

Book Review Discussion Questions



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Table of Contents

Sabotaged	3	Sir Kendrick and the Castle of Bel Lione	20
Sam the Minuteman	3	Skeleton Creek	20
The San Francisco Splash	3	Skeleton Key	21
Sapphique	4	Skellig	21
Sarah's New World: The Mayflower Adventure (1620)	4	Skin Hunger	22
Saving Sailor	4	Sky the Blue Fairy	22
Saving the Liberty Bell	5	Slam!	22
Savvy	5	Sleepover	23
Scarlet	6	Sleepover Sleuths	23
The Scarlet Pimpernel	6	Snap Decision	24
School. Hasn't This Gone on Long Enough?	7	Sneak	24
School's Out	7	Snow Treasure	24
School's Out—Forever	7	So Not Happening	25
The Scorch Trials	8	So Not Okay	25
The Scorpio Races	8	Sober Faith	26
Scream for Ice Cream	8	Son	26
The Secret Garden	9	The Son of Neptune	26
The Sea of Monsters	9	A Song for Harlem	27
The Secret Life of Walter Mitty	10	Speak	27
The Secret of the Caves	10	Speaker for the Dead	27
The Secret of the Old Clock	11	Spirit Fighter	28
Secret of the Red Arrow	11	Stargirl	28
Secrets Can Kill	11	Starlighter	28
The Secrets of Tree Taylor	12	Stealing Bradford	29
Seeds of Rebellion	12	Stone Cold	30
Seekers: Great Bear Lake	13	Stone Fox	30
Seekers: The Quest Begins	13	Storm Warning	30
The Selection	13	Stormbreaker	31
Sense and Sensibility	14	The Storybook of Legends	31
Sent	14	Strangers on a Train	32
A Separate Peace	15	Strawberry Girl	32
Sepron the Sea Serpent	15	The Summer Before	32
Seven Stories Up	16	Summer of the Swans	33
Shadow Chaser	16	SummerHill Secrets Volume 1	33
The Shadows	16	Sunset of the Sabertooth	34
She Walks in Beauty	17	Surprise Endings	35
Shiloh	17	Surprises According to Humphrey	35
Shine	17	The Sweetest Thing	35
Shoot-Out	18	Swipe	36
Sidney & Norman	18	The Sword Thief	36
The Sign of the Beaver	18	Sybil Ludington's Midnight Ride	37
The Silver Chair	18		
A Single Shard	19		
Sir Bentley and Holbrook Court	19		
Sir Dalton and the Shadow Heart	20		

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

Sabotaged



This science fiction novel by Margaret Peterson Haddix is the third in “The Missing” series published by Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers,

an imprint of Simon & Schuster Children’s Publishing Division, a trademark of Simon & Schuster Inc. *Sabotaged* 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. Where and when do Jonah, Andrea and Katherine land in this story? How does their knowledge of history help them? Why might it be important for you to learn history?
2. Second, JB and Jonah all have different ideas about what is most important concerning time travel and history. What is each character’s priority? What do you think should be the priority: making history happier, keeping kids safe or making sure history remains accurate? Explain your priority.
3. What do you think about JB’s suggestion that even bad things in history can lead to good? What are some stories in the Bible that prove this theory? When have you had a situation in your life where something bad

ended up working out for the good? What happened?

Sam the Minuteman



This historical book in the “I Can Read Book” series by Nathaniel Benchley is published by HarperCollins Publishers and 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. Was it necessary for the Americans and British to fight?
2. What might have happened to our country if they hadn’t?
3. Parents may want to delve deeper into topics such as war and personal freedoms, even discussing the war in Iraq, if they feel their children can handle the intensity of such a conversation.

The San Francisco Splash



This mystery story by David A. Kelly is the seventh in the “Ballpark Mysteries” series published by Stepping Stone Books, a trademark of Random

House Inc. *The San Francisco Splash* is written for kids ages 6 to 9.

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 interesting facts you learned about San Francisco, Alcatraz or the Giants from this book?
2. When the kids don’t initially find what they are looking for, how do they keep their attitudes right? When you’re disappointed, how do you keep from taking on a bad attitude?

Sapphique



This fantasy book by Catherine Fisher is the second book in the “Incarceron” series and is published by Dial Books, a division of Penguin Group. *Sapphique* is written for kids ages 12 and up.

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

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

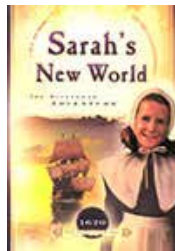
If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. In the first book, Finn longed to make it out of Incarceron. In this book, how does he feel about the Realm and Incarceron? Describe a time when your idea of something was better than the real thing. If someone expects things to be perfect all the time, how happy will that person be? How can you have a hopeful attitude even if things aren't perfect?
2. Why does Jared have a hard time believing Finn? Talk about a time when you lied to someone and the person found out. How did that affect your relationship? If someone lied to you several times, how would you treat that person? Why do you think Jesus is called the Way, the Truth, and the Life?
3. When the power goes out in the Realm, what happens to Queen Sia? How was her technologically enhanced appearance different from her true self? Describe a time when you saw an attractive person act in an ugly way. Did you view that person in a different way because of his or her behavior? What is more

important to you: appearance or behavior? Explain.

4. What is Incarceron's job? What happens to the prisoners when Incarceron forgets its job? If you quit doing your jobs and chores or stopped using the talents God has given you, how might it affect others?

Sarah's New World: The Mayflower Adventure (1620)



This first historical book in the “Sisters in Time” series by Colleen L. Reece is published by Barbour Publishing, Inc. *Sarah's New World* 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 are some difficult times in your life where God has helped you through?
2. Why do you think God allows bad things, such as the deaths of some of the other Pilgrims in the story?
3. What were some of the lessons John and Sarah learned from their Mayflower experience?
4. How can we set a good example for people like Klaus, who don't believe in God?

Saving Sailor



This contemporary Christian book is the first of two by Renee Riva and is published by David C. Cook. *Saving Sailor* 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. What does A.J. raise money for? What does she do with the money she raised? How does she find forgiveness for spending a charity's money? When you have done something wrong, what do you do to make things right with others and before God?
2. What are some spiritual disciplines that you practice as part of your faith? What spiritual disciplines do you see others doing that you don't feel are necessary? Which of these are mentioned in the Bible?
3. What do A.J.'s relatives have? Where do they stay? How can A.J.'s dad be happy with a simpler boat and a less expensive place to stay? What does he feel is more important than money? Do you agree with A.J.'s dad or his relatives? Explain.
4. What did a nun tell A.J. about sins never being a secret? Do your sins hurt other people? Give one example. What were the consequences of your sin to you and to others?
5. What was your impression of A.J.'s mom acting like Sophia

Loren? What have you done for fun that you thought was harmless but ended up hurting someone?

Saving the Liberty Bell



This historical book by Megan McDonald, with illustrations by Marsha Gray Carrington, is a Richard Jackson Book published by Atheneum Books

for Young Readers, an imprint of Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing Division. *Saving the Liberty Bell* 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 danger do John Jacob and his father face by taking the Liberty Bell to their hometown? What is so important about this bell? Why is it protected so carefully?
2. Why isn't the Liberty Bell safe in Philadelphia? What might happen if it stays there?
3. Which famous historical figure does John Jacob meet along the way? How does George Washington treat John Jacob and his father? How does he help with their mission?

Savvy



This coming-of-age fantasy book by Ingrid Law is published by Dial Books for Young Readers, Penguin 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. Mibs questions whether God is with her, and she later wonders if He can understand her reasons for stowing away and lying. How would you answer those questions for her? Have you ever tried to bargain with God, like Mibs does when she wants to make the voices in her head stop? How does God want us to seek His help?
2. What does Mibs mean when she says Samson has a sort of "human magic" in the way he demonstrates genuine concern for others? What words would you use to describe a person like that? How else did you see such behavior demonstrated in this book? Name people in your own life who display those characteristics and describe how they show them.
3. Why was Mibs so concerned for the homeless man she saw while she was on the run? Why couldn't she wake him up—even though she tried to seek power from deep inside herself? Where do you look for power when you're in a tough situation?
4. What would it feel like to have lots of voices in your head, in the same way as Mibs? How did

Lester's tattoos of his mother and former girlfriend talk to and treat Lester? How did their cruel words make you feel about Lester? Do you ever hear voices in your head telling you what you should do and who you should be?

5. How is Mibs punished? Is the punishment appropriate for all she did and the problems she caused? How did she suffer for her actions? How did her lies and behaviors endanger others?
6. Do you agree with Mibs that it's sometimes difficult to predict what will happen when you make a particular choice? What are some specific guidelines you can use to make wise decisions? Can bad things ever lead to good things, as Lill suggests? What can you do when a choice you've made has left you in a bad situation?
7. What are your unique skills or talents? Are you pleased with the skills you have, or do you wish you had different talents? What special ability or savvy would you choose for yourself if you could do or be anything? How did this story's "ordinary" characters, including Lill, Poppa and Will, demonstrate their uniqueness?
8. How were the overtly Christian characters, such as Pastor Meeks and Miss Rosemary, portrayed in this story? In what ways did they show—or fail to show—God's love through their actions? Which characters most exemplified Christ's compassion? How did they do this?
9. What does Mibs realize about the events (big and small, good and bad) that happen in life? Are there changes in your life that are hard for you to accept? What are some events or situations that

have changed who you are? How did you respond to them? Where can you find the strength to move forward when life is hard?

Scarlet



This science fiction book by Marissa Meyer is the second book in the “Lunar Chronicles” series and is published by Feiwel and Friends, a division

of Macmillan Publishers. *Scarlet* 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. Scarlet tells Wolf that as a child, she would throw tantrums, break things and tell lies to get her father’s attention. Have you ever felt that we don’t pay enough attention to you? If the answer is yes, give us an example. What can we do as a family to give each other the attention we each need?
2. Scarlet is shocked and hurt when she finds out that Michelle kept many important secrets from her. Has a friend or loved one ever kept a secret from you? Have you ever kept secrets from them? What was the situation? What affect do secrets have on friendships?
3. Cinder uses her ability to manipulate people when necessary, but she hates doing it. Are Cinder’s actions acceptable? How is she doing the same thing as others on the Luna side? Is it OK to do what is right in your own eyes, or are we held to a higher standard? Why might some of our

good intentions be faulty? How is God’s standard a better measure of how we should act or behave around others?

4. When Cinder sees the picture of herself as an injured toddler, she thinks of all the people who sacrificed to save her. Who are some of the people in your life who have sacrificed something, even if it’s a small thing, for you? How does their sacrifice make you feel? Who made the ultimate sacrifice for all of humankind? What did Jesus do?
5. In the end, Scarlet grieves her grandmother’s death, but she decides to forgive Wolf for his involvement in Michelle’s kidnapping. Tell about a time when someone you trusted betrayed you. Tell about a time when you betrayed someone. Why is it important to forgive those who wrong us? How did you reach a point of reconciliation with the person you wronged?

The Scarlet Pimpernel



This historical drama is written by Baroness Emmuska Orczy and was originally published by G.P. Putnam’s Sons Books for Young Readers. Lightyear

Pr, University of London Press, New Dawn Press and others have since published versions of the book. *The Scarlet Pimpernel* is written for adults but is sometimes used in high school classrooms.

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 the state of Marguerite’s marriage to Sir Percy when we first meet them? Why is this? What qualities made Marguerite marry Sir Percy? What qualities do you hope to find in your future spouse?
2. Lord Blakeney was in disguise even when he wasn’t wearing one. Do you ever pretend to be someone you’re not? Why? How is your pretending different from or similar to his?
3. The Comtesse de Tournay holds a grudge against Marguerite. Has someone ever treated you or your family poorly? Did you hold a grudge against the person? How did it make you feel? How does God want us to deal with our anger? See Ephesians 4:25-27
4. Sir Andrew and Lord Anthony were willing to take great risks for the Scarlet Pimpernel because of his courage and for the excitement. Is there someone you admire for his/her bravery or the cause for which the person works? Is there a cause for which you would risk your life?
5. An author’s viewpoint is often apparent in the words they write. Do you think the author of the *Scarlet Pimpernel* had any sympathy for those involved in the French Revolution? Whom do you think she favored?

School. Hasn't This Gone on Long Enough?



This pre-teen humor book by Jim Benton is the first book in the “Dear Dumb Diary, Year Two” series and is published by Scholastic Inc. This book is written

for kids ages 8 to 10.

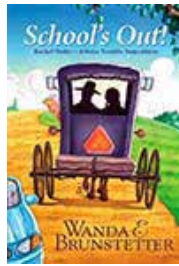
Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

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

1. What does Isabella do to help Jamie improve her grades? How would you feel if one of your friends did something like that to you? Would you feel grateful for her concern or upset because she'd tricked you? Explain. How does Jamie feel?
2. Why is Jamie so disturbed when she thinks Angeline and Emmily may be smarter than she is? What happens when you start comparing yourself to others? How does it make you feel? What's the difference between having healthy competition with someone and trying to beat someone just to make you look better? How can you feel good about who you are without comparing yourself to other people?
3. Why shouldn't Jamie refer to her friends and teachers as stupid or idiots? What is she really trying to say? How can you feel good about yourself without putting someone else down?

4. How does Jamie feel about lying? Do you agree that lying is a great idea if you're sure you won't get caught? Explain. What does the Bible say about lying? (Proverbs 12:22; Ephesians 4:25)

School's Out



This Amish-life book is the first in the “Rachel Yoder” series by Wanda E. Brunstetter and is published by Barbour Publishing. *School's Out* 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 Rachel's brother Jacob constantly tease her? How does his teasing make Rachel feel? Do any of your siblings tease you? Do you tease any of your siblings? If you tease someone, does it mean you don't love the person? What is a better way to treat someone?
2. Does Rachel mean to be mischievous? What are some ways she gets into trouble? How could she avoid this kind of trouble?
3. What does Rachel's mother make her do to the hall after Rachel skateboards on it? How does this help Rachel learn from her mistake? Do you think she will ever skateboard there again?
4. What other ways do her parents discipline her? How do we, your parents, help you learn to make good choices?

School's Out—Forever



This science-fiction adventure is the second book in the “Maximum Ride” series by James Patterson and is published by Little, Brown and Company, in

conjunction with the Time Warner Book Group. *School's Out—Forever* 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. Angel tells Max that Ari loves Max. If this were true, why would he want to hurt her?
2. How might Fang know if Max turned bad? Did he know when her twin replaced her? How well do you know your best friend? What makes that person your friend? How might you tell if your friend was “replaced”?
3. What speaks to Max? Is the Voice trustworthy? Who did Jesus send to help believers? How does the Holy Spirit guide you? How does the Holy Spirit speak to you?
4. What do Iggy's parents want to do with his story? What makes people crave attention and fame? How would our society view someone who looked like Iggy and could fly? Why might he be accepted or ostracized?
5. The scientists created another Maximum Ride who had no empathy for others. Which Max was stronger? Why was the real Max able to defeat her evil twin?

How do her emotions make her stronger?

The Scorch Trials



This futuristic science fiction novel by James Dashner is the second in the “Maze Runner Trilogy,” which consists of three books and a prequel, and

is published by Delacorte Press, an imprint of Random House Children’s Books, a division of Random House Inc. *The Scorch Trials* is written for kids ages 12 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:

1. Minho’s tattoo labels him as the leader of Group A. How does he demonstrate his leadership? Do you think he’s the true leader? What qualities make a good leader?
2. Who is betrayed in this book? How does this character respond? Have you ever been betrayed by someone close to you? How did it make you feel? Talk about why you could, or couldn’t, forgive that person? What does Jesus teach about forgiveness?
3. Throughout the book, Thomas and the others are told that WICKED is working for their good. In what ways do you think this is true? How might the statement be false?

4. As Thomas regains his memories of life before the Maze, how does he feel about his choice to help WICKED? What would you be willing to sacrifice in order to save humanity?
5. The representative of WICKED warns the boys not to trust what they see, because their perceptions can be manipulated. How do today’s media manipulate a person’s perception of the world? Discuss how the media’s view of strength and beauty differs from that of the Bible. How does Ephesians 6:10-18 help you to defend yourself from the world’s distortions?

The Scorpio Races



This fantasy novel by Maggie Stiefvater is published by Scholastic Press, an imprint of Scholastic Inc., and 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:

1. How does Ben react to his mother? What do Puck and Sean believe about God and religion? What is the real “religion” of the people on the island? When have you seen something other than God become a religion for you or those close to you?
2. Why are the races so important and popular, despite the danger? In what kinds of dangerous activities do people you know

participate? How do you personally decide what activities are wise or foolish to pursue?

3. Puck remembers her mother saying obstacles often appear in our lives to stop us from doing stupid things. Her dad argued that obstacles should push us to try harder. Which philosophy do you agree with? When has an obstacle been a warning for you to stop? When has it been a hurdle for you to overcome?
4. How do the blood and violence portrayed in this book add to or detract from the story? How would you have written this book differently?

Scream for Ice Cream



This mystery book by Carolyn Keene is the second in the “Nancy Drew and the Clue Crew” series, the 2006 edition, and is published by Aladdin Paperback,

an imprint of Simon & Schuster Children’s Publishing Division. *Scream for Ice Cream* is written for kids ages 6 to 9.

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. Kevin’s parents don’t allow him to eat sweets. That is one of their family’s rules. What is one of our family’s rules? Why do we have this rule? Why might Kevin’s parents have their rule? What are some of the rules we have as a family that are hard for you to follow? How do you obey them,

even when you're tempted not to? What are some of our family's rules that are easy to follow? What makes them easier to follow?

- Henderson finds something that isn't his (the recipe), and that doesn't have an owner or person's name on it, and keeps it. What would you do in that situation? Have you ever found something and had to choose between finding the owner to return it and keeping it? Explain.
- What excuse did Nancy and George make for Bess at the Fan Club? Do any of your school clubs or peer groups have "tests" or initiations to become members? What excuses have you made for a friend or to get yourself out of an awkward situation? What would you have done in their situation?
- Henderson pickets and heckles at the ice cream factory contest sign-up and kick-off event because he is worried the new factory will take business away from his father. Have you been worried about losing something? What are some ways to handle fear and worry? What could Henderson have done differently?

The Secret Garden



This coming-of-age novel by Frances Hodgson Burnett is a Tor Book published by Tom Doherty Associates, LLC, 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:

- What is Mary like when she arrives at Misselthwaite Manor? How does she feel about herself? What are some of the things and people that change her while she's there? When has a person, place or idea changed you in a powerful way?
- What is wrong with Colin when Mary meets him? In what way does his attitude play into his healing? When have you been able to make a situation better for yourself by changing your attitude?
- What is the Magic that the children refer to? Do you believe that Magic makes the garden grow and causes Colin's healing? How is their version of a Higher Power different than what you believe?

The Sea of Monsters



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

Hyperion Books for Children. This book is written for kids ages 12 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:

- What makes Percy wonder if his father cares for him or Tyson? Which of Poseidon's actions and behaviors make him appear unconcerned about his sons?

Which make Percy believe he does care about them? How is Percy's relationship with his unseen father like and/or unlike your relationship with God?

- What other father-child relationships are explored in this book? How do half-bloods like Annabeth and Luke feel about their fathers? Why is the father-child relationship so important? What are some aspects of your relationship with your father that you appreciate? What are some ways you would like to see your relationship with your father improve?
- What is a fatal flaw? What does Annabeth say her fatal flaw is?
- What does hubris mean? What are some temptations she faces in this book that test her? What is your fatal flaw (or flaws)? Why is it important to know your own weaknesses? What can you do to keep your flaws from destroying you?
- Why does Annabeth call kids like Tyson "mistakes"? Do kids like those she describes, ones that "don't come out right" and get "tossed aside," exist in our world? Who are they? What kind of people are "mistakes" in the eyes of God?
- What are Percy's initial feelings when he learns Tyson is his brother? What makes him begin to care for Tyson? Have you ever initially misjudged someone who turned out to be a good friend? What happened?
- What kind of person is Clarisse? Why does Percy let her take credit for bringing back the Fleece? What does this tell you about Percy's character and priorities?

The Secret Life of Walter Mitty



This American short story by James Thurber found in *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty and Other Pieces* is published by Penguin Books

and is written for adults, but it is sometimes studied in book format by high school classes.

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 type of person does Walter Mitty become in his daydreams? How do people treat him in his fantasies? How would you describe him in real life? How do his wife and others treat him there?
2. What do you daydream about? How are daydreams useful? How do they keep us from living in the moment? When is a good time for daydreams? When is a good time to live in the moment?
3. Compare the Mittys' relationship to another marriage relationship you know. How is it better than that relationship? How is it worse? If you were a marriage counselor, what would you recommend to the Mittys?

The Secret of the Caves



This mystery book by Franklin W. Dixon is book number seven in "The Hardy Boys Mystery Stories" series and is published by Grosset and Dunlap, Inc.

The original 1929 and the reissued 1992 editions are compared in this review. In 1992, Grosset & Dunlap is a member of The Putnam and Grosset Group. This book 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. Frank and Joe receive homemade medals from their friends for rescuing Evengline Todd, however they also take that moment to acknowledge the presence of Biff and Tony during the rescue. How do you think Biff and Tony felt with that acknowledgment? How might Biff and Tony have felt if Frank and Joe had not acknowledged them? Did Frank and Joe need to acknowledge Biff and Tony? Have you ever been part of a group that does something good, but only a few people get credit for it? How did that make you feel? Have you ever been part of a group that does something good and everyone is given credit? How did that make you feel? When and how should the efforts of individuals in a group or a team be acknowledged? How do you personally acknowledge people's efforts when the contributions are not the same?
2. Telling versus asking:
How did the Hardy boys interact with their parents? When you want to do something, do you tell us what you are doing or ask us? What should the interaction with us look like—during topical discussions? When given instructions? When asking to do something? How do you respond if we say "no" to something? How do you handle disappointment, anger or frustration? Is there ever a time to appeal a decision? What would a respectful appeal look like?
3. After Frank and Joe Hardy discover Carl Schaum drunk on the beach, they tie him up and then splash water on him to wake him up. The dialogue in the story indicates they were also a little bit glad to pour the cold water on him for stealing their motorcycle and food. Do you think Frank and Joe wanted to do more than pour cold water on Carl Schaum? What might have kept them from doing that? Has anyone ever taken something that belonged to you? What did you do about it? How did you feel? What did you do or can you do to forgive the person, even if you never get back what was taken?
4. Captain Royal is aggressive toward the boys, yet they still care for him when he is in danger and reach out to help him. Taking a risk, they rescue him from the surf among the rocks. How do you respond to others who are unkind to you? What attitudes do you have toward someone who is not acting kindly toward you? How have you helped someone in a difficult situation? How do you decide to help someone?

The Secret of the Old Clock



This mystery book by Carolyn Keene is the first in the “Nancy Drew Mystery Stories” series published by Grosset & Dunlap Publishers, a member of the

Putnam & Grosset Group. This book 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 are the Tophams like? How do they treat others, and how do others feel about them? How does Nancy treat others, and how do people respond to her?
2. What are some practical ways Nancy aids Josiah’s friends and family, even before she finds the new will? What does the Bible urge us to do when we see others in need?
3. Would you like to do detective work? What kinds of cases would most interest you? Explain.

Secret of the Red Arrow



This mystery novel by Franklin W. Dixon is the first in the “Hardy Boys Adventures” series published by Aladdin,

an imprint of Simon & Schuster Children’s Publishing Division. *Secret of the Red Arrow* is written for kids ages 8 to 12 years.

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 kind of relationship do the boys have with their father? What are some good qualities about their relationship? How do the boys deceive and lie to him? How do they break “the Deal”? Do you believe they will keep their word when they say they will at the end of the book?
2. Why do people purposely shock and disturb others, like Seth did with his video of the fake bank robbery? According to Joe, why do people want to see increasingly shocking images? How are his comments true today? How does the escalating amount of startling behavior in the media impact your world?
3. *The Secret Soldier: The Story of Deborah Sampson*
4. This historical biography by Ann McGovern, illustrated by Harold Goodwin, is published by Scholastic Inc. and is written for kids ages 8 to 12.
5. If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:
6. Why weren’t women allowed in the military in Deborah’s day? (Have your child consider the living conditions, food, etc., in her answer.) What were women supposed to do while men fought?

7. Why does Deborah want to become a Continental soldier? Why isn’t she happy being a schoolteacher? What kind of adventures do you hope to experience someday?
8. What are some historical facts you learned about the Revolutionary War and the time period? How was Deborah’s day similar to your world? How was it different?

Secrets Can Kill



This mystery book by Carolyn Keene is the first in “The Nancy Drew Files” series, the 1986 edition, and is an Archway Paperback published by Pocket

Books, a division of Simon and Schuster Inc. *Secrets Can Kill* 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. Jake bullies and blackmails other students at the high school. How do you see kids at school treat each other? What would be some ways you could respond to a bullying situation? How are you treated at school? What could you do if someone tried to bully you?
2. Nancy and Daryl flirt with each other, kiss, snuggle and slow dance. How do you see other couples express affection around you? What standards do you see at school and in other groups you’re a part of? What

boundaries do you think should be in place for physical behavior in relationships?

3. Nancy tells Ned about the relationship she had with Daryl. Would you have done what Nancy did? Why or why not? How did Ned respond? Would you have responded in the same way? Explain.
4. Bess gets increasingly frustrated with the way Carla is treating Nancy. She eventually trips Carla in the bathroom. What would you do if someone was acting rudely toward or picking on one of your friends? Did Bess handle the situation well or poorly? Explain. What are some situations where you have had to stick up for your friends? How did you express your support for them? What are your options for handling your frustration over the way someone is being treated?

The Secrets of Tree Taylor



This coming-of-age novel by Dandi Daley Mackall is published by Alfred A. Knopf, an imprint of Random House Children's Books, a division of

Random House, and is written for kids ages 10 years 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:

1. What are some of the secrets Tree learns in the summer of 1963? Which secrets does she

keep? Which does she tell? How did she know which to keep and which to tell? How can you know whether or not you should keep a secret?

2. What is Jack's mother, Donna, best known for around town? How does her gossiping cause trouble? According to Dad, why do people spread rumors? When have gossip or rumors been damaging to you or someone you know? What does the Bible say about gossip and the type of words God's people should speak?
3. What does Tree mean when she says words in print can easily become truth for readers? Why do writers and people in the media have a special responsibility to get their facts right? Why does it bother Dad so much when reporters use words like conflict in reference to Vietnam? How can you determine the validity of what you see on the Internet, on TV or in the paper?
4. What are some ways people in the community try to make life better for Gary Lynch, the bed-ridden boy with leukemia? How does helping Gary inspire and bring people together? When have you witnessed or joined a group of people uniting to help someone in need? Talk about what you saw and how you felt.

Seeds of Rebellion



This fantasy novel is the second in the "Beyonders" series written by Brandon Mull and is published by Aladdin, a division of Simon & Schuster

Publishing. *Seeds of Rebellion* is written for 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. Galloran explains that after many lifetimes lived, the Aram Kabal have learned to value simplicity. Why do think they value simplicity? What might simplicity have that money, power and fame don't have?
2. The company journeys to the oracle in order to learn about the future. What does the Bible say about people who practice fortune-telling? (See Deuteronomy 18:10-11.)
3. Jason had the opportunity to live a "normal" life in our world. Why does he choose to go back to Lyrian? What would you have done in that situation?
4. Rachel enjoys learning Edomic. What physical dangers come with her gift? What do you think are the emotional dangers that come with her ability? If you could have a superpower, what would it be and why?
5. Tark has many regrets. Are there any decisions you've made that you've regretted? If so, what are they? Is there anything you can do to change the situation?

Seekers: Great Bear Lake



This animal fantasy book by Erin Hunter is the second in the “Seekers” series and is published by HarperCollins. This book 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. Many of the book’s characters are only comfortable associating with bears who are similar to themselves—polar bears associate with polar bears, black bears associate with black bears, etc. How does this affect the way the animals interact with those who are different? Just like the bears in the story, people sometimes view those who are different from themselves with hostility, fear or prejudice. Have you ever felt this way? What can be done to overcome these feelings? What does the Bible tell us about how we should treat one another, regardless of our differences?
2. Why does Toklo tell Lusa that he does not want to hear anything about his mother, Oka? How does Toklo get over his resentment toward his mother? Have you ever been so sad or angry that you’ve said something you didn’t mean? What should you do when you say something that hurts someone’s feelings? If someone hurts your feelings and

later asks for forgiveness, how should you respond?

3. Why does Toklo say that Lusa is not a proper bear for scavenging through garbage instead of hunting? Why does Lusa feel guilty about eating part of the sheep that Toklo kills, even though Toklo invites her to eat with him? Describe a time when you let someone down or failed to meet another person’s expectations. Sometimes, like Lusa, we feel that we must do something to “earn” the blessings in our lives. However, God freely gives people the greatest blessings of all—grace and salvation. When did you first learn about these gifts? Have you accepted these gifts from God? How does it make you feel to know that you do not need to do anything to earn these gifts?

Seekers: The Quest Begins



This animal fantasy book by Erin Hunter is the first in the “Seekers” series and is published by HarperCollins. This book 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 Toklo’s mother say she wishes Toklo were more like his brother? What do you value in your siblings or a close friend? What can you learn from him/

her? Why does Toklo feel that he is superior to his brother? Is he really superior? Describe a time when you felt inferior because you did not have the same abilities—physical, mental, athletic, etc.—as someone else. How do we know that each of us is valuable, no matter what our abilities are? If every person is valuable, how should you treat someone with abilities that are different than your own?

2. Why does Toklo help rescue the wounded cub Ujurak in the forest? Why does he bring Ujurak meat, even though the other cub is weak and Toklo has previously looked down on weak cubs? Which incident makes Toklo decide to abandon Ujurak, and why does he change his mind and stay with the shape-shifting cub? Name someone at your school who is in need of a friend. How might you help that person or be a friend to that person? Talk about a time when you saw someone else who needed help. What did you do? How should you respond when you see someone injured or in need of help?
3. How do older male bears threaten cubs? Why must bears in the wild protect their territories? Human beings are different from animals. How might these same actions in our world be considered bullying?

The Selection



This dystopian romance novel by Kiera Cass is the first in “The Selection” series and is published by HarperTeen, a division of HarperCollins.

The Selection is written for kids ages 13 and up.

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

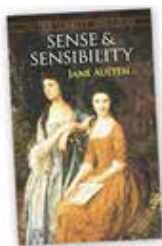
If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. Before America is selected, her whole future rests on being with Aspen. How does her hope for happiness rest in one person? How does that person let her down? To whom does the Bible tell us to give our hope and dreams? How might putting your hope in God help you pursue your dreams?
2. How does America's mother pressure her to register for the Selection? How would America's success in the Selection be an opportunity for the entire family? When have you felt our family putting unfair pressure on you? Explain. How did you respond to that pressure?
3. How does America feel on her first night in the palace? When have you felt overwhelmed? How did God help you get through it?
4. How does America feel toward Maxon when he believes Celeste's deception? What does America do after she decides that if Celeste can find a way around the rules, so can she? How does America handle her anger toward Celeste and Maxon? How do you feel when you see others breaking the rules with no repercussions? Explain.
5. Why does Celeste treat America poorly? How have you treated others poorly because they were different or unimportant to you? What value does God put on each human being? How does your worth stem from what Jesus

did for you and not what you can do?

6. How are the girls in the Selection competitive? What do some do to intimidate other girls so they feel poorly about themselves? How have you been intimidated or bullied by your peers? How have you intimidated or bullied your peers?
7. Why does America's older brother, Kota, distance himself from his family? How do his actions wound America? Tell about a time when someone ignored you. How did being ignored make you feel? Who is the One the Bible says will never leave you or forsake you?

Sense and Sensibility



This historical romance by Jane Austen was originally published by Thomas Egerton and is now published by a variety of companies, including HarperCollins Publishers, Belknap Press and Dover Publications. *Sense and Sensibility* is written for adults but is sometimes studied by high school classes.

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

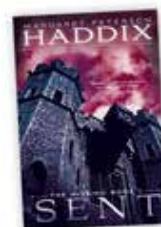
If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. What influences Marianne's romantic ideals about love? How do our media and society influence your ideals about love? Where else do your ideas of love come from? How does Elinor's behavior reflect the biblical

ideals of love described in 1 Corinthians 13?

2. Money and social status play an important role in the choosing of a spouse during Austen's day. Do you think it plays as important a role in our society? What influences a person's choice in a marriage partner?
3. What role does gossip play in the story? What are the dangers of gossiping?
4. Both Edward and Marianne profess their love for people who they did not end up marrying. What are the dangers of allowing your emotions to influence your relationships? What are our family's rules about dating? What are their benefits?

Sent



This science fiction book by Margaret Peterson Haddix is the second in "The Missing" series published by Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing, a division of Simon & Schuster Inc. *Sent* is written for ages 8-12.

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. The children are angry with JB because they think he wants to hurt Alex and Chip. Have you ever been angry with us because you thought we were being unfair? How long did it take before you realized that we were

trying to do what was best for you?

2. If you could travel back in time, where would you like to go and why? Do you think these children would have chosen to go to the 15th century? How do they make the best out of a bad situation? Why might Katherine and Jonah want to go back in time, again? What is appealing about it?
3. The children initially think Richard of Gloucester is evil. What makes them change their minds about him? The Bible tells us that people judge the way people look on the outside. What does 1 Samuel 16:7 say about how God judges us?
4. JB says that whether King Richard went to heaven is between God and the king. Do you think the king went to heaven? Why or why not?
5. The Bible tells us in John 15:13 that it takes a great love to give up your life for a friend. How do Jonah and Katherine demonstrate this? How might this have been hard for them to do? How hard would it be for you to do?

A Separate Peace



This coming-of-age novel by John Knowles is published by Scribner, an imprint of Simon and Schuster. This book 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 role does fear, hate and jealousy play in Gene's outlook on life? How does Gene's viewpoint on life hurt Finny? Why is Gene blind at first to Finny's true friendship? Describe your outlook on life.
2. How do your beliefs hurt or help those around you?
3. Why does Gene assume that Finny hates him because he earned all A's? When have you assumed something about a friend that wasn't true? Why can that be dangerous? How can you avoid making false assumptions?
4. At the end of the book, the adult Gene says he fought his war at Devon. What kind of war is he talking about? What thoughts and sins did Gene battle in his mind? What thoughts do you battle in your mind? Why do you think Paul writes in the Bible that we must renew our minds and take our thoughts captive to Christ?
5. What pictures are taped to the walls in Gene's room? Why does Gene let others believe that the expensive southern plantation is his home? Have you ever let others believe something about you that was false? Why?
6. At the end of the book, the adult Gene says that Finny was never afraid and never hated. What do you think about this statement? How perfect can anyone be? How perfect do you expect yourself to be? How perfect does God expect you to be? Who is the only one who has never been afraid or hated?
7. At the start of the book, the adult Gene says love does not endure.

Why do you agree or disagree with this statement? How has love affected your life? How has your love affected others?

Sepron the Sea Serpent



This fantasy by Adam Blade is the second in the "Beast Quest" series and is published by Scholastic Inc. This book 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. Calum's father wants to give up on their village after Sepron destroys their boats. Was there ever a time you felt you were in a hopeless situation? Who did you turn to for help? How did your actions change the situation or your attitude?
2. Calum's father refuses to let Tom and Elenna borrow the town's last boat, but they take it out in the morning. Is it stealing if they planned to bring it back? Why is it important to respect other people's property? What would have happened to the village if the boat had been destroyed?
3. Tom and Elenna work well together. Describe how each one contributes to the capture of Sepron. Could either have succeeded by him- or herself?
4. Calum says Tom reminds him of a man he met years ago. Do you think this man was Tom's father? Why or why not?

Seven Stories Up



This historical, time-travel novel by Laurel Snyder is published by Random House Children's Books, a division of Random House, 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. Annie's mother tells her that her grandmother seemed to have a big black hole inside her. When she goes back in time, how does Annie help fill that emptiness? Have you ever felt empty inside? Who has helped fill that emptiness? How does God help fill that emptiness?
2. What does Molly want to do about the broken lampshades and stolen skates? What does Annie want to do? What would you do if this had happened to you?
3. What could have happened to the girls as they were sneaking out? Since no one knew where they were, would it have been difficult to find help if they needed it? What else could they have done to have adventures that weren't so dangerous?
4. How does Annie influence her grandmother's future? How does she influence her own future? Give an example of how something you do today might affect your future.

5. How can having only material things make a person feel unloved? What might have made the original Molly an angry old woman? How does anger hurt Molly? How might it hurt you? How can forgiveness help you not become an angry adult?

Shadow Chaser



This fantasy novel by Jerel Law is the third in the "Sons of Angels, Jonah Stone" series published by Tommy Nelson, a registered trademark of Thomas Nelson

Inc. *Shadow Chaser* is for kids ages 11 to 15.

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 Bible character does Jonah remind you of in this story? What are some of the similarities between what Jonah endures and what Job went through?
2. Why does Abaddon single Jonah out for his torture? Why do you think Elohim allows Jonah to suffer and eventually lose his mom?
3. What weapons do the quarterlings use to defeat the fallen ones? Where does the Bible talk about these weapons? How can you use the full armor of God in your life today??

The Shadows



This fantasy book written by Jacqueline West is the first in "The Books of Elsewhere" series and is published by Dial Books for Young Readers, a

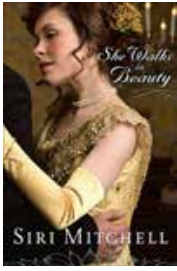
division of Penguin. *The Shadows* is written for ages 10 and up.

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:

1. Which characters gossip? What do they talk about? Tell about a time when you heard someone gossiping or you gossiped. How might those words hurt someone? What does Ephesians 4:29 suggest to do instead of gossiping about others? What can you do if you hear someone gossiping?
2. When Aldous leaves the painting, what form does he take? What does Olive use to banish the evil Aldous and the darkness? What does it take to banish real evil and darkness in the world? How powerful is a lantern compared to the power of Jesus, the Light of the World (John 12:46)? How does Olive find the courage to face evil? Talk about a time when you needed courage. What helped you find that courage?
3. How does Horatio warn Olive? How does Olive respond to the warning? What is one thing that you've been warned against? How have you been tempted to ignore the warning? What might help you keep from acting on that temptation?

She Walks in Beauty



This Christian historical romance book is written by Siri Mitchell and is published by Bethany House, a division of Baker Publishing Group. This book is

written for kids ages 16 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. Clara likes to eavesdrop. How does what she hears affect the way Clara treats others? How might knowing a half-truth about someone affect your view of the person? Did Clara see eavesdropping as wrong? Do you? Explain.
2. Clara spreads damaging gossip. Is it OK for her to do this? Explain. Does the end result justify her actions? What does the Bible say about gossip? What harm can come from gossip?
3. How does the author show that a corset can damage a woman's body? Is the sacrifice worth the fashion statement that an 18-inch waist can make? What are some items in your closet today that are not good for your body? How should you treat your body?
4. How was Harry different from Franklin? Why do you think he was so different?
5. Clara's aunt said, "Some races are simply inferior to our own. The Irish, for instance. And the Italians. If they're poor and they live in tenements, then it's their own fault. If God wanted the

poor to prosper, then they would. If they're not, then they deserve what they get." What is wrong with her reasoning? What is your view of the poor? How can you serve them as a brother or sister in Christ?

6. What do those around you think about you? What does God think about you? What do you feel you have to do to be accepted by those around you? How does God accept you just the way you are? Do you know anyone who suffers from a poor self-image? How can you help someone struggling with his or her self-image?

Shiloh



This coming of age novel by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor is the first in the "Shiloh" series published by Atheneum Books for Young Readers, an imprint of

Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing Division, a registered trademark of Simon & Schuster Inc. *Shiloh* 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 you think Judd is so cruel and violent? Why should you be particularly cautious around people who are cruel to animals? What lessons can you learn from Marty about how to understand and deal with mean people?

2. How does Marty feel about lying to keep Shiloh safe? What happens to Dad's trust in Marty when he learns about the lies? What might be some of the consequences you'd face if you lied to your friends or relatives?
3. What do you think about Marty's belief that Jesus would want him to keep Shiloh safe at any cost? What would you have done if you'd been in Marty's shoes? When, if ever, is it OK to break the law like Marty did by hiding Shiloh? Name some trusted adults you could talk to, other than us, about tough situations like this one.

Shine



This contemporary, mystery book by Lauren Myracle is published by Amulet Books, an imprint of Abrams. *Shine* 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. Do Christians have a duty to counteract bullying? What prevents people from speaking up and helping others who are being picked on? What does Christ model when it comes to defending others and showing compassion? How does Cat treat others with dignity and respect? What can you do to act respectful toward your classmates?
2. As Christians, we adhere to biblical principles. The Bible says sex

should be reserved for a man-woman marital relationship. Find other references to sexuality in the Bible.

3. Toward the end, Cat says that hiding in the shadows has the power to hurt. How so? Why didn't Christian rescue his sister from Tommy?
4. What is Jason's father's addiction? How can a whole family be sick when one person is sick? If you had a friend who you knew was using alcohol or drugs, what would you do? What is the best way to help him?

Shoot-Out



This sports story by Mike Lupica is part of the “Comeback Kids” series published by Philomel Books, a division of Penguin Young Readers Group

in association with Walden Media, L.L.C. *Shoot-Out* is written for kids ages 8 to 12 years.

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 soccer season teach Jake? How can you sometimes learn more from losing than winning?
2. Why does the coach urge Jake not to go too easy on Kevin? How are Jake and Kevin finally able to connect and become friends? What are some things you can do to help a friend who has lost a loved one? What kinds

of things should you avoid saying or doing?

3. What are Jake's parents like? How do they encourage him as a soccer player and in other aspects of his life?
4. How important is winning to you? Have you ever found yourself disliking an activity you once loved because you are no longer successful at it? What is the value of participating in something you enjoy even if you're not the star?

Sidney & Norman



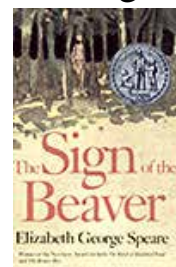
This Christian book by Phil Vischer is published by Thomas Nelson Publishers and is written for kids ages 4 to 10.

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. Does God love you? Why do you think He loves you?
2. Who are other people you know that God loves? Why do you think He loves them? (Emphasize that God loves your child and others because He chooses to, not because of what they do or how good they are.)
3. Why do you think I love you?

The Sign of the Beaver



This adventure by Elizabeth George Speare is published by Houghton Mifflin 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. Do you think you could survive on your own as long as Matt did?
2. What would you do?
3. It was difficult for Matt to be nice to Attean when the American Indian behaved so rudely toward him. Is there someone like Attean in your life?
4. Do you think that, like Matt, you could turn that person into a friend?

The Silver Chair



This fantasy adventure is the sixth book in “The Chronicles of Narnia” series by C.S. Lewis. HarperCollins Children's Books, a division of

HarperCollins, is the publisher. *The Silver Chair* 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. Jill is bullied at school, and Eustace used to be a bully. Why can't they ask the school's authorities for help? From whom can you ask for help if you are being bullied? How can you help others who are being bullied?
2. Why can't Eustace and Jill draw magic symbols or recite spells to get into Narnia? How do they get into Narnia? Why does Aslan tell Jill that he called for them?
3. What important instructions, called Signs, does Aslan give Jill? Does Jill remember them after hearing them only once? Are they easy for her to remember on her journey? Do she and Eustace misunderstand any of the Signs? How are the Signs similar to reading Scripture or learning memory verses?
4. In her first encounter with him, Aslan cautions Jill not to pay attention to appearances. What are some examples of when Jill and Eustace are deceived by appearances? Tell about a time when you were deceived by appearances.
5. Why do Jill and Eustace want to get to the giant city of Harfang? Who tells them it is a good place to visit? Who tells them they should not go to Harfang? In whom should they have trusted? In whom did they trust? Why didn't they choose to trust Puddleglum's advice? What problems do they have when they stay in Harfang?
6. The Knight asks the children to free him in Aslan's name. Why do Jill and Eustace still not want to free him? Why does Puddleglum say they must? In whom did Jill and Eustace choose

to trust? What happens when they untie him? Has God ever asked you to do something that didn't seem to make sense to you? How can you trust God's direction, especially when doing the right thing means taking a risk?

A Single Shard



This historical fiction by Linda Sue Park is published by Clarion Books, an imprint of Houghton Mifflin 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. What would have happened if Tree-ear had given up and gone home when the robbers broke the vases? When have you been tempted to give up? What has helped you go forward instead of going backward?
2. Can you imagine what your life would be like if you didn't have a family? Why is it so important to have a place where you feel as though you belong? What often happens to people who feel they don't belong anywhere?
3. Many children around the world today live without homes or families. What are some ways you could help children who are in need—maybe in your own school or community?
4. What happened in the story about the "Rock of the Falling

Flowers"? Should the women have jumped to their deaths? Why do you think the story ended in this way? What would have been a better ending?

Sir Bentley and Holbrook Court



This medieval fantasy is second in the "The Knights of Arrethtrae" series by Chuck Black and is published by Multnomah Books, a division of

Random House, Inc., New York. This book is written for kids ages 10 to 14.

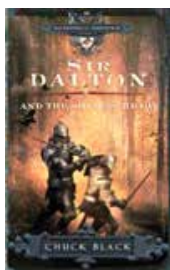
Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

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

1. Who does the King from the Kingdom Across the Sea represent? Who does the Prince represent? Why are the followers persecuted for believing in the Prince?
2. Bentley spends time among the poor and needy. How does this change his perspective? Why is it important for Christians to be compassionate toward the poor and needy?
3. What choice must Bentley make when he realizes the truth about the King's words? What sacrifices must he make to follow the Prince? Why must he give up his life as a knight? How is this like following Jesus Christ? Do Christians have to give up anything to follow Christ?

4. Bentley is mentored by Sir Demus. Why is it important for believers to be mentored by wise and mature Christians? What have you learned about God and the Christian life from older, more mature Christians?
5. In this fantasy book, the characters face many battles. How are these struggles similar to ones that Christians face living in this world? How does God equip you to face these struggles? How does knowing the Bible help you deal with obstacles you face?

Sir Dalton and the Shadow Heart



This medieval fantasy book is third in “The Knights of Arrethtrae” series by Chuck Black and is published by Multnomah Books, a division

of Random House, Inc. This book 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:

1. The Knights of the Prince are trained in swordsmanship. As believers, we grow in maturity by learning the Word of God. What are the similarities between a sword and the Bible? How does being familiar with the Bible help you become more effective as a Christian?
2. The book shows how important it is for believers to grow in their faith and become more mature after they first become Christians.

What are some things Christians can do to grow in their faith? What kinds of things have you done to grow in your faith since you became a Christian?

3. Master Sejus asks Dalton what’s most important to him. At that point in the story, Dalton answers that Lady Bryn is most important to him. Why is it necessary for believers to know what the most important things in their lives are? What’s the most important thing in your life?
4. At first, Dalton thinks Master Sejus is an old man, but after spending an extended period of time with him, Dalton’s perception of him changes. What is your perception of Jesus? Has your perception changed since you first met Jesus?
5. Christians all have a calling in this world. Do you know what God is calling you to do as a Christian? How might God equip you to carry out that calling? If you don’t know your calling, how might you find out what your calling is?

Sir Kendrick and the Castle of Bel Lione



This medieval adventure is the first book in “The Knights of Arrethtrae” series by Chuck Black and is published by Multnomah Books. This book

is written for kids 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 doesn’t Kendrick care about winning events in the tournament?
2. In Chapter 15, Landor talks about three different ways people are often taken in by Lord Ra’s enticements. What are they? How can one who serves the King take another route and avoid these entanglements?
3. When Duncan chooses to return to Lord Ra’s castle, he begins to feel anxious as he remembers the torture he experienced there. Why does he go anyway? What would you have done?
4. At Lord Ra’s parties, young people drink and flirt with one another and behave wildly. What is dangerous about Lord Ra’s parties?
5. If you were Kendrick, could you have forgiven Landor when you learned he’d killed your family? Have you ever had to forgive someone for something they did to hurt you? How difficult was it?

Skeleton Creek



This mystery suspense book by Patrick Carman is the first in the “Skeleton Creek” series published by Scholastic Press, an imprint of Scholastic Inc.

Skeleton Creek is written for kids ages 10 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. Why do Ryan and Sarah become interested in the dredge and the history of Skeleton Creek? Why does Ryan continue to pursue the investigation, even though it frightens him? If you were Ryan or Sarah, would you have taken your investigation as far as they did? Why or why not?
2. Why might some people like scary stories or movies? What do you think of them? What is the difference between a story that is innocently thrilling and exciting and one that draws readers into dark, terrifying thoughts? On what kind of thoughts should God's people dwell, according to the Bible?
3. What kind of relationships did Ryan and Sarah have with their parents? What were some ways Ryan and Sarah could have been more obedient and respectful? What are some things their parents could have done to improve the parent/child relationships? What are some ways that you and I can improve our parent/child relationship? What would this require from you? What would it require from me?.

Skeleton Key



This action/thriller book is the third in the “Alex Rider” series by Anthony Horowitz and is published by the Penguin Group. *Skeleton Key* is written for kids

ages 12 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 spy, Alex often lies in order to outwit his enemies. Are there times in life when it's all right to lie? If so, in what kind of situations would it be OK? If not, why not? What does the Bible say about lying? How does the biblical perspective line up with what you believe?
2. Being an orphan, Alex would like nothing more than to be a part of a real family. However, when Sarov offers to adopt him, Alex declines. What does Alex realize about family? Why wouldn't Sarov be a good parent for Alex? What do you like best about your family? Is there anything you would like to change about your family? What does it mean to have God as your heavenly Father and to be a member of His family?
3. Does Sarov believe in God? Does Alex? What is different about Sarov's beliefs and Alex's? Where do you think Alex gets his sense of right and wrong? Do humans have more of a natural desire to do what is right or what is wrong?
4. Why does Alex hate working for M16? What would be the major differences between being an M16 agent and living the life of an average teenager? Why does he decide that the so-called glamorous life of a spy is not what he wants? What would Alex like about your life? What do you like about his?
5. Does Alex want to go on the mission to Skeleton Key? Why does he go? What does he do to help

his partners and prevent Sarov from carrying out his evil plans? How can someone not want to do something, but still do it to the best of his ability? Read Colossians 3:23. Whatever you do, how are you supposed to work at it? Why is it hard to do everything as if you're doing it for Christ?

Skellig



This fantasy by David Almond is published by Delacorte Press, an imprint of Random House Children's Books, a division of Random House.

Inc., and is written for kids ages 10 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:

1. What is Skellig? How does he describe himself to the children? How does he change throughout the story? How does Michael change because of Skellig? How do Michael's friendship with Mina and his concern for the baby change him? What things in your world have changed you?
2. What do Michael's teacher and Mina believe about evolution? What does the Bible say about it?
3. How does love aid in the healing process? How is this idea shown in this book? How has love helped to heal something in your own life or in the lives of those close to you?

Skin Hunger



This fantasy book is the first in the “A Resurrection of Magic” series by Kathleen Duey and is published by Simon Pulse, an imprint of Simon & Schuster

Children’s Publishing Division. *Skin Hunger* 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. How does Sadima lie to cover her communication with the wolf? Why doesn’t she want to tell her family about her abilities? Is there an area of your life that you don’t feel you can tell your family about? How does having to hide those thoughts and feelings make you feel?
2. What does Hahp consider doing before reaching the academy of wizards? In what ways does he contemplate killing himself? What does he think of himself for not being able to kill himself? Is this also your definition of a coward? Does it take more courage to live or die? Explain.
3. Why does Sadima wish people would be able to truly understand animals? What does she say that animals are and people are not? What does she mean when she says animals are honest? Through their thoughts, how are animals seen as higher, lower or equal to humans?

4. Why did Micah have to steal milk money to buy Sadima paints? Why couldn’t he let his father know what he was doing?
5. How did Hahp feel about having to get undressed in front of the other boys? How did the burning of his clothing end his connection to life outside the academy? How did finding new clothes begin his life at the academy?
6. Why were the boys at the academy forbidden to help each other?
7. Who does Hahp hate? Why does he hate his father? Why does he hate Gerrard at one point? Why does he hate the wizards? Why does he hate himself? What kind of life has Hahp led that has made him hate so many so quickly? Do you hate anything? How can God help you with this area?
8. Why does Sadima lie to Franklin about the extra copy she makes? What does Somiss do with the songs that she copies? How does Sadima feel about lying? Why do you think she does it anyway?

Sky the Blue Fairy



This fifth fantasy book in the “Rainbow Magic” series by Daisy Meadows is published by Scholastic, Inc. This book is written for kids

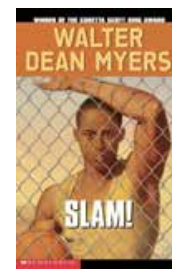
ages 6 to 9.

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. Kristy and Rachel promise they will find all the fairies, but they realize they may not be able to before their vacation ends. Why is it important to keep the promises we make? Is it sometimes better not to make promises if we’re not sure we can keep them?
2. The girls run into the forest to return Sky to her sisters when they’re supposed to be waiting on the beach for their moms. What should the girls have done when what their moms’ said conflicted with what they knew they had to do?
3. How could their actions have been dangerous?
4. Why do parents tell children to do things?
5. What made Kristy no longer afraid?
6. How does belief affect a person’s actions?
7. Why is it wrong to believe in the power of magic spells?
8. As a child of God, why don’t you have to be afraid?

Slam!



This sports drama by Walter Dean Myers is published by Scholastic 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:

1. Slam isn't honest with Mtisha when she asks him about his fling with another girl. Why is honesty important in a relationship? If you saw one of your friends starting to travel a dangerous path in life, how would you try to help that person?
2. Slam felt that grades weren't important as long as he could play ball well enough to get a scholarship. How much do you think your grades now will shape your future?
3. How important are male role models in a boy's life? Who were the men in Slam's life, and what kind of examples did they set for him?

Sleepover



This beginning reader book by Cece Bell is published by Candlewick Press and is written for kids ages 5 to 9.

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 parts of the sleepover that don't go the way Rabbit plans? What are some ways the sleepover doesn't go the way Robot may have wanted? How does each behave when his plans don't work out and he doesn't get his way?

2. What does Robot do while Rabbit yells and runs around the house? Tell about a situation in your life that was difficult or that you were disappointed. What are some good ways you can respond in a difficult or disappointing situation?
3. What fun things happened when Rabbit's plans fell through? Tell about a time with friends or family that was especially memorable because something happened that was unexpected or unplanned.
2. Why doesn't Deirdre think Trina's doll is a part of the City Girls line? How does Deirdre finally realize the doll is in the City Girls line? Does she admit this to Trina? What would you do if you were in Deirdre's place and realized you were wrong?
3. What frustrates Marcy about her little sister? How does she stand up for her little sister at the pizza place? Think about your siblings, friends or relatives. What are some things that are hard for you to talk about with them? What do you appreciate about them? Describe a time when you were publically supportive of them. Was that easy or hard for you to do? Explain. What are some other ways you could be more supportive of them?

Sleepover Sleuths



This mystery book by Carolyn Keene is the first in the "Nancy Drew and the Clue Crew" series and is published by Aladdin Paperbacks, an imprint of the

Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing Division. *Sleepover Sleuths* is written for kids ages 6 to 9.

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 Nancy use her skills to find the hidden present? How is she able to guess the school lunch menu? How do you think she felt her friends recognized her talent? When was the last time you encouraged one of your friends in what she was good at? Who around you could use an encouragement about her character, skills or talents? When will you let this person know that you think well of her?
4. Why doesn't Deirdre want to ask her parents to help her look for her doll? Describe a time when you wanted to do something on your own and didn't want to ask for help. Why didn't you want to ask for help? What did you decide to do? How did the situation turn out?
5. How does Nancy play the role of peacemaker at the party? Have you ever had to play the role of peacemaker? How did you help others work through a disagreement? Who do you know acts as a peacemaker?
6. Why doesn't Madison tell Deirdre that she has her doll? How does she feel threatened by Trina? Have you ever felt like you were losing a friend? Like you were being replaced by a new friend? How did it make you feel? How did you respond? What is that friendship like now?

Snap Decision



This sports novel by Nathan Whitaker is published by Zonderkidz, a trademark of Zondervan, and 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. What decision does Chase make that strains his friendship with Tripp? What might have happened if he had lied about Tripp's unconsciousness and strange behavior? Why is Tripp so angry about Chase's decision? What would you have done in Chase's place?
2. Why was it a little surprising that the kids all found Mo Isom so beautiful? What did her 6-foot, 195-pound frame make them realize about beauty? Why is the beauty you see in magazines often deceiving and dangerous? What inner qualities make people truly beautiful?
3. What kind of person is JB? How does he treat Chase, who is younger and less experienced in football? What are some ways JB influences Chase for the better? Why is Tripp's dad important to Chase as well? If you don't already have a good role model, how can you find someone to encourage and teach you? How can you set a good example for someone who is younger or less experienced at something than yourself?

Sneak



This science fiction book by Evan Angler is the second in the "Swipe" series published by Tommy Nelson, a registered trademark of Thomas Nelson Inc. *Sneak*

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. What kind of a leader is Chancellor Cylis? Why does his strategy of offering people an easy life, rather than taking away their freedoms, work so well? Why do people in real life sometimes prefer fewer, simpler choices over the freedom of having many choices? How does the Devil employ a similar strategy?
2. What advantage does the Dust have over Marked (consider their sense of community, ideals, etc.)? What happens when people are forced to come together based on their similar, but unpopular, beliefs? How are the Unmarked in this book similar to the early Christians of the New Testament?
3. What are some difficult circumstances Logan and his friends choose to endure in order to effect change? What are some sacrifices or difficult decisions you may face if you choose to help make the world a better place?

Snow Treasure



This historical book by Marie McSwigan is published by Dutton Children's Books, a division of Penguin Young Readers Group 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 did the children initially feel about helping the adults keep the gold from the Nazis? How did Peter feel about it when he made his first sled run and a company of soldiers were in his way? How did he feel about it as he passed the sentries? How did he feel about it when he threw the snowball at the Commandant? How would you feel if you were asked to hide something from an invading army?
2. Why did the adults ask the children not to say anything to any of the soldiers? What might have happened if they had become friends with a nice soldier? What did the soldiers think of them when they refused to talk to the soldiers? How did not talking to the Nazis help the children keep their secret? How can you apply not talking to others about a secret to your life?
3. What bad things happened to Jan in his life? What was he willing to risk to save Peter? What did he get in return?

- Why did the people of Riswyk want to hide their gold bullion from the Nazis? What were they afraid the Nazis would do with it?
- What did the people of Riswyk do well? What did they do poorly? What happened because of their hard work?
- How does Bella try to help Lindy attract the attention of Matt? How does this affect the relationship between Lindy and Matt? Do you think Bella is right in trying to improve Lindy's image? Why or why not? Have you ever wanted to change yourself or a friend to impress someone else? What does God's Word say about being who you are?

So Not Happening



This contemporary Christian mystery in the "Charmed Life" series by Jenny B. Jones is published by Thomas Nelson Publishers and is written for teens

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:

- How does Bella feel about her parents' divorce and her mother's remarriage to Jake? How does their marriage change Bella's life? How does she react to those changes? Have you ever experienced a tough situation like Bella's? How did you react? According to the Bible, what kind of attitude should you have when life changes?
- What consequences does Bella face after she writes mean things about Truman High School on her blog? How does that decision affect her relationship with her new classmates? Who shows her forgiveness? How does God show you forgiveness when you mess up?
- What does The Brotherhood require of those wanting to join their group? What has happened as a result of these activities? Have you ever wanted to become a member of a club? What did you have to do? How did you feel? How does God show you that He doesn't require you to prove yourself to Him? What does this say about His love? What does this say about how we are to love others?
- How does Bella show selflessness when she sees her house on fire? What does she do for Robbie? How do her actions change her family's attitude toward her? How has God saved you from trouble?
- What does Budge do for Bella after Zachary's funeral? How does this change their relationship? How does Bella finally accept her new family? What does Bella say about God and His plans? What does the Bible have to say about God's plan for your life?

So Not Okay



This slice-of-life novel by Nancy Rue is the first in the "Mean Girl Makeover" series published by Tommy Nelson, a registered trademark of Thomas

Nelson. So Not Okay 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 are some of the ways members of the Pack bully Tori, Ginger and their friends? Why does Tori stand up for Ginger, even though she knows she will get in more trouble with the Pack? Why does Ophelia refuse to defend Ginger? Why is it important for you to stand up for others who are in trouble?
- What are some of Lydia's suggestions for how to handle bullies? When have you had to deal with a bully, and how did you handle it? Which of Lydia's tips might work for you in the future, when you have to face someone mean?
- Why are Tori and the girls afraid to get adults involved in their bullying problems? If you're dealing with a bully, when should you seek help from parents, teachers or administrators? Which adults would you feel most comfortable talking to in a situation like this?

Sober Faith



This second Christian-school-life book in the “Payton Skky” series by Stephanie Perry Moore is published by Moody Publishers. *Sober Faith* 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. After Payton witnesses her friends drinking she is more concerned about her parents’ reaction than about the condition and safety of her friends. What is the legal age for drinking alcohol? How would you have responded?
2. Alcohol advertising campaigns sometimes refer to responsible drinking. What does that mean?
3. During spring break, Payton’s friends call her Miss High-and-Mighty. Payton is upset when she observes her friends’ behaviors, which includes one of them drinking and smoking marijuana with her boyfriend, and one of them drinking and entering a wet T-shirt contest after being dumped by her boyfriend. How would you approach your friends if you observed them participating in dangerous or irresponsible activities? How would you try to stop them?
4. Payton’s friend Lynzi seems to have lots of good things going for her, but she still tries to commit suicide. What makes a girl like

Lynzi feel her only choice is to end her life?

5. Payton’s boyfriend appears to be a mature, young, Christian man. After attending Tad’s prom, Tad and Payton go to a secluded spot and begin kissing passionately. Payton eventually stops him. What circumstances led to Payton and Tad’s passion getting out of hand? When and where should unmarried couples spend time alone?
6. What does the Bible say about physical intimacy?

Son



This social science/dystopian novel written by Lois Lowry is the fourth book in “The Quartet,” published by Walter Lorraine Books, a division

of Houghton Mifflin Company. *Son* 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. Describe the three communities Claire experiences. Which is your favorite? Why?
2. How do the people of the seaside village first view Claire when she washes ashore? Why do some of their opinions change? Why shouldn’t you judge others, as the village people did?
3. Which characters in this story demonstrate sacrificial love? What does each sacrifice cause to happen? Have you ever sacrificed

for someone? What did your sacrifice cause to happen?

4. If you climbed the cliff, what might the Trademaster ask you for? What would you want in return? How could you still attain that without making a trade?
5. What embarrasses or shames Mentor about his dealings with Trademaster? Why does he tell what he did to Gabe? Think about something you’re ashamed about and don’t want to tell anyone. Why wouldn’t you want to tell someone about what you did? How is that similar to what Mentor feels? If a friend needed to know about what you did, would you tell your friend? Explain.

The Son of Neptune



This contemporary fantasy by Rick Riordan is the second in the “Heroes of Olympus” series and is published by Hyperion Books, an

imprint of Disney Publishing Worldwide. *The Son of Neptune* 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. Frank briefly wishes he could forget the past, as Percy has. Is there something about your life you wish you could forget? Explain. How has that incident influenced your life? What did you learn from it?

2. Frank uses his spear for the last time to save strangers on a train. What does this demonstrate about his character? Why is this an admirable quality? Whom do you know who has this same quality?
3. Describe how greed led to Hazel's mother's death. Read Matthew 6:23-25. What does God say about money in this passage?
4. What differences do you see between the Greek Camp Half-blood and the Roman camp? If you were Percy, how would you try to bring the two camps together?

A Song for Harlem



This historical fiction story by Patricia C. McKissack is the third book in the “Scraps of Time” series published by Puffin Books, a division

of Penguin Young Readers Group. This book was 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 were some ways Lilly Belle changed as a result of her time in Harlem? What did she learn about writing? What did she discover about herself?
2. Why is Alice so unkind to others? What secret difficulties is she experiencing in her life? Do you know anyone who is always mean, angry or unhappy? What

might happen if you made a special effort to show that person kindness or respect?

3. What are some interesting facts you learned about the Harlem Renaissance?

Speak



This coming-of-age drama by Laurie Halse Anderson is published by the Penguin Group. The book is written for ages 12 and up.

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

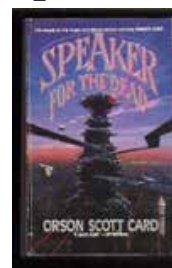
If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. Why is Melinda treated as an outcast at school? Why is she treated as a celebrity by the end of the book? How does student perception change?
2. How does our society view celebrities? Why shouldn't we treat our friends as outcasts or celebrities? How can we learn to look inside of people instead of judging them for their appearance or actions?
3. How old was Melinda? Should she have been drinking? What were some of the poor choices she made leading up to the rape? Is it her fault that she was raped? Why do some victims feel that it is their fault, when it isn't?
4. Why do you think Melinda kept her emotions bottled inside? Why doesn't she tell anyone what has happened? Is there someone in your life that you can tell

everything to? Tell me about this person.

5. How does Heather use her friendship with Melinda to her own advantage? How do her actions show that she isn't a true friend? How should Melinda have asked a friend for help? How do your friends ask you for help? How do you ask your friends for help?
6. Melinda's former friends don't ask her why she called the police at the party. Why is it important to talk with your friends, even if you think they are to blame for something?
7. What would you do if you noticed a friend had changed—an A student was flunking or a joyful-hearted person was now depressed? Who should you tell about this person? How should you talk to this person?

Speaker for the Dead



This science fiction book by Orson Scott Card is the second in the “Ender Quintet” series and is published by Tor Books, a division of Macmillan

Publishers. *Speaker for the Dead* is written for readers age 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. Describe how the colonists deal with the Piggies. How is this similar to or different from the ways that people today view other

cultures? How would you have acted in their place?

2. What does Ender believe redeems a person's existence? Can moments of good in an evil person's life redeem him? What does the Bible say about redemption? Why might Jesus be willing to redeem all people, even those who have been evil, if they confess their sin and believe on His name?

Spirit Fighter



This fantasy novel by Jerel Law is the first in the “Sons of Angels, Jonah Stone” series published by Tommy Nelson, a registered trademark of Thomas Nelson

Inc. *Spirit Fighter* is written for kids ages 9 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:

1. Of whom are the kids frightened when they ride the train? Who do they try to help on that same part of the trip, believing she is safe? What do they learn about judging people based on their looks? What does the Bible say about a man's outward appearance?
2. What does Henry tell the kids about the man they see walking around with a fallen angel clinging to his back? What kind of lies does the Devil tell you to keep you trapped and afraid?

3. How are Jonah and Eliza ultimately able to overcome Abaddon? What is required of them in order to succeed? What kinds of armor are they reminded to use for battle? How can you use this armor in the battles you face in your life?

Stargirl



This romantic, slice-of-life book is not in a series but it does have a sequel. Written by Jerry Spinelli, *Stargirl* is published by Knopf Books, a division

of Random House, Inc., 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. What aspects of this story seem realistic? What parts seem more like a fairy tale? What is the difference between the two?
2. How much of your identity should be based on what others think of you? How much of it is? How did Jesus handle people's negative opinions of Him? Did their mean words make Him a different person on the inside?
3. To what degree is conformity necessary—and maybe even good? Give examples. To what degree is conformity unnecessary—and perhaps not good? Give examples. Where is the balance between these two elements?

4. What did you think of the way Stargirl said the Pledge of Allegiance? Was she being herself or being disrespectful?
5. How did you feel about Stargirl giving up her true identity for a while just to make Leo happy? Was that an act of love? Did Leo love Stargirl? Would a person who really loves you ask you to change your core personality for the sake of popularity (or some other purpose)?
6. Was Archie a good role model for Leo? Why or why not?
7. What were some ways that Stargirl brought out the beauty in her world? Did you get any ideas about how you could be more aware of the beauty in everyday things and/or improve the lives of those around you?
8. What did you think about the way Stargirl meditated and tried to “erase” herself? Is meditation a good or a bad thing? What might be some ways to meditate on God? What is dangerous about meditating on things, such as nature or the universe?

Starlighter



This fantasy adventure book is the first in the “Dragons of Starlight” series by Bryan Davis and is published by Zondervan. *Starlighter* is written for kids ages 14 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. What does it mean to show respect for authority? Does a person in authority have to earn respect? Why or why not? Do you know a person in authority whose ways or policies you disagree with? How can you show respect for that person?
2. What does self-sacrifice mean? Have you ever given up something important to help someone else in need? How hard was that to do? Was there a benefit? What did Jesus sacrifice for us?
3. How did the people of Jason's world treat Uriel Blackstone when he told them about the dragon planet? How is the way Uriel was treated similar to the way Christians are treated today? Are you willing to have people call you "crazy" when you tell them about Jesus?
4. Why does Drexel want to rescue the enslaved people of Starlight? How do you see that same response in our world today?
5. What do the snatchers try to take from Jason as he stands at the portal and keeps the river flowing? How do they try to take it from him? Who in the Bible uses these same techniques? Have you ever made a promise and then had someone else try to convince you to break your promise? How did that person try to convince you? Did you begin to doubt yourself? What can you do in those circumstances to overcome such self-doubts?
6. Why did Jason slay the dragon? Have you ever rushed into a situation to help someone and found out your actions only made the situation worse? What did you do then? Will God help a person

out of a difficulty even when that person has made a mistake?

7. What does Koren believe happens to a person enslaved to another? Do you agree with her that love must be a choice? Why does God give us the choice to love Him or not love Him?
8. Why do the dragons allow Arxad to ride away with Koren and Natalla? Was it true that Jason was revering the black egg? Should Koren have used her gift of storytelling to deceive the dragons?
9. Why do you think Elyssa doesn't tell Jason her plans? Is this a good way for a person to work with a team member? What can be the consequences of not communicating?

is it important to have other Christian friends?

3. What does the Bible teach about homosexuality? What does the Bible teach about how you should treat others? Which girls in the book handled the situation with their PE teacher the best from a biblical perspective?
4. How does Taylor react to the online photos? How does she react to what kids at school are saying about her? Read 1 Timothy 6:20. How does this Scripture relate to what happened to Taylor? When something like this happens at your school, how will you choose to react?
5. Rhiannon points DJ to Matthew 5:43-44. What does this Scripture ask those who follow Christ to do? How does DJ do this? Is there anyone in your life you find difficult to love? What makes this person hard to get along with? What role can you take in reaching out to this person with God's love?
6. How does DJ feel about Conner? What messed up things in their relationship? How does going too far physically with a boyfriend or girlfriend change the relationship?
7. How does Rhiannon notice that God is changing DJ and working in her? Has anyone ever noticed that about you? Have you noticed that about other people? What is one thing that makes it clear that God is at work in a person's life?

Stealing Bradford



This teen chick-lit book is the second in the "Carter House Girls" series by Wendy Lawton and is published by Zondervan. *Stealing Bradford*

is written for kids ages 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. In which of her actions is DJ conscientious about her decision to follow Christ? How has being a Christian changed her? If you have made the same decision, how did Christ change you?
2. The Bible says that "iron sharpens iron." Who is DJ's iron? Why

8. Steelheart



This science fiction novel by Brandon Sanderson is the first in “The Reckoners” series published by Delacorte Press, an imprint of Random House

Children’s Books, a division of Random House Inc. *Steelheart* 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. What is David’s motivation throughout most the book? Why is it problematic to be driven by a desire for revenge? What are some possible consequences of harboring vengeful thoughts or plotting to get back at someone? What does the Bible say about revenge? Why might God want to be the one to avenge injustice?
2. In what circumstances, if any, should a person resort to violent behavior? When isn’t violence the right response? In what situations might it be the right response? What are some healthy ways you can address injustice in our world without resorting to violence?
3. What emotion starts to make David see beyond his desire for revenge? What emotions dictate the decisions you make in your life? What decisions should never be made when you are emotional? What is the danger of making big life decisions when you are emotional? How can you keep yourself from doing this?

Stone Cold



This mystery coming-of-age novel by Robert Swindells is published by Hamish Hamilton Ltd. and the Penguin Group. It 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 unexpected things does this story portray about homelessness? How did it change your view of homeless people, if at all?
2. How do you think God wants His people to address the issues of homelessness and poverty? How can you and your family personally help someone in this situation?

Stone Fox



This animal adventure by John Reynolds Gardiner is published by Harper Trophy, an imprint of Harper Publishers and is written for kids ages 7 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. Can you be a winner without being the first to cross the finish line?
2. What happens when we “turn the other cheek” and are kind to our enemies?
3. How can we sacrifice our time, talents and money to help others in need, just as Willy did?

Storm Warning



This mystery adventure book by Linda Sue Park is the ninth book in “The 39 Clues” series and is published by Scholastic Inc.

Storm Warning is written for kids ages 9 to 12.

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

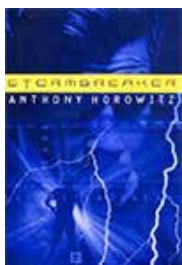
If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. How does Amy treat Nellie? Is she respected as an adult in Amy’s life? Is she wise about taking matters into her own hands and refusing to share information with Nellie? Do you believe Nellie has the children’s best interest in mind? Explain your answer.
2. How would you describe “The Right Excellent Nanny’s” mission? Do you consider her a hero? Why? What might Amy and Dan have felt when they visited one of her villages in the mountains? How important was her work? Did they grasp how important it was?
3. What was Grace’s relationship with Lester’s grandmother?

How did that friendship impact Lester's life? How did his life impact Amy and Dan?

4. Were you surprised when "The Man in Black" identified himself as Grace Cahill's brother? How did he behave throughout the series? Is he telling the truth? Do you feel that he can be trusted?
5. What do you like and dislike about the Madrigals being peacekeepers in the family? Was this information good news or bad news for Amy and Dan? Explain. How does this news affect their opinion of their parents? How does it change their family's legacy? How might Amy and Dan bring peace to their family?

Stormbreaker



This action-adventure book is the first in the "Alex Rider" series by Anthony Horowitz and is published by Speak Books, an imprint of the Penguin Group.

Stormbreaker 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. What role does revenge play in Stormbreaker? Which characters feel the need to exact revenge, and why? What does the Bible say about seeking revenge?
2. How does Alex feel about his mission? Does he get the sense that he is respected for the dangerous work he's doing? What

does he believe is the big difference between him and spies like James Bond? Why is it more difficult to complete a task you are forced to do than a job about which you feel passionate?

3. How does Alex feel when he learns Ian has told so many lies? How would you feel if you found out someone you trusted had kept his or her true identity from you?
4. Which characters show some concern for the value of human life? Which are more concerned about their work than about the lives that might be lost in the process? Why does Alex refuse to kill people in cold blood, despite the fact that Sayle and Gregorovich are doing it? Is it ever justifiable to take another life? Explain your answer. What does the Bible say about the value of human life?
5. Why does Alex protect and help Wolf, the man in his MI6 training, who tries to get Alex in trouble? Have you ever heard the phrase "killing someone with kindness"? What do you think that means? How does Alex's behavior eventually make an impression on Wolf? How might your decision to be kind to an enemy bring about positive results?

The Storybook of Legends



This modern fairy tale by Shannon Hale is the first in the "Ever After High" series published by Little, Brown and Company, a division of Hachette

Book Group, Inc. This book 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 Apple try so hard to convince Raven to sign the Storybook of Legends? Besides the possibility of going poof, what is Apple afraid might happen to her if Raven doesn't sign? How do the decisions of others affect you?
2. How does Apple feel about an uncertain future? How does Raven feel about an uncertain future? How will Raven's decision affect her future? When have you been nervous about the future because you didn't know what might lie ahead? What are some of your biggest concerns about the road before of you?
3. What does Maddie say are her favorite kind of stories? Why do some of us prefer the unexpected in life, while others prefer a story already written for us? As a child of God, into which of these categories does your story fall? Explain your answer.
4. Is Raven being selfish by refusing to sign the Storybook, or does she have the right to choose her own path? When have you had to make a decision that impacted the health, safety or happiness of others? What did you do?

Strangers on a Train



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

Children’s Publishing Division. *Strangers on a Train* 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. If you had been on this trip with Nancy, would you have known she was a detective? Explain how or why not.
2. How does the availability of online information about Nancy put her in danger? What are the Internet rules in our family? When you use the Internet, how do you use it responsibly? How is the Internet both a good and a bad thing at the same time?

Strawberry Girl



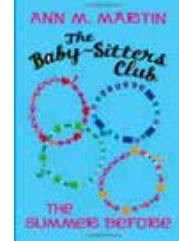
This historical fiction book by Lois Lenski is published by HarperCollins Children’s Books and written for kids ages 8 to 12.

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 do people respond to the Boyer family as they move to their new home? What kind of attitude does the Boyer family have toward their new home, town and neighbors? Have you ever moved to a new home? How have people responded to you? How did their response make you feel? Has anyone new ever moved into your neighborhood? How were you or could you be welcoming to them?
2. How are the Boyers and Slaters different? How do their beliefs influence them? What are their views on hard work? Which family is your family most like? How do your beliefs influence your family? What is your family’s view on hard work?
3. What do Birdie and the other kids do when Gus and Joe are beating up the schoolteacher? How do the kids at your school treat their teachers? Who are the bullies at your school? What have you done when or would you do if you saw kids getting bullied at school?
4. How does the new schoolteacher react when Shoestring comes to school? How does Birdie stand up for him? What would you have done if you were in Birdie’s shoes?

The Summer Before



This tween chick-lit book is a prequel to the first book in the original “The Baby-Sitters Club” series. It is written by Ann M. Martin and is published

by Scholastic Press, a division of Scholastic Inc. *The Summer Before* 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 do people respond to the Which one of the girls do you relate to the most and why?
2. What kinds of changes have you experienced in your friendships? How did you respond? Why were Claudia, Mary Anne and Kristy able to remain friends while Stacey and Laine were not?
3. How do Janine and Claudia resolve their conflict over Frankie? What could they have done differently to stop fighting earlier?
4. Do you feel Stacy’s parents made the right decision in not telling other people about her diabetes? Why or why not? How do you think her experiences might have been different had her family been willing to talk about her medical condition with others?

Summer of the Swans



This coming-of-age novel by Betsy Byars is published by Viking Penguin, a division of Penguin Books USA, 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 might Sara be frustrated and irritable so much of the time? What are some new or unexpected emotions you've experienced as you've gotten older? What are some things you do to handle those feelings so they don't overwhelm you?
2. How does Sara feel about her father early in the story? Why doesn't he come immediately when he hears Charlie is gone? What does Sara eventually realize about her father that causes her to give him a little more grace than before?
3. What does Sara discover about herself by the end of the story? When have you felt yourself taking a big step toward maturity or a greater understanding of life? How did this new understanding change your feelings and behavior?
4. When have you interacted with someone who has physical or mental disabilities? How did it make you feel? How does God feel about people with

disabilities? How does He want you to treat them?



This contemporary Christian book is first in the "Christy Miller" series by Robin Jones Gunn and is published by Bethany House Publishers, a division of Baker Book House Company. *Summer Promise* is written for kids ages 12 and up.

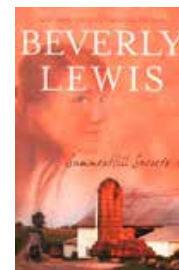
Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

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

1. How does Christy feel after her first day on the beach? What does Aunt Marti do to make her feel better? How does Christy feel after her makeover? Tell about a day when you felt bad. Who helped you feel better?
2. 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? What does Christy find out about Alissa that makes her realize Alissa is right? Who are you more like, Christy or Alissa? Who do you want to be more like?
3. 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 have you done that you have regretted? Why does Christy apologize to her aunt?

4. 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. Which group of people is Christy most attracted to? 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?
5. 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?

SummerHill Secrets Volume 1



This contemporary teen collection is the first of two volumes in the "SummerHill Secrets" series by Beverly Lewis and is published by Bethany House

Publishers, an imprint of Baker Publishing Group. This book is written for kids ages 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. **Whispers Down the Lane:** How does Merry deceive her family and friends? How does her deception help Lissa? How does it hurt Lissa? If you were in Merry's place, what would

you have done? How does Lissa change in the story? How does she find the strength to forgive her father? Lissa says, “Remember your tears. They’re precious to God.” How does it make you feel to know that God understands your sadness?

2. **Secrets in the Willows:**

How does Elton’s life change when Merry befriends him? How does her life change? What does the Bible say about how we are to treat people, even those who are not rich, popular or powerful? Have you ever encountered someone who was difficult to love? What did you do? What did you learn? How did Elton use His talents to worship God? What is your definition of worship? How can you use your own gifts to praise God?

3. **Catch a Falling Star:**

How is Merry caught in the middle of two cultures? In what way do you feel caught between two groups of people? How are Merry’s experiences similar to your own? How does Merry feel when her best friend, Jon Klein, spends time with Lissa? What does God’s Word say about jealousy? How does jealousy affect Merry’s relationships? How has jealousy affected you? What could you have done differently? What does Merry think when Lissa tells her that her parents are experimenting with the occult? Why is it so dangerous? What does God say about dabbling in unhealthy practices?

4. **Night of the Fireflies:**

What are some of the life-and-death trials that Merry faces? Through these trials, what does Merry learn about God’s love? What are some trials you have faced? What have you learned about God through them? How has He comforted you during

these trials? Like Merry, have you ever had the opportunity to influence someone younger than you? What did you do? How did it impact the other person? What did you learn from the relationship? What is the Amish way of dealing with death? What does God’s Word say about death? How are your thoughts about death similar or different from God’s Word and/or Amish beliefs?

5. **A Cry in the Dark:**

How did the young mother in *A Cry in the Dark* sacrifice for her child? How did she feel when the Hansons didn’t adopt her child? How did God work things out for good in this situation? Has God ever asked you to give up something you loved for the sake of someone else? How has that decision changed your life? What did God give up for you? What was Merry’s opinion of Miss Spindler throughout the book? How did that opinion change after she placed Charity in Miss Spindler’s care? Have you ever judged someone without knowing the whole story? What did it take to change your impression?

Sunset of the Sabertooth



This fantasy adventure book by Mary Pope Osborne is the seventh in “Magic Tree House” series and is published by Random House. *Sunset of the Sabertooth* 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. Which animal is larger, the sabertooth tiger or the woolly mammoth?
2. Which is more dangerous? Can you think of other examples of small animals that could be more dangerous than larger ones? According to the Bible, who created all animals? Are you surprised to learn that being bigger doesn’t always mean being more fierce? Is the same thing true about people? According to the Bible, who created all human beings?
3. How do Annie and Jack know that they are in a bear cave? How do they know when they are in the cave of a Cro-Magnon family? According to the Bible, how did God create animals, such as bears, and people differently? If Jack and Annie came to your house, what would they see? What would they learn about your family from looking at your belongings?
4. What does Annie name the woolly mammoth? How does she decide on that name? If you have a pet, how did you decide what it should be called? Do you know how your parents decided what to name you? Do you like your name? Why or why not? In the Bible, God calls us His children. Why is that name so valuable to Christians?

Surprise Endings



This contemporary Christian book is the fourth in the “Christy Miller” series by Robin Jones Gunn and is published by Bethany House Publishers, a division of the Baker Publishing Group.

Surprise Endings 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. What is Rick trying to do by encouraging Christy to try out for the cheerleading squad? Does she enjoy being controlled by Rick? 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?
2. Why does Christy get upset with Todd? As a result, what does she do with the bracelet Todd gave her? What does she realize later when Todd shows her a picture from the prom?
3. 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?
4. Why is Christy upset when her parents do not allow her to go to the prom? Why should Christy trust her parents’ decision? 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?

Surprises According to Humphrey



This contemporary adventure book by Betty G. Birney is the fourth book in the “Humphrey” series and is published by Puffin Books, a division of Penguin Books.

This book is written for kids ages 7 to 9.

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 makes Mrs. Brisbane special to her class? What makes Mrs. Brisbane special to her school? What does the school do to show its appreciation to Mrs. Brisbane? Who is someone in your life who is special but overlooked? How can you show this person that you appreciate him or her?
2. What are some of the bad habits that children in Humphrey’s classroom have? By what names does Humphrey know each of these children? If you were in his classroom, what would be your nickname? What could you do to working on overcoming a bad habit you have?
3. Which friends fight in this book? How does their fight end? Think about a time that you and a friend had a fight. What was your argument about? How was your

argument resolved? What did you learn from it?

The Sweetest Thing



This Southern, historical novel by Elizabeth Musser is published by Bethany House and written for ages 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:

1. What two things does Dobbs’ mother say form the crux of human relationships? Why must love and forgiveness go hand in hand? What happens if they don’t?
2. Why is the saying “the eye is the window to the soul” so special to Perri? Through what “eye” does she learn to see God’s world more clearly? How is she changed as she learns more about photography? Where do you see God’s work and power most clearly?
3. What events and circumstances drive Dobbs into a crisis of belief? What finally restores her faith in God? Have you ever gone through a period of doubt? How did God show himself to you? Why does it sometimes seem like God is silent?

Swipe



This science fiction book by Evan Angler is the first in the “Swipe” series published by Tommy Nelson, a registered trademark of Thomas Nelson Inc. *Swipe*

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. What does the Bible say about obeying the laws of the land? How do you feel about Logan’s decision to rebel against the government? Was it the right decision? Explain your answer. Are there any circumstances in which you would oppose or break the law? If so, what would they be?
2. Where is a body marking—the Mark people receive in this story—mentioned in the Bible? Who had the mark in the Bible, and what did it mean?
3. In what ways might our future be like Logan’s world? In what ways do you think it will be different?

The Sword Thief



This mystery book by Peter Lerangis is the third book in “The 39 Clues” series and is published by Scholastic, Inc. *The Sword Thief* 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 does Dan feel when he thinks Alistair has died? Why has Dan vowed never to get close to adults? Who did Alistair lose when he was a child, and why was the person killed? Have you ever lost anyone who was special to you? How did you feel? How did you express your grief?
2. Have you ever felt, as Dan and Amy did, that other people have a stronger support system than you? Did it seem like they had a bigger or closer family, or more friends than you? Whose family are you always a part of, even when you feel alone?
3. Why do you think Nellie has so many tattoos and piercings? Why does Natalie think Nellie will regret them once she gets older and gets a job? How do people today react when they see someone with a lot of tattoos and piercings?
4. How does Irina Spasky feel about teamwork? What does she believe will tear apart any teams that do form? Have you ever been part of a team or group where jealousy, greed or betrayal drove a wedge between the members? What happened? What are some of the benefits of teamwork?
5. What did you learn about Japanese history or culture from this story?
6. What does Alistair mean when he tells Dan and Amy that trust is difficult to build but easy to break? What does he say will break the chain of mistrust between two people? Who do you have difficulty trusting? How can you know whom to trust? What does the Bible say about God’s trustworthiness?
7. Why is winning the contest so important to Eisenhower Holt? How does he feel his family is viewed now? Have you ever felt like you had something to prove or accomplish? What happened?
8. How does Ian mistreat Amy? Have you ever liked someone who ended up being mean to you? How did it feel? How does Amy feel?
9. What does Ian steal from his parents, and how does he justify the theft? What does Dan steal from the hotel, and why does he think he needs it? What does the Bible say about stealing? Is it ever OK to steal? Explain your answer.
10. What are some things Dan and Amy lie about in their search for the 39 clues? Are their lies justified? Explain your answer. What does the Bible say about lying?
11. Are you familiar with the video games Dan likes to play? What do you know about them? Are they violent? Do you think violent video games, movies and TV shows are dangerous? Why or why not? On what sort of things

does God want us to focus our thoughts?

Sybil Ludington's Midnight Ride



This historical fiction by Marsha Amstel, with illustrations by Ellen Beier, is part of the “On My Own History” series published by Carolrhoda Books

Inc., a division of Lerner Publishing Group. *Sybil Ludington's Midnight Ride* 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 is it so dangerous for Sybil to ride alone in the woods? If you were Sybil, what would be scariest to you? What difficulties does she encounter? How does she manage them?
2. Why does Sybil cry when her ride was finally over? How do you handle your emotions when you have to get a job done? When do you allow yourself to feel your emotions?
3. How did Sybil's bravery change the course of American history? What other young people do you know or have you read about that have changed their world for the better? What can you do to make your country a better place to live?