

# CONVERSATION STARTERS FOR YOUNG READERS

## GET YOUR KIDS TALKING

Your whole family can take part in our One Book, One Community thanks to our titles for young readers. Just like *The Violin Conspiracy*, these books address themes of family, music, racism, and perseverance. Help your kids join the discussion using these conversation starters.

- **Read with your kids.** Share books with your kids! Whether you enjoy them aloud together or explore the same story separately, staying connected through what they're reading is a great habit.
- **Make it fun.** Keep it casual by asking questions while you read. It shouldn't feel like a pop quiz for your kids.
- **You know your kids best.** Ask the questions that you think will really get your them talking. Or ask your own questions based on your their interests.
- **Pause.** Be sure to give your kids time to think and answer before you jump in with your own answer to every question.

## CONVERSATION STARTERS

*Not Your Average Jo* by Grace Shim

1. In what ways did you share perspective with the main character, Riley? In what ways did your perspectives differ?
2. Think about the different ways in which Riley explores her identities and discovers herself throughout the book. What are some ways in which you can explore your own identities?
3. Riley is a guitarist in an indie rock band at her new school. If you could choose any instrument to play, which would you choose? What style of music would you want to play with it?
4. Riley is told many times throughout the book who she should be by others, and she finds herself stuck between wanting to be an advocate and fight back and wanting to lay low so that she can continue working on her goals. Aerie's (option 1) and Xander's (option 2) characters further explore this juxtaposition that Riley feels she is stuck between. Do you think Riley was able to find balance between these two goals? What advice would you offer Riely in this situation?
5. What is your favorite moment from this book? What made it stand out to you?
6. Take a look at the book's cover. What are some things you notice? What do you like or dislike?
7. The author chose to include video scripts in a way that closely mirrors the way real-life video scripts are formatted (in the table with visuals in one column and audio in the other). What do you think this brought to the story? How was this helpful for readers?
8. If you could write a song about a moment in your life, which moment would you choose? What would you title your song?
9. Would you recommend this book to a friend? Why or why not?
10. If you could ask the author, Grace Shim, anything about the book or her writing process, what would you ask her?

## CONVERSATION STARTERS

*Meet Me on Mercer Street* by Booki Vivat

1. How did speaking with the “Bench Grandpas” help Kacie?
2. How did Kacie’s art help the neighborhood?
3. Kacie learns that she can use her art to help imagine the world how she wants it. What kind of art would you use to imagine a better world? Why did you choose that?
4. What do you think you would do if you lived on Mercer Street?
5. What do you think happens after the block party? Do you think Kacie and her family will have to leave as well

For more information and even more discussion questions, visit <https://bookivivat.com/meet-me-on-mercerc-street>

## CONVERSATION STARTERS

*Because* by Mo Willems

1. What does the word “because” mean?
2. The girl learned everything she could about music “because it fed her.” What does that mean?
3. What do you think happens to the person that was “changed” at the premiere of “The Cold?”
4. Is there something you love as much as the girl in *Because* loves music? Describe your passion.
5. Who or what inspired your interest in something that you love?

For more information on the author, visit Mo Willems at <https://mowillemsworkshop.com/>