novels: *The Candy Bomber*, *Beetle Bunker* and *Smuggler's Treasure*—by

Robert Elmer is

published by Zonderkidz 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. **Candy Bombers**
Why does Erich try to “borrow” food? Can food be borrowed? What is he really doing? Why is he stealing?

Who are against Brigitte and Fred marrying? What do Fred's grandparents do to separate them? What does Brigitte's mother-in-law do to separate them? How might not forgiving people or nations cause good people to do some not-so-good things? Have you ever said something mean about a rival school or another sports team? How is that similar, in a much smaller way, to what Fred's grandparents and Brigitte's mother-in-law do?

Why doesn't Erich want Fred to marry his mother? What does Fred do to gain Erich's trust? In

your life, how have the actions of someone meant more to you than just their words?

2. **Beetle Bunker:**

In 2 Corinthians 12:9, the apostle Paul says God's power is perfected in weakness. Sabine's weakness is her polio, and she prays to Jesus for healing, but it is not granted. How does God use Sabine's polio for good in Beetle Bunker? How might the story have changed if Sabine had never had polio?

How is Brigitte's relationship with her mother-in-law similar to Ruth's relationship to Naomi in the Bible? How does each woman take care of her mother-in-law? What does each have to sacrifice? If God asked you to sacrifice for someone, as Brigitte does, would you do it? Explain.

Why doesn't Erich leave with Sabine? What does Erich promise Onkel Heinz? Do you think life will be easier or more difficult for Erich after his mother and sister leave? Have you ever had to do something that you knew wasn't easy but you still had to do it? Explain.

3. **Smuggler's Treasure:**

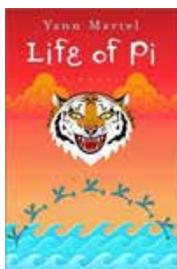
What has Liesl done that the border guards notice her? Has she done anything wrong? Why is she thought to be one of the protesters? How does being around people cause others to think you are with them?

What events happen that characterize Liesl as brave? What does Liesl do that characterizes her as impatient? How does her impatience lead to trouble?

What truths are hidden from different family members for decades? How does the truth reveal some bad things about people in Brigitte's and Fred's

families? How does the truth reveal some good things about people in their families? In this story, what is able to take place because people face the truth? How might the truth reveal good and bad things in our family?

Life of Pi: A Novel



This adventure book by Yann Martel is published by Alfred A. Knopf, an imprint of Random House Books For Young Readers and is written for kids

ages 14 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. What is Pi's argument in support of zoos? Do you feel zoos have a part in God's plan for humans to have dominion over the animals (Genesis 1:26)? How does God's plan for human dominion over animals play out between Pi and Richard Parker on the lifeboat?
2. What effect does Pi's belief in reincarnation and karma have on his lifestyle? How does he react to killing animals for food in order to survive?
3. Why does Pi eat human flesh? Is eating human flesh morally acceptable when you are starving? Read Genesis 1:27. How did God make humans? How does being made in God's image and having His breath in us make us different from animals?

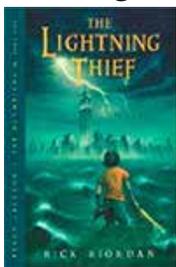
4. [Note to parents: There are two men with exactly the same name. One is this atheist, who is also his biology teacher. The other is a baker and a Muslim mystic, the one who taught Pi about Islam.] What does Pi fear about Mr. Kumar's atheist ideas? Do Mr. Kumar's words destroy Pi's love of religion and kill God in him? What does Pi conclude about atheists? How are atheists his brethren but of a different faith? Would Mr. Kumar be OK with Pi's conclusion?
5. Does Pi's acceptance of all religions extend to agnosticism? Why does he see doubt as a negative philosophy of life? How do you feel about the agnostic's argument that truth cannot be known? How does this conflict with the Bible?
6. Pi compares an agnostic's doubt to Christ's suffering in Gethsemane and His cry on the Cross, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Mark 15:34). In what ways does the author misunderstand the extent of Christ's suffering? How does the author misunderstand the cause of it? How is the purpose of Christ's suffering also misunderstood? (You can discuss Christ's suffering more in-depth using Luke 22:39-44, Isaiah 53 and Hebrews 12:2.)
7. Pi relates his reasons for being Hindu to the sights, smells, sounds and emotions he experiences during rituals as well as to the ideas of Hinduism that appeal to his intellect. Why is it dangerous to rely on emotions, rituals and reason to discover Truth? Where is Truth found? (You can discuss this topic more in-depth by using Isaiah 44: 9-20; Romans 1:18-23; Psalm 86:10-12; John 1:14, 8:31-58, 14:6, 18:37; 1

Timothy 2:3-6; 2 Timothy 4:3-4; 1 John 4:5-7.)

8. What are Pi's objections to Christianity? Why does he think that the Christian God and religion do not measure up to Hinduism's beliefs and gods?
9. What does Pi think about Christianity's God, especially Jesus? Is God weak? What is Pi's definition of weakness? Is that a good definition for weakness? Why or why not? Is God irritable and unworthy of what a god should be? What is Pi's definition of what a god should be?
10. Why does Pi discount Christ's miracles? What is his basis for comparing them to magic and being no better than card tricks? How does he feel about the power of the Hindu gods? What is his basis for coming to this conclusion? Are his arguments equal and valid?
11. What did Pi believe tainted the Trinity? Does Christ's resurrection matter to Pi? What parts of Pi's discussion are true? Which are misrepresentations of what the Bible teaches? What is Pi's reason for becoming a Christian? Is not being able to get Jesus off his mind a reason for being a Christian? Is he truly a Christian in the biblical sense? Why or why not?
12. The book claims this story would convince a person to believe in God. Do you agree? What god would this story make readers believe in? Is it possible to be a Hindu, Muslim and Christian as Pi claimed to be? What would keep you from fully believing in each religion? If you pick and choose only those beliefs that you want from each religion, would that make you a true follower of each religion? Why or why

not? Is it possible for a biblical Christian to embrace any other faith? Explain.

The Lightning Thief



This fantasy adventure is the first book in "Percy Jackson and the Olympians" series by Rick Riordan and is published by Miramax Books, a division

of Hyperion Books for Children. *The Lightning Thief* 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. Have you studied any of the mythological characters from this book in school? Which ones? What did you think of the author's modern-day interpretation of these gods or monsters? Which characters did you learn about that you didn't know about before?
2. Which characters in this book are father figures to Percy? What are some of Percy's positive and negative father/son experiences? What are Percy's initial feelings about the father who abandoned him? When he learns who his father is, how does Percy try to get Poseidon's attention? How do the other campers at Half-Blood Hill, such as Annabeth and Luke, feel about their fathers? Why is a father/child relationship important?
3. Why is it so amazing to Percy that Poseidon is his father? What

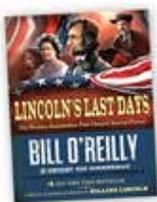
would you do if you found out your dad was that powerful? Is it ever hard for you to believe you have an infinitely more powerful heavenly Father who loves you? How does that make you feel?

4. Are Percy's heroic powers a gift or a curse? Explain your answer. What does Poseidon say is a hero's fate? What kind of future do various characters (including Poseidon) say is in store for Percy, and why does Poseidon say he's sorry Percy was ever born?
5. When the campers at Half-Blood Hill show honor to their gods, in what ways is their "worship" similar to Christian worship? In what ways does it differ? What characteristics of the mythological gods are similar to and different from God Almighty? Are the Greek gods loving and approachable? How does that differ from the God of heaven?
6. Why do the residents and staff at Half-Blood Hill frequently tell Percy that names have power? Do you agree that names are powerful? Explain your answer. (Parents could take this opportunity to talk about the various names of Jesus mentioned in the Bible and/or the power of praying in His name.)
7. What advantage does Percy have over Ares? What does Annabeth mean when she says that even strength has to bow to wisdom sometimes? Would you rather have physical strength or wisdom? Explain. Where can you get wisdom if you're lacking in it?
8. Why does Percy's mom refuse to let him get rid of Gabe for her? Do you agree or disagree with her belief that to live a meaningful life, she must do it herself and not let a god take care of her? Do you need divine intervention

in your life, or can you do it all yourself? Explain your answer.

9. What do you think of the Underworld in this story? How is it like or unlike the way you imagine hell might be?

Lincoln's Last Days



Lincoln's Last Days: The Shocking Assassination That Changed America Forever is an historical biography by Bill O'Reilly and Dwight Jon Zimmerman

is published by Henry Holt and Company and 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. Why did Lincoln attend the theater? Why didn't he listen to the advice of those around him? In retrospect, it's easy for us to say that he should not have gone to the theater that night, but how would his life have been different if he'd stopped doing things out of fear? Think about your life. When should you listen to the advice of those around you? How can you keep from allowing fear to govern your life?
2. When Atzerodt was faced with the decision to kill or be killed, what did he choose? In the end, did it matter? What was the right choice for him to make?
3. Which military leader showed the most character and why?

4. Were the people who gave Booth and his accomplices refuge after the assassination just as guilty as Booth himself? Explain.

Lion to Guard Us



This historical fiction novel by Clyde Robert Bulla is published by HarperTrophy, a division of HarperCollins Publishers, 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. Why does Amanda decide she, Jemmy and Meg need to make the dangerous voyage to Jamestown? What might happen to them if they stay in London? When have you had to make a difficult decision? How did that decision change your life? What did you do?
2. Describe Dr. Crider. Why are his actions so important to Amanda and her siblings? How have adults other than your parents helped you? What did their help let you accomplish? What are some things you admire about them?
3. In what ways does Amanda have to take on grown-up responsibilities, even though she is very young? What is her attitude toward these difficult tasks? What are some of your responsibilities, tasks or chores? How can you keep a positive attitude, even

when you're doing something you don't enjoy?

The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe



This fantasy adventure is the first book in "The Chronicles of Narnia" series by C.S. Lewis. Although it was written first, the events in *The*

Magician's Nephew, another book in this series, chronologically take place before the events in this book. HarperCollins Children's Books, a division of HarperCollins, is the publisher. *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* is written for kids ages 8 and up.

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

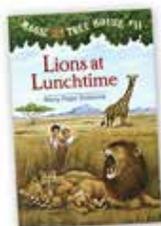
If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. Peter and Susan ask Professor Kirke for advice when they are worried about Lucy. When should you try to solve a problem yourself? When should you ask an adult for help? How can you help your brothers or sisters when they are sad or upset?
2. Lucy follows Mr. Tumnus to his house, and Edmund joins the Witch in her sleigh. What would have happened to Lucy if Mr. Tumnus hadn't protected her? What happened to Edmund when he listened to the Witch and ate her Turkish delight? What should you do if people you don't know ask you to follow them? Why do you think Lucy and Edmund readily talked to

strangers? (Have children consider the time period and how fiction is different from the real world. You can also talk about what each Narnian character might represent.)

3. Why does Edmund tell himself that the White Witch is good, and the people who say she is evil are lying? Does he truly believe she is a good person? What clues could he have picked up to understand her real character? What does she say she will give him if he brings her his brother and sisters? (Turkish delight—and she will make him a prince of Narnia) What part does greed play in Edmund’s decision to think of the Witch as being kind?
4. How does Peter treat Edmund in the early chapters? How does Edmund feel toward Peter? How could each have behaved differently? How should you treat your brothers and sisters when they are behaving badly?
5. To whom does Edmund belong when he betrays his family? How does Aslan save him? How does our human sin nature keep us from God? How did Jesus save us? What should our response be to Him?
6. How does Edmund act differently after Aslan accepts him? Why does Aslan tell the other children not to talk about the bad things Edmund once did? In what ways can you encourage others as Aslan encouraged Edmund?

Lions at Lunchtime



This fantasy adventure book by Mary Pope Osborn is the 11th book in the “Magic Tree House” series and is published by Random House.

Lions at Lunchtime

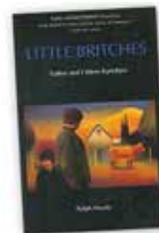
is written for kids ages 5 to 8.

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 animals do Jack and Annie see in Africa? What could happen in real life if you stood under a giraffe, knocked down a beehive or stood close to an elephant? What’s the difference between what happens in stories and what can happen in real life with wild animals? What should you do when you see a wild animal?
2. Who do Jack and Annie meet in Africa? How do they try to make friends with the Masai warrior? Where is it safe for you to make friends? What should you do if a stranger scares you?
3. How does Jack help Annie when she falls into the mud pit? Talk about a time when you needed help or helped someone.
4. What does Annie think when Jack tells her to get under the giraffe? Why does Jack tell her this and then grab her hand and pull her under the giraffe? Why do we, as your parents, want you to do or not do certain things? How might we have a bigger perspective than you do?

Little Britches: Father and I Were Ranchers



This historical autobiography by Ralph Moody is the first in the “Little Britches” series published by Bison Books, University of Nebraska Press.

Little Britches: Father and I Were Ranchers 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. Which of Father’s wise words about character stick with you most, and why? Why does Ralph’s father make him talk to the sheriff after the boy accidentally kills a pheasant? What does Father say are the two kinds of men? What kind of character does God want you to have? What are some ways you can develop it?
2. What are some of the situations in which Ralph battles inwardly with the choices he’s making? What holds Ralph back from doing whatever he feels like doing? When has your conscience stopped you from doing something you knew was wrong?
3. Why does Hi make Ralph’s horse suffer a little as he trains it? What does Hi say about the lessons that hurt to learn? When have you had to learn a lesson the hard way? How did it impact or change you?

4. How does Ralph change over the course of the story? What events and people shape him as he grows? What people and events have helped you grow into a wiser or stronger person?
5. Why does Ralph have to watch his language carefully after spending so much time with Hi and the other cowboys? When have you found yourself speaking or behaving in ways you knew were not appropriate after being around people who did those things?
2. Why does Laura think everyone likes Mary more than people like her? What does she feel Mary does better than she does? Why does she hit Mary? What causes her to think her brown hair is OK? How does her brown hair being OK help her think that she is an OK person?
3. What do Laura and her cousin Laura disagree about at their grandparents' dance? How might both girls be a little right and a little wrong in their disagreement?

Little House In the Big Woods



This historical fiction book is the first in the “Little House” series by Laura Ingalls Wilder and was originally published by Harper and Brothers, then

Scholastic. *Little House in the Big Woods* 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 does the Ingalls family have to work so hard to make food during the summer and fall months? What does your family do to prepare for the winter? How is your family similar to the Ingalls during each season? How is your family different from Laura's family during each season? What is one thing that Laura's family does that you would like your family to do?

Little Klein



This coming-of-age, unlikely champion book by Anne Ylvisaker is published by Candlewick Press, an imprint of Walker Books 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 skill does Little Klein develop to help others notice him when they don't hear his soft voice? How does his strong whistle help Little Klein? What abilities or talents do you have that many of your friends and classmates don't? How did you develop it, and how does it help you?
2. How does Little Klein's family, especially his mother, view him? How do their opinions help or hurt him? Do the words other people call you influence you or your actions? If so, how would God want you to speak to and about others?
3. How did Stanley Klein's long and frequent absences impact his family, especially his sons? Why would it be (or is it) hard having a dad who is gone a lot? What would you (or do you) miss the most about your dad? Why is your father important in your family?
4. Why does the narrator suddenly start calling Little Klein “Harold” at the end of the book? Why does the boy himself demand that a neighbor call him by his real name? Why is that significant? How will Harold's life be different now?
5. What would have happened if Harold had believed all of the things people said and thought about him? Would he have been able to save his brothers? Why or why not? Whose opinions should we listen to? What does the Bible say about how much God values us?

Little Sister is NOT My Name



This contemporary slice-of-life book by Sharon M. Draper is the first in the “Sassy” series and is published by Scholastic, Inc. *Little Sister is NOT*

My Name is written for kids ages 8 to 10.

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

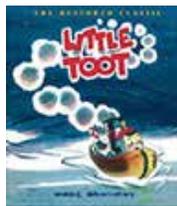
If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. How does Travis get his head stuck in the chair at school? Why did he think it would be a good idea to put his head there? What have you done that seemed like a good idea at the time but later proved to be a mistake? What happened and how did you solve the problem or make things right?
2. Why does Sassy prefer reading over playing video games or other activities? What kinds of books do you enjoy reading? How do people benefit from reading a lot? How is listening to someone tell a story similar to reading, and how is it different?
3. According to Grammy, where do style and flair come from? What is your sense of who you are? How confident are you around other kids? What can you do to nurture the kind of self-assurance that comes from within and isn't based on what others think? How can faith in God and trust in the Holy Spirit free you from

self-consciousness and allow you to be more confident?

4. If you had your own Sassy Sack, what would it look like? What would it be made of? What would you put inside, and why?
5. How did Sassy save her family during the blackout? Why couldn't anyone else call 9-1-1? What makes someone a hero? What do heroes look like? What kind of training is required to be one? Where does a hero's power or ability come from?

Little Toot



This adventure by Hardie Gramatky is published by G.P. Putnam's Sons Books for Young Readers, Penguin Group and is written for kids ages 4 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. Little Toot's bravery and seriousness saved the ocean liner. What might have happened to the liner if Little Toot had responded with his usual fear or idleness when he saw that the other boat was in trouble?
2. How might other people be affected if you behave in a lazy or fearful way? (Or, why is it important that everyone “does his part”?)
3. What is one mistake or bad choice that you have made?

4. How can you prove to others that you can do or act better?

A Living Nightmare



This first horror book in the “Cirque Du Freak: The Saga of Darren Shan” series by Darren Shan is published by Little, Brown and Company, a

division of the Hachette Book Group. *A Living Nightmare* 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. What did you think about all of the creepy, scary images in this book (and the boys' obsession with them)?
2. Do scary things like these fascinate you? Why?
3. Is it dangerous to dwell too heavily on “dark” things?
4. What does the Bible say about our thought life and what we should focus on? (See Philippians 4:8.)
5. What did you think of Darren's choice to commit suicide to become the vampire's assistant?
6. Was it worth it to save Steve's life? Or did he hurt others, including his family, in the process? (Parents could further discuss suicide and the value God puts on human life.)

- Darren seems like a fairly nice kid. Is being nice enough to keep evil from infiltrating your life?
- Darren kept getting in deeper trouble. One lie led to another. What might he have done earlier in the story to keep his circumstances from spiraling out of control?
- How would you define evil?
- Do some people have evil in their blood, as the vampire suggested about Steve?
- The vampire didn't consider himself evil. What do you think?
- What about Darren's actions of stealing, lying and endangering his friend's life? Was that evil?
- Darren blames the freak show for all of the problems that follow. Do you think he's right, or did he make some bad decisions of his own along the way? What were they?

The Long Way Home



This action adventure by Andrew Klavan is the second book in "The Homelanders" series published by Thomas Nelson. *The Long Way Home* is written

for ages 15 and up.

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

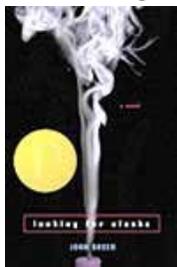
If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

- What are some choices Charlie can still make despite his difficult circumstances? How does he

choose to act and believe? Why does he hold tightly to his patriotism and faith even though this endangers his life?

- What does Sherman believe about God, America and absolute truth? What do you believe? How would you debate someone like Sherman? What would you tell him?
- Why does it mean so much to Charlie when he sees his friends again? What does it feel like to have friends who believe in you? Who are your closest friends? How might they be there for you someday?

Looking for Alaska



This coming-of-age book by John Green is published by Dutton Children's Books, an imprint of Penguin Young Reader's Group and is written for

kids ages 13 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:

- Alcohol, drugs, smoking and sex pervade the thoughts and discussions of the young characters in *Looking for Alaska*. They also play pranks on faculty and other students. Pudge acknowledges early in the book that the kids he's meeting are what his parents would call the "wrong crowd," but he embraces them and their activities anyway.

- In addition to discussing these issues, parents may want to talk about Alaska: Her sexy actions, bright mind and carefree spirit make her the kind of girl young women may want to emulate and guys want to date—but she's clearly not the role model most parents would endorse.
- Finally, parents may want to ensure teens recognize that Christ desires relationship with people and Christianity is not just one of many religions—it's the only true religion and far more glorious than what Dr. Hyde describes to his class. Jesus is not just one of many options for someone searching for answers about what happens after death.

The Looking Glass Wars



This first fantasy book in the "Looking Glass Wars" series by Frank Beddor is published by Dial Books for Young Readers, a division of Penguin Group.

The Looking Glass Wars is written for kids ages 14 and up.

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

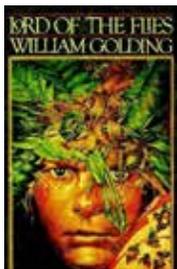
If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

- Dodge Anders grows up quickly when he sees The Cat brutally murdering his father. From that point forward, Dodge bases his life on revenge. Describe how he changed when his whole focus went from becoming the best

guardsman to assassinating The Cat. Consider ruthlessness vs. discipline, friendliness vs. secretiveness, joy vs. cynicism, etc., and what God requires of people when they have been wronged.

2. Although Alyss is touted as someone who had a great imagination at age 7, she forgets her skills and almost loses her identity. How has being around different friends or at a new school changed you?
3. Has this change drawn you closer to God or taken you from Him?
4. Loyal subjects, such as Gen. Doppelganger and Hatter Madigan, continue doing what was entrusted to them, even when no one is looking or cares. Yet because of them, Alyss eventually becomes the Queen of Wonderland. What things has God entrusted into your care—talents, Bible reading, prayer, serving others?
5. How have you continued to do what you know you should be doing, even when no one is looking or cares?

Lord of the Flies



This coming-of-age book by William Golding is published by Riverhead Books, a division of Penguin Group and is written for ages 13 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 happens to a society where people have too much personal freedom?
2. How is our society like this?
3. Why do some people constantly degrade others (the way Ralph did to Piggy, for example)?
4. Are people inherently good or bad?
5. What happens when we let our fear of the unknown rule us (like the boys did with regard to the Beast)?

Losers, Inc.



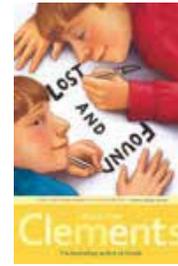
This drama by Claudia Mills is published by Farrar, Straus and Giroux and is written for kids ages 8 to 12.

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 qualities make someone a hero or a loser?
2. What can happen when you tease or bully others?
3. Are you unhappy with some part of your life, and if so, what can you do to improve the situation?

Lost and Found



This realistic fiction by Andrew Clements is published by Atheneum Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Simon & Schuster Children's

Publishing Division. *Lost and Found* is written for children 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. To what does Jay compare his starting school in Denver in mid-January? What are the advantages and disadvantages of starting in Denver compared to starting in Cleveland? Which would you have preferred? Explain.
2. Jay and Ray's parents trust them to walk to and from school and to be on their own after school until dinnertime. How is this trust broken? How would you feel if you found out we were deceiving you?
3. Do you know any identical twins? How are you able to tell them apart? How has this book helped you relate to twins better? Are there ways it might help you relate better to kids who are not twins?
4. Alex helps Jay find his way around the school the first day. Have you ever done this for a new kid? Have you ever been the new kid and had someone help you?

5. What is Jay and Ray's reason for skipping school? Is it valid?
6. The boys lie by pretending to be someone they are not. What are some other ways that people deceive? (Consider a lie of omission, for example.) How can lying be a form of stealing?
7. Which of the twins has the voice of reason? On two occasions, Ray does not want to go through with Jay's plan. How does Jay persuade Ray?
8. The principal, Mrs. Lonsdale, explains to Ray how dangerous it is for his parents to believe both boys are in school every day and for the school to not know about one of them. Do you agree with her about the danger, or do you think she is overreacting? What might have happened to Jay and Ray? How does alternating days at school hurt their education?
9. The book doesn't say what punishment the boys will get for what they did. What punishment would be appropriate? Should the school have suspended them?

The Lost Heir



This fantasy novel is the second in the "Wings of Fire" series written by Tui T. Sutherland and published by Scholastic Press, an imprint of Scholastic Inc. *The*

Lost Heir is written for 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. At the beginning of the novel, what does Tsunami want most? How does her vision of the Sea Kingdom differ from what it is in reality? How does Tsunami learn to control her instincts? Who influences that change? When it comes to making decisions, which character do you resemble and why?
2. SeaWings can communicate not only with words, but also through Aquatic. Can you think of different ways humans communicate? How does a deaf person communicate with others? What other languages would you like to learn?
3. The dragonets of destiny have learned to mistrust the adults in their lives. What does Exodus 20:12 say about your parents? If you needed help, which adult, other than us, would you trust?
4. What does Riptide keep secret about his identity secret from Tsunami? Is he right to do this? Explain. Why should or shouldn't Tsunami forgive him? What secret has a friend kept from you? How did it make you feel? How did you respond?

The Lost Hero



This contemporary fantasy novel written by Rick Riordan is the first in the "Heroes of Olympus" series and is published by Hyperion Books, a divi-

sion of Disney Book Group. *The Lost Hero* is written for 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. Aphrodite tells Piper that to be perfect, you have to feel perfect. What does that mean? Is that conclusion true? Explain. How do you measure perfection in your life? In what areas are you nearly perfect? In what areas would you change so you could be more perfect?
2. Jason struggles throughout the book because he has no memory of his past. Think about your life. What situation made you happiest? What have you learned to make you a stronger person? How would you be different if you couldn't remember these things?
3. Leo believes he is to blame for his mother's death. Have you ever felt guilty about something that was out of your control? Explain. How did you overcome this emotion?
4. Leo is jealous of Jason's abilities. Who are you jealous of? What do they have or what do they do that causes you to feel this way? How has this jealousy hurt you? How can God help you overcome these feelings?
5. Piper had to decide whether to let her father remember how she saved him or give him the potion to make him forget. If you were in that situation, what would you have done? Why?

The Lost Medallion



This adventure book is the first in “The Adventures of Billy Stone” series by Bill Muir and Alex Kendrick, and is published by Methinx Publishing. *The*

Lost Medallion was 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. Why does Billy want to find the medallion? What does he think will happen if he does?
2. Why does Faleaka speak in riddles? Why does he give the children tasks involving pineapples? Why does he give them each a different task? What does he want each child to learn?
3. What inscription is on the back of the medallion? What do those words mean to you when you think about your own life?

The Love Killer



This contemporary Christian book in the “The Powerlink Chronicles” by Josh McDowell and Bob Hostetler is published by Word Publishing

Group, Thomas Nelson Publishers. *The Love Killer* is written for kids 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. In reading about Krystal’s sexual attraction to Brad and their kisses, how do you think emotions can overtake reason when you are physically intimate?
2. What does the Bible say about purity in Psalm 119:9 and 1 Timothy 4:12?
3. How can you stay pure?
4. How can Proverbs 4:23-27 serve as a guide to staying pure?
5. How important is it to have Christian friends?
6. Do you have a friend or someone you can talk to?
7. What are some of the reasons presented in the book about how sex will not fill your need for love?
8. Talk about the unconditional love God offers. Demons are shown to put evil thoughts into people’s minds that are disguised as half-truths. Have you wrestled with half-truths or other deceptive thoughts?
9. Krystal never shared her faith with Kathy. Who are the people in your family with whom you have never shared your faith?
10. Do they need to hear your testimony?

Lucky Breaks



This slice-of-life sequel to *The Higher Power of Lucky* by Susan Patron is published by Gineeo Seo Books, an imprint of Simon & Schuster

Children’s 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. How does Lucky feel when Short Sammy’s secret box arrives in Hard Pan? What does she think is in the box? What else could arrive in a crate big enough to hold a bathtub (instead of a coffin)? What scares Lucky about the box? Why doesn’t she share her fears with Brigitte? Do you ever keep your fears to yourself because you worry that voicing them will make something bad happen? Explain. Are there other reasons why you keep your fears to yourself?
2. What is the first thing Sammy does with his new bathtub? Do most bathtubs hold soup? What was Lucky’s reaction to a bathtub of soup? What is one time you were surprised? What was unique about that situation?
3. What is Lucky’s secret birthday wish? How has her father’s absence and lack of communication hurt her? Does Lucky’s wish come true? Why is Lucky so hurt by a father she doesn’t even know?

4. What does Lucky do to Lincoln's secret knot project? Why does she want to destroy it? How would his leaving town for a year to stay with a knot expert in England affect Lucky? How does cutting Lincoln's project destroy more than rope? Lucky reacted without having all the facts. She also thought only of herself. How have you reacted inappropriately because you misunderstood what someone was doing? How does Lucky feel when she learns why Lincoln was spending so much time on his secret project?
5. What kinds of things does Lucky lie about? Why does she tell so many lies? How do the lies hurt Lucky and others? Why doesn't God want people to lie?
6. What word describes what Lucky most wants to be when she's 11? Why is it so important for her to be intrepid? Why does she like the word? What does it mean? What word would you use to describe who you are and what you'd like to be?
7. When Lucky is stuck in the well, what imaginary conversation does she have with Brigitte? Lucky tells Brigitte she (Lucky) has run out of luck, and Brigitte says that the future doesn't happen by chance. Who is right? Which of their statements best describes your view of life, and why?
8. When Lucky is trapped in the well, why does she partly want Lincoln's rescue plan to fail? Have you ever wanted to be right more than you wanted to be safe or happy? Why?
9. How does all of Lucky's mean behavior finally make her feel about herself? Do you ever wish you could get away from yourself because you don't like the person

you're becoming? How can hurting others be worse than getting hurt yourself? Has that ever happened to you? How did you handle the situation?

10. Was Lucky a good friend to Lincoln? To Paloma? What does it take to be a good friend? How can Lucky have been a better friend? Are there any areas in which you can be a better friend? How do you make new friends and still maintain old friendships?

Lunch Lady and the Picture Day Peril



This humorous comic by Jarrett J. Krosoczka is part of the "Lunch Lady" series published by Alfred A. Knopf, an imprint of Random House Children's Books,

a division of Random House Inc. *Lunch Lady and the Picture Day Peril* 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. How does Candace betray the trust of her fellow students? Why does she use school funds for her own purposes? Why is it foolish and dangerous for Candace to meet with Stefani secretly and alone?
2. How does Stefani scam the students? How does she convince them, especially Candace, to give her extra money? Have you ever agreed to do something because someone tried to make you feel

especially good looking (or particularly unattractive)? What happened?

3. Why does Lunch Lady want to find Stefani? What does Lunch Lady personally gain by hunting down Stefani? What does Lunch Lady personally lose as she tries to find Stefani? What is admirable about Lunch Lady? What is one way that you can be like her?

Lunch Lady and the Video Game Villain



This humorous graphic novel by Jarrett J. Krosoczka is the ninth book in the "Lunch Lady" series published by Alfred A. Knopf, an imprint

of Random House Children's Books, a division of Random House Inc. *Lunch Lady and the Video Game Villain* 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. Why does Milmoie bully other kids? Why do you think he gets elected? What kind of bullying have you seen or experienced at your school? What can you do to help keep yourself or others from being bullied?
2. Why does Hector leave the election debates? Is this a good reason? What would you have done in his place?
3. Lunch Lady fights for justice and what is right. What does she win in this book? What does she

lose? Just because you're doing the right thing, does it mean you will always win? Because doing the right thing doesn't guarantee a win, why should you still do the right thing?