

Book Review Discussion Questions



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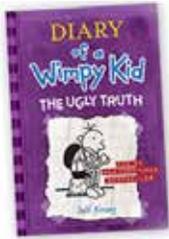
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Book reviews cover the content, themes and worldviews of fiction books, not their literary merit, and equip parents to decide whether a book is appropriate for their children. A book's inclusion does not constitute an endorsement by Focus on the Family.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

DISCUSSION TOPICS

The Ugly Truth



This juvenile humor book by Jeff Kinney is the fifth in the “Diary of a Wimpy Kid” series published by Amulet Books, an imprint of Abrams. *The Ugly Truth* is

written for kids ages 8 to 12.

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

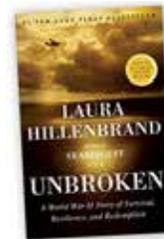
If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. What kind of secret things is Greg expecting to learn in advanced health? Why does he feel that he won't get reliable answers to his questions about growing up if Mom doesn't let him attend the “Facts of Life” unit? Where do you feel you can get reliable answers to your questions about body changes and relationships with the opposite sex? What questions can I answer for you?
2. Why do some of the kids in Greg's grade post pictures of themselves online? What are some of the dangers of sharing too much information about yourself online? What are some good guidelines to use in deciding what you should and shouldn't post online? Why do you think we (your parents, teachers, etc.) want to be cautious about your Internet use in general?
3. According to Greg, why has his Uncle Gary been married so many times? What are some mistakes Uncle Gary makes in his relationships, even before he gets married? What are some qualities you look for in a friend? What are some of your behaviors you can focus on to help build strong, lasting relationships with others?

expectations. What are your reasons for believing or not believing everything Jesus says?

5. How can you learn from Mary's example of faith?

Unbroken



This biography by Laura Hillenbrand is published by Random House and is written for adults but may be 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:

Unafraid: Mary



This fifth historical fiction book in the “Lineage of Grace” series by Francine Rivers is published by Tyndale House Publishers. *Unafraid Mary* is written for adults

but is sometimes studied by kids ages 16 years and up.

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

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

1. Louie and Phil seem optimistic while Mac thinks they will all die. How might you react under similar circumstances? How does their optimism change the outcome of circumstances? How might your good attitude help change hard situations that you're in?
2. In what ways does Louie's story change how you think about war? What new things did you learn about war from this book? Have any of your relatives fought in a war? What might they have gone through? How might it have made them the people they are today?
3. Do you think you would be able to endure what Louie did? Talk

about a time when you had to endure a difficulty. What helped you get through it?

4. How does being able to forgive help Louie recover? Read Matthew 6:9-15 and discuss what it has to say about forgiveness.
5. During one bombing raid, Louie hears the Lord's Prayer being prayed over and over. To what prayer or hymn would you cling if you were in a life-threatening situation?

Uncle Tom's Cabin



This historical drama was written in 1851 by Harriet Beecher Stowe as a serial story for an abolitionist newspaper. It was published in book form in 1852 by

John P. Jewett and is now published by a variety of companies including (but not exclusively) Hurst and Company, Broadview Press, Dover Publications and Barnes and Noble Books. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is written for adults, but may be assigned to students in high school.

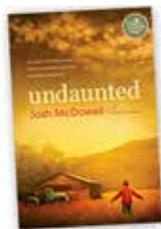
Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

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

1. Consider the quote Abraham Lincoln is believed to have said when meeting Harriet Beecher Stowe: "So you're the little woman who wrote the book that made this great war!" How do you think Stowe's book may have been a factor in the Civil War?

2. Think about the character of Uncle Tom. How does he exemplify the life Christ has called us to live?
3. Describe the different arguments Stowe's characters use in defense of slavery. Why don't any of them justify slavery?
4. How did Stowe use the character of Miss Ophelia to exemplify the Northerners attitude toward slavery? What does she say or do correctly? What does she say or do incorrectly?
5. Senator Bird has just signed a law making it illegal to aid runaway slaves. Uncle Tom's Cabin is Stowe's call to all Christians to not only pray for an end to slavery, but to demand they physically act on their indignation. Several characters discuss how slavery may be the law of the land, but it is still immoral. Are there any laws you believe are immoral, or in what area would you like to call all Christians to not only pray but also to work toward an end? Where could you volunteer your time to help bring this about?

Undaunted



This memoir by Josh McDowell with Cristóbal Krusen is published by Tyndale Momentum, an imprint of Tyndale House Publishers, and is written for

ages 13 and up.

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

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

1. Have you ever felt unloved in our family? If so, what caused you to feel unloved? How do you know you are loved?
2. When Josh visits a girlfriend's home, her father asks him, "What is your relationship with Jesus Christ?" How would you answer that question if someone asked you?
3. When Lt. Tim Reitingger dies in a plane crash, Josh wonders, Why does one man live and another die? and Why do the good perish and the wicked thrive? What would you tell Josh?
4. Josh's mom, and later his sergeant, tell him to make them proud of him. What kinds of things could you do that would make someone proud of you?
5. What did you think of the Christian "clique" Josh encountered at college? Could you understand Josh's view of them? Why do you think their smiling faces and friendliness upset Josh?
6. Romans 8:28 tells us that "in all things God works for the good of those who love him." Explain how this is true in the case of Josh's accident with the drunk driver. Have you seen evidence of this in your life? Explain.
7. Josh's brother Junior/Mac says, "There are many rivers, but they all flow into one sea, don't they?" What does he mean? Do you agree?

The Unfairest of Them All



This modern fairy tale by Shannon Hale is the second 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. How do Apple and Raven feel about being the leaders of their respective groups, the Royals and the Rebels? Where does Apple go for advice on how to be a good leader? What are some of the suggestions people give her? What does she discover are the most effective leadership techniques? In your opinion, what are some other qualities that make a good leader?
2. What does Apple do to demonstrate that friendship means more to her than her own fairy-tale destiny? When have you put a friend's needs above your own? When has a friend put your needs above hers? What happened?

Under the Never Sky



This fantasy novel by Veronica Rossi is the first in the “Under the Never Sky” trilogy and is published by HarperTeen, a division of HarperCollins.

Under the Never Sky 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 do Dwellers experience the world? What things can the Dwellers do in the Realms? How do the Outsiders experience the world? Which world would you rather live in? Explain why. In what ways do you live your life like a Dweller or an Outsider?
2. Why might Aria and Perry be attracted to each other? What kind of role does physical attraction play in their relationship? Think about a time when you were attracted to someone's looks but didn't know much about that person. What kind of confusion have you or your friends experienced when it come to feelings for the opposite sex? How does the Bible define love in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7?
3. Why don't Aria and Perry talk about marriage and a lifelong commitment to each other? How would you feel if you loved someone who chose not to commit to you? Why does God ask us to commit to each other through marriage before having sex?

What kind of commitment does God make to us?

4. Why does Perry get drunk after he leaves Aria at Bliss? Why does he end up fighting Reef? How doesn't he express his emotions well? Think about a time when you experienced strong, negative emotions. What did you do to release them? What helped you? What didn't help you? How did your emotions affect others?

Under Siege



This contemporary Christian book in the “The Powerlink Chronicles” series is written by Josh McDowell and Chuck Klein and is published by

Word Publishing. *Under Siege* is written for kids, ages 13 to 17.

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

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

1. What did Duane, the youth director, do after losing his temper with Tony? Did he apologize only to Tony? What do you do if you've hurt someone with your words?
2. What does Will struggle against with Amber? How is that different than Jason's struggle with pornography? How do you handle your sexual desires? How might an accountability partner help you stay pure?
3. What problems did Amber and Will have when they wanted to share their faith with others?

How did they improve? When was the last time you shared your faith with another person? What happened?

4. The demons sent out thought waves to stop prayers and thoughts to encourage teens to get too busy for prayer. When do you have trouble keeping up with your prayer life and Bible study?
5. Will prayed for Tony even though he felt jealous of him. What happened as a result? Why should you consider praying for those you dislike?

Unwind



This dystopian novel by Neal Shusterman is the first in the “Unwind Dystology” series and is published by Simon & Schuster Books for

Young Readers. *Unwind* is written for ages 12 and up.

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

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

1. What different arguments does this book present regarding the value of human life? Which of them do you believe? Read Psalm 139:13-14? When does life begin?
2. Why do you think Sonia makes Connor and the others write letters to someone they love? If you knew you were going to die, to whom would you write? What would you say to them? Is it something you have the courage to tell them now? Explain.

3. What does the “Bill of Life” negotiate in the novel? Do you think people in real life would agree to such an extreme compromise?
4. How are clappers convinced to give up their lives in this story? How are they similar to terrorists today? What is wrong or illogical about the actions of the clappers?
5. Where does the author infer that a person’s soul resides? Do you think the soul resides in the pieces of the body if they are dismembered while the person is alive? Explain. Where do you believe the soul resides? Why do you believe that?

The Unusual Suspects



This fantasy novel written by Michael Buckley is the second in “The Sisters Grimm” series and is published by Amulet Books. 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. Sabrina has a really bad attitude toward the Everafters. Why does she not trust them? Granny Relda finally puts her foot down and demands that Sabrina stop acting so mean. How does Sabrina respond? What would you have done in her place? Think about a time when you had a bad attitude. How did you change it?

2. Sabrina realizes she doesn’t deserve the gift of matches from the Little Match Girl. Why does she feel this way? Would you agree or disagree with how she is feeling? Think of one thing that was given to you that you didn’t deserve. What did you do with this gift?
3. The sisters and Puck deliberately disobey Granny Relda by going into the furnace room at school in search of clues. What was one of the immediate results of their escapade? How could they have found the same information while still being obedient?
4. When asked why they are helping find the killer, Daphne replies, “Because it’s what we Grimms do!” Sabrina doesn’t exactly feel the same way. What is her motivation for helping solve the mysteries? What motivates you to do what is right?
5. Granny Relda has rules and expects her grandchildren (and Puck) to follow them. Are her rules appropriate? How do her rules help her grandchildren and Puck? Think about our family’s rules. How do they keep you safe? How do they help you mature? Can rules be good even if you don’t like them?