

Book Review Discussion Questions



P

Provided by *Focus on the Family* magazine

Table of Contents

The Pale Horse	3	The Princess and the Goblin	19
Pandemonium	3	The Princess Bride	19
Panic	3	The Princess Diaries	19
The Paper Crane	4	A Princess of Mars (basis for the movie <i>John Carter</i>)	20
Paperboy	4	The Princess Plot	20
Pashmina	5	The Problem Child	21
The Passage	5	Problems in Plymouth	21
A Passionate Hope: Hannah's Story	5	Prodigy	21
Pathfinder	6	Prom and Prejudice	22
Pawn's Play	6	The Prophecy	22
The Pearl	7	P.S. I Like You	22
Pedro's Journal: A Voyage with Christopher Columbus August 3, 1492-February 14, 1493	7	P.S. I Still Love You	23
The Penderwicks: A Summer Tale of Four Sisters, Two Rabbits, and a Very Interesting Boy	7	Ptolemy's Gate	23
Penguin Problems	8	The Pumpkin War	24
The People of Sparks	8	Pure	24
Perfected	8	Pygmalion	25
Perfectly Dateless: A Universally Misunderstood Novel	9		
The Perfectly Proper Prince	9		
Peril in the Palace	9		
Peter and the Starcatchers	10		
Peter Pan	10		
The Phantom Tollbooth	10		
Phoebe the Spy	11		
Physik	11		
Piecing Me Together	12		
The Pilgrim's Progress	12		
The Pinballs	13		
Pinky and Rex and the Double-Dad Weekend	13		
Pippi Longstocking	13		
The Pirates! In an Adventure with Scientists	14		
Pirates Past Noon	14		
Pitchers' Duel	14		
Point Blank	15		
Polar Bears Past Bedtime	15		
Pop	15		
Poppleton in Winter	16		
The Pox Party	16		
Predator's Gold	17		
Pretties	17		
Pride & Prejudice	18		
Prince Caspian	18		
Princess Academy	18		

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 Pale Horse



This mystery, suspense/thriller, historical book by Agatha Christie was originally published by the Collins Crime Club in 1961 and then in the U.S by Dodd, Mead and Company. The edition reviewed was published by HarperCollins Publishers in 2011. *The Pale Horse* 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. What critical mistake does the mastermind behind the murders make? When have you kept secrets or told lies that caught up with you? What happened?
2. What do you think of Thyrsa's suggestion that everyone has a death wish? What about Corrigan's theory that a fluid deficiency in the spleen can turn someone into a criminal? What are some strange or interesting theories you've heard about life, death or human behavior?
3. Why does Mark go to such lengths to learn the truth about *The Pale Horse*? When has your curiosity caused you to dig deeper into a subject or situation? What happened?
4. Why is Ginger willing to risk her life to help Mark solve the case?

What would you risk your life for, and why?

Pandemonium



This science fiction/romance book by Lauren Oliver is the second in the "Delirium" series and is published by HarperCollins. *Pandemonium* 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. Lena is angry and resentful when she learns that she was used to further the resistance's cause without her knowledge or consent. Have you ever felt used by a friend? Have you ever selfishly treated someone else this way? What was the situation? How could it have been handled differently?
2. Lena compares hatred to a parasitic fungus on a tree: As the tree feeds the fungus, the fungus rots the tree. Have you ever had a feeling of hatred until it became a desire for revenge? What was the situation? How was the situation resolved? In what ways can hatred be unhealthy and destructive?
3. Lena realizes that life situations have hardened Raven, especially losing Blue, the little girl she

found as a baby and raised. Has anything sad or traumatic ever happened to you that changed you as a person? What was the event? Do you think the change was for the better or worse? How can God's Word and promises bring comfort to you in times of hardship and sorrow?

Panic



This historical, coming-of-age novel by Lauren Oliver is the first book in the "Panic" series published by Harper, an Imprint of HarperCollins Publishers.

Panic is written for ages 15 to 18.

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

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

1. How does Heather feel about her height? How does her self-consciousness affect her choices? What do Avery and Nat have that she would like? Have you ever felt envious of another person's body or personality type? How can you better appreciate the characteristics of others? How can you be more content with who you are and your characteristics?
2. What did Luke do that hurt Dayna? Why is the game kept secret from the police and the adults in town? How do these illegal activities lead to acts

of cruelty and betrayal? How does the competition threaten the friendships of the main characters?

3. How does working with Anne on her farm help Heather's emotional state? If negative examples from trusted figures lead to disillusionment, how can positive role models re-establish a person's trust in humanity? How might physical activities like exercise or manual work improve a person's mood? How have you seen this as true in your life?
4. How does Dodge want to revenge his sister's condition? How does Dodge's desire for revenge poison his relationship with Dayna? Does Dodge's goal bring him any happiness? What does the Bible say about seeking revenge?
5. What does Heather realize when Anne's tigers escape? How does she feel about Anne? What is Heather afraid she might lose? How does Anne's forgiveness show Heather how real love works? How can you extend love and mercy to someone who has messed up and treated you badly? How might forgiveness repair your relationships?

The Paper Crane



This beginning readers, fable by Molly Bang is published by Greenwillow Books. *The Paper Crane* is written for

kids ages 4 to 8.

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

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

1. How is the owner of the restaurant a good example of Ecclesiastes 2:24? How do you know he enjoys his work? What is your "work"? How is doing your homework and chores a part of your work? How can you do these things with a good attitude? What can you do to enjoy them more?
2. What does the owner of the restaurant do for a stranger? Read Matthew 25:35-40. How does the restaurant owner do this? How does the stranger thank him? Tell about a time when you helped someone in need. What did your actions do for this person? How did helping someone bless you?
3. How does the restaurant owner treat the stranger, even though he has no money? Why is it easier to treat people well who treat you well? How can you be more like the restaurant owner and give without expecting anything in return? What could you do for someone today, even if that person doesn't know you did this action for him or her?
4. How do other people benefit from the gift of the paper crane? Tell about a gift you were given that you used to help others?

Paperboy



This coming-of-age, historical novel by Vince Vawter is published by Delacorte Press, an imprint of Random House Children's Books, a division of Random

House Inc. *Paperboy* 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 four words does Mr. Spiro write on the dollar bill pieces he gives Victor? What do they mean? What does he want Victor to learn or think about when he reads these words? What do you think about when you read them?
2. What are some things Victor and Mam experience or discover that could lead them to be bitter or hateful? How do they deal with these situations? What are some things in your world that could lead to your being bitter or hateful? How do you deal with these situations?
3. How does Victor change during the month he spends on Art's paper route? How does he see the world differently at the end of July? How do you see the world differently by the end of this book?
4. Why does Mam remain calm in the face of prejudice, but lashes out when Ara T. steals from Victor? What people or situations in your life make you particularly angry or frustrated? In what difficult situations are you able to remain calm? In what difficult situations do you lash out the most?
5. Why is Victor disillusioned with God? What does he want God to take away for him? How does he understand God better through Mam's example? How can you be an example of God's love to others, as Mam was to Victor?

- How does Victor make the best of his stuttering so he can grow as a person and connect with others? What is one area where you struggle? How can you grow through the struggles in your life, rather than becoming bitter or giving up?

Pashmina



This graphic novel, fantasy book written by Nidhi Chanani is published by First Second Publishing, an imprint of Roaring Brook Press, a division

of Holtzbrinck Publishing Holdings Limited Partnership. *Pashmina* is written for kids ages 9 to 14.

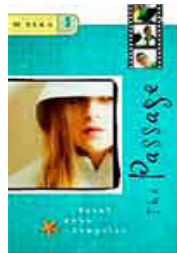
Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

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

- What are some ways Indian women struggle in this book? How is the treatment of women in this culture different from your world?
- Why is Pri convinced India is an idyllic place? What does she discover when she visits her aunt? When have you imagined that life would be ideal if certain parts of it were different? What gave you this idea? What is the reality of this situation?
- Why does Pri's mom keep secrets about her past and Pri's father? How does Pri feel when she learns the truth? When has someone kept a secret from you? Why might some adults keep secrets from their children?

- Why is it important to Pri to learn about her heritage and her father? When have you wished you could learn more about your family history? What are the benefits of knowing about your origins?
- Why does Pri dislike Jatin's baby? When have you been jealous of someone who seemed to be taking your place? What are some practical ways you make room in your life for new people rather than trying to protect your territory?
- What does Shakti say is the purpose of the pashmina? How does it give struggling women hope? Where can you turn when you need hope during a difficult time? What does the Bible say about hope?

The Passage



This contemporary, coming-of-age book is the third in the "Becoming Beka" series by Sarah Anne Sumpolec and is published by Moody Publishers.

The Passage is written for kids ages 13 to 18.

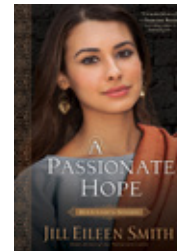
Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

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

- How does Beka struggle with her belief in God? How does Christianity look in your life? Does your faith resemble Mark's, Beka's or Josh's? How big a part does God play in your life?

- Why was Beka upset about Gretchen's rumor? Why did Liz think the rumor was not a big deal? How do your friends view sex? Why does God not want you to have sex until after you are married? How can you keep yourself pure if those around you are encouraging you to do otherwise? Nancy knew where her boundary was when it came to physical intimacies. What are yours?
- Beka could not understand why God allowed the boys to attack her. What events in your life have caused you to question God's presence? Have you asked Him about it?
- How did Beka's dad point out that God did protect her? What could have happened to Beka? How did God use her situation for good? Where in your life have you seen God use a bad situation for good?

A Passionate Hope: Hannah's Story



Jill Eileen Smith is the fourth book in the "Daughters of the Promised Land" series and is published by Revell, a division of Baker

Publishing Group. It 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:

- What initially causes Hannah to begin doubting God's goodness? What circumstances drive

her into deeper despair? When have you struggled with questions about God's goodness to you? What steps have you taken to gain God's wisdom and peace in the midst of your doubts?

2. Why is Peninnah so cruel to Hannah? In what ways, if any, do you feel sympathy for Peninnah? When have you been mistreated by someone who was jealous of you?
3. What are the circumstances leading up to Hannah's long-awaited pregnancy? When have you made a vow to God about something important? What happened?
4. What are some of the conflicts Hannah faces with various members of her extended family? How does she respond to them? How do you think you would have reacted if you were subject to this kind of treatment? How do you handle conflict with friends or family members?
5. How do you feel about Elkanah's decision to marry Peninnah? What are some of the ways he pays for that decision? What kind of a father is he? When have you made decisions that ultimately left you stuck in unhappy or uncomfortable circumstances? What are some ways you can keep from making a bad initial decision?

Pathfinder



& Schuster Children's Publishing

This science fiction book by Orson Scott Card is the first book in the "Pathfinder" series and is published by Simon Pulse, an imprint of Simon

Division. *Pathfinder* is written for kids ages 12 and up.

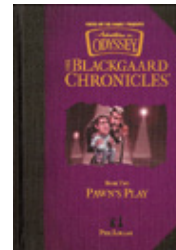
Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

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

1. How do the expendables interpret their mandate to serve humanity? What do you think of their conclusion—that it's right to forfeit individual human lives for the betterment of a greater number of humans? This thinking relies on the idea that the end result justifies the means for getting there. Is this a biblical concept? Why not? How does our mandate to love others as we would want to be treated keep us from believing the way the expendables do?
2. Rigg finds that his relationship with Father is based on lies and deceit. Why does Father lie to Rigg? How would you feel if you learned that someone close to you had deliberately lied to you? Would you lie to someone if you felt it would keep them from being hurt?
3. Why did the expendables decide to destroy most of the life on Garden? Do you agree or disagree with what they did? What are some things you can do to be a good steward of creation?
4. What evidence led Rigg to believe that humans might not be native to the planet of Garden? How did the other scientists react to the scientist who proposed that there might be two separate origins for life on Garden?
5. How is Loaf different from Umbo's father? How is he different from the man Rigg called Father? What makes him a

good authority figure? Do you know anyone who acts rough but is actually gentle and loving? Describe some of the quality traits of your father (me).

Pawn's Play



This mystery, Christian fiction book is second in "The Blackgaard Chronicles" by Phil Lollar is published by Focus on the Family.

***Pawn's Play* is written for kids 10 and up.**

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

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

1. Why is Connie upset with Whit? How does her interaction with her campers teach her a lesson about forgiveness and consequences? When has someone forgiven you but still required you to pay the consequences for your actions?
2. What kind of a person is Richard Maxwell? What are some of the things he does that give you a window into his heart? When have you known someone who acted nice, but you had a feeling you shouldn't trust him or her?
3. What makes Lucy start behaving in ways that aren't normal for her? When have you been around someone who made you want to do things you knew you shouldn't? What happened?
4. Why is it so hard for Eugene to tell the truth when confronted about his part in the

grade-changing scandal? When have you been in a situation where telling the truth could cause problems for another person? What did you do?

5. Why is Nicholas afraid to go against Maxwell's orders? When have you been intimidated into doing something because you felt someone might hurt you or get you in trouble? How did you respond?

The Pearl



This parable by John Steinbeck was originally published by Viking Press but now has been published by many different publishers. *The Pearl* was

written for adults, though high school students often study it in the classroom.

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

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

1. What happens to the townspeople when they learn about Kino's pearl? How do they change? Describe Kino's outlook on life before finding the pearl. How do Kino and Juana change because of the pearl? When have you seen greed change a person?
2. Why does Kino's finding the pearl have such a big impact on his entire community? Why does Kino's brother think upsetting the normal structure of things may be dangerous for Kino? When have you made a choice for yourself that had a ripple

effect, impacting or even hurting other people?

3. Steinbeck's story alludes to the biblical parable often called "The Pearl of Great Price" (Matthew 13:45-46). How are these two tales alike? How are they different?

Pedro's Journal: A Voyage with Christopher Columbus August 3, 1492-February 14, 1493



This historical book by Pam Conrad is published by Caroline House, an imprint of Boyd Mills Press Inc. *Pedro's Journal* is written for kids ages 8

to 12.

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

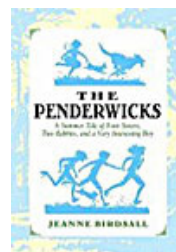
If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. What kind of man is Columbus, according to Pedro's writings? Why does Pedro often think of his mother and her opinions when he sees Columbus behaving badly? What are some things we as your parents have said or done that have helped you understand right from wrong?
2. What does Columbus want most? When have you made bad choices because you thought they would earn you attention,

power, money, friends or other treasures?

3. Why does Pedro believe God has forgotten him in the end? Have you ever felt like God has forgotten about you? What does the Bible say about God's love and concern for you?

The Penderwicks: A Summer Tale of Four Sisters, Two Rabbits, and a Very Interesting Boy



This first humor, adventure book in the "Penderwicks" series by Jeanne Birdsall is published by Alfred A. Knopf Books for Young Readers, an imprint of

Random House Children's Books. *The Penderwicks* 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. On several occasions, Batty is endangered because her sisters aren't watching her. Why is it important to keep an eye on your younger brothers or sisters when you're put in charge of them?
2. What did you dislike about Mrs. Tifton and Dexter, and how can we make sure we don't treat others the way they did?
3. It was sad that Jeffery didn't feel he could talk to his mom about

what he wanted. Do you feel as though you can talk to me/us?

4. If not, what can we do to make that better?

Penguin Problems



This slice-of-life story by Lauren Myracle is the first in the “Life of Ty” series published by Dutton Children’s Books, an imprint of Penguin Group

(USA) Inc. *Penguin Problems* 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 changes for Ty when his baby sister arrives? Why is he so uncomfortable with the new circumstances in his life?
2. Why does Ty feel upset with the behavior of friends Lexie and Taylor? Which kids in your class behave in ways that make you uncomfortable? What do they do that bothers you?
3. What are some ways Ty shows he cares about other people (and animals)?

The People of Sparks



This science fiction, adventure book by Jeanne DuPrau is published by Random House Children’s Books, a division of Random House 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 you know that Lina and Doon start the book as close friends? What happens to change their friendship? How does Tick influence Doon? What does Lina think of Doon’s new friend? Have you ever been jealous of a friend’s friendship with someone else? How can you keep yourself from becoming jealous if your friend finds another friend? How can you help an old friend not get jealous if you make a new friend?
2. How do the people of Sparks feel about the people of Ember when the story begins? How do those feelings change? What helps cause the change? What could the people have done to stop their anger from growing? What makes you angry? When someone hurts your feelings, what can you do to stop your anger from turning into mean actions?
3. What is different about the city of Sparks and where you live? What are some things these people do to survive without no electricity, cars or modern conveniences? What would you miss most about living in a world like that?

4. What does Torren falsely accuse Doon of destroying? Why are the crates of tomatoes important? Why does Torren blame Doon? What could Doon have done to help prove his innocence? How would you feel if someone blamed you for something you did not do? Explain. What would you do to try and clear your name?
5. Does Doon forgive Torren? Which of Doon’s actions demonstrate your answer? Would you be able to forgive someone for lying about you? Why would this be hard to do? Why should you absolutely forgive the person anyway?

Perfected



This fantasy, romance book by Kate Jarvik Birch is published by Entangled Publishing. This book 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:

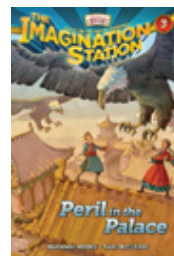
1. Is it more important to make yourself happy or to make other people happy? How can you do both? Explain.
2. Why is Ella afraid to rebuff the unwanted advances from the men she meets? Tell about a time when you were afraid to tell someone no. How can we help you be more confident to say no in uncomfortable or inappropriate situations?

- How does Claire make Ella feel as if she is something dirty that needs to be wiped away? Has anyone ever made you feel this way? Have you made anyone else feel this way? What was the situation? What could you (or they) have done differently?
- Why doesn't Ella know which parts of her are truly her and which parts are what the kennel says she should be? Who influences who you are, and is the influence positive or negative?
- Why does John think owning a pet is a new indicator of class? Are there things that you strive for because they are status symbols? Do you know others who do this? How can the pursuit of things be healthy or unhealthy? What does the Bible say we should pursue?
- What did Claire say about Daisy's appearance? How did this add to Daisy's pressure to fit in? If you were Daisy's friend, what would you have said to Daisy instead?
- Why didn't Daisy tell anyone that Claire was living alone? What would you have done if you were Daisy? How did lying about it backfire on her? Tell about a time that you didn't tell the whole truth and the situation backfired on you.
- What helped Daisy realize that Chase wasn't the person she thought he was? Who have you known that turned out to be different than you expected? How have other people thought you were different than what they expected? How did this revelation make you feel?

new friends sneak out of the palace several times in search of adventure.

- What dangers and problems can result when young people lie, sneak out or break their parents' rules?
- Fatima (age 12) and Jonathon (age 13) take an hour-long, unchaperoned ride on a magic carpet. This event may lend itself to additional discussion about when and if it's a good idea to be alone with members of the opposite sex.

Peril in the Palace



This historical, adventure, Christian fiction is the third book in "The Imagination Station" series by Marianne Hering and Paul McCusker. It is a

Focus on the Family book in association with Tyndale House Publishers Inc. and is written for kids 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:

- What does Patrick do that offends the Mongols? How do the Mongols react? Have you ever been in a situation where you didn't know the rules or what people expected of you? What did you do?
- How do Patrick and Beth stand up for their faith in the encounter with the khan and his shamans? Can you think of a time when you had to stand up for your faith? How can you be bold in those types of situations?

Perfectly Dateless: A Universally Misunderstood Novel



This contemporary Christian book by Kristin Billerbeck is published by Revell, an imprint of the 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:

- In the end, Daisy doesn't get a prom date. Tell about a time you didn't get something you wanted. What did you learn from the experience?

The Perfectly Proper Prince



This first fantasy book in the "Princess Power" series by Suzanne Williams is published by HarperCollins Publishers and is written for kids

ages 6 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:

Lysandra practices dishonesty throughout the book. She lies to her parents, sister and the other princesses about her motives for hosting a talent show. Then she tells the unwanted princesses she has the plague to get rid of them. She and her

3. What does the khan want from God? Do you think he has a good understanding of what it means to have a relationship with God? What does genuine faith in God look like? Do you think you are showing that kind of faith in your own life?
4. How does Beth show compassion for the wounded messenger? Does he appreciate her attempt to help? Have you ever tried to help someone only to have him or her reject you? How did it make you feel? How can you still show love for that person?
5. What is Beki's reaction when Patrick and Beth give her the Bible? Why is she so excited? Are you that excited about studying the Bible and learning more about God? Why or why not?

2. Do you think lying and stealing are ever appropriate?
3. When explaining why Starcatchers return starstuff rather than keeping it for themselves, Molly says, "If people have power, even if they start out using it for good, in time they will use it for evil. Do you agree or disagree? Give examples from real life to support your answer.
4. If you found a chest of starstuff, what would you do with it?
5. How did you feel about the bloodshed in this book? Did you think it was too violent?
6. Though this is a fiction book, Molly talked about the starstuff affecting real historical figures. How does that confuse the real world and this imaginary world?

2. What message is the author trying to convey about growing up? What are some of the advantages of growing up? What are the disadvantages? In what ways do you wish you could stay a child forever? In what areas would you like to be an adult?
3. How do mothers, both real and pretend, play important roles in this story? Why do the pirates and the lost boys all want mothers? What is life like for these boys and men without mothers? What role does Mom (or do I) play in our family?

Peter and the Starcatchers



This fantasy by Dave Barry and Ridley Pearson is published by Hyperion Paperbacks for Children, Disney Editions 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. Peter always tells people he's the oldest so he can stay in charge. He also steals food because the soup they're given is filled with living creatures. How do you feel about his actions?

Peter Pan



This fantasy book by J.M. Barrie is published by Viking Penguin, a division of Penguin Books USA Inc. and 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 are particularly self-absorbed? How does their pride show itself in their behavior? What, if anything, do these characters learn about the dangers of caring too much or too little about others' opinions? What does the Bible say about pride?

The Phantom Tollbooth



This fantasy novel by Norton Juster with illustrations by Jules Feiffer is published by Knopf Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Random House

Books for Young Readers, Random House Inc., and is written for kids ages 8 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 interesting and valuable things Milo learns about words and numbers? Why do you like words or numbers better? Why is it important to learn about words and numbers?
2. Which character in the kingdom of Wisdom is most interesting to you? Explain. How are you like or unlike this character?

3. What happened in the kingdom of Wisdom when its residents stopped paying attention to the sights and sounds around them? (The sight and sounds faded or were taken away.) What cautionary lesson is the author trying to teach his readers?
4. What was the secret the kings couldn't tell Milo until he returned from his journey? (They couldn't tell him the task ahead was completely impossible.) What was their lesson for Milo? (Many things are possible as long as you don't know they're impossible.) What tasks in your life seem impossible? What might happen if you tried anyway?
5. Why is Milo so bored with life before his trip through the toll-booth? What does Milo's journey teach him about his own life and his own world? How do you think Milo's outlook and actions will change after his adventures in the kingdom of Wisdom?

Phoebe the Spy



This historical fiction by Judith Berry Griffin is published by Puffin Books, an imprint of Penguin Putnam Books for Young Readers, a division of the

Penguin Group and is written for kids ages 8 to 11.

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

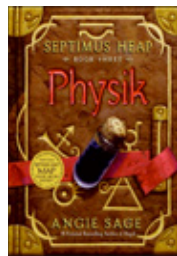
If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. What are some of the instructions Samuel gives to Phoebe when he sends her to spy? Do

you think he expects too much from a young girl or puts her in too much danger? Why or why not? Would you have been able to do the work that Phoebe did? Explain. Would you have been able to protect the general as she did? Explain.

2. Why does Samuel say it is a strange freedom they are fighting for? What do the slaves stand to gain if America becomes a free country?

Physik



This fantasy, adventure, paranormal book in the "Septimus Heap" series by Angie Sage is published by Katherine Tegen Books, an imprint

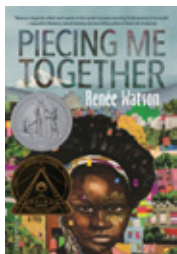
of Harper Collins Publishers and is written for kids ages 8 to 12.

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

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

1. What does Marcia Overstrand believe about Marcellus Pye? Why does she think the study of Physik is useless? Give an example that illustrates why her position is correct. Why does Septimus believe there is some good in Pye and that Physik can be helpful? Give an example that illustrates his opinion. Which one do you agree with and why? Have you ever liked a person your friends did not? How did that make you feel? How could you defend that person to your other friends?
2. What do both Queen Etheldredda and Marcellus Pye desire? What are their reasons for wanting to live forever? If you could, would you drink such a potion? What are the reasons for your choice?
3. What is most difficult for Snorri? Why is going into the Tea and Ale shop on her own and ordering food so difficult for this otherwise brave girl? How do you feel when you have to face a group of strangers, such as a new class in school or a new team? Do you make friends easily? If so, how can you reach out to someone who might be shyer? If it is difficult for you, what things can you do to help yourself be brave enough to talk with others?
4. What are some of the prejudices that Snorri faces when she wants to trade? Why do you believe people think she cannot do the job because she is young and a girl? If she had been able to stay in the port, do you think she would have been successful? Have you ever been told you are too young to do something you've wanted to do? How did it make you feel? Sometimes age does restrict you from a goal. What things can you do to prepare yourself to achieve your goals when you are older?
5. Ullr, Spit Fyre and the Aie-Aie are three different pets in the story. Which ones are good and which are bad? How do their owners' behavior determine how the pets behave? If you have a pet, talk about what you do to take care of it. If you do not have a pet, what kind of pet would you like to have one day? Either way, what things could you do to help your pet behave?

Piecing Me Together



This contemporary drama book by Renee Watson is published by Bloomsbury Children's Books, a registered trademark of Bloomsbury

Publishing and 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 are some of the incorrect assumptions people make about Jade throughout the story? In what ways are Jade and Maxine's lives vastly different, even though they share the same ethnicity? When have you had people stereotype you based on your skin color, gender, religion or another aspect of your life? What did you do?
2. Why does Jade have a hard time expressing her needs and wants at the beginning of the book? Who and what help her speak up for herself? What happens after she learns to advocate for herself? In what areas of your life do you need to self-advocate? In what areas might you need to speak up for someone else?
3. How does Jade benefit by having a mentor? In what ways does Maxine need to grow as a mentor before she can be effective? In what areas would you benefit from finding a mentor? In what ways could you mentor someone younger than yourself?

4. Why do the Woman to Woman mentors say a girl must love and respect *herself* before she tries to be loved or respected by someone else? What bad things can happen when a person with low self-esteem tries to gain someone else's affection? What are some steps you can take to be a healthy individual *before* trying to gain someone else's love or friendship?
5. How do men and boys treat Jade? What double standard does Jade mention concerning men and women in her neighborhood? How did Jesus treat women in the Bible, and what can you learn from His example?
6. Why is Jade frustrated that no one will give her a chance to serve others? Why isn't she invited to participate in things like the Costa Rica service project? How does she create opportunities on her own through which she can help others? When have you found joy or experienced personal growth by serving others? Why is serving others good for all people, regardless of their financial or social status?

The Pilgrim's Progress



This allegorical Christian fiction by John Bunyan is published by Oxford University Press and is written for kids ages 15 and up.

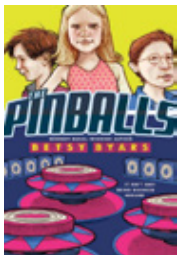
Search for a review of this book for parents at pluggedin.com/book-reviews.

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

1. What does Evangelist say one must do to be a true pilgrim (in regard to one's family)? Does that mean you can disrespect or not do what we tell you to do? How does striving for the world to come and loving God first compare to loving your family? What does the Bible say about honoring your parents and loving your neighbors? How do you both love and hate us? Explain.
2. Why does Ignorance think he can enter the Celestial City? Does living near a church or Christians make you a Christian? Does living a good and moral life make you a Christian? How do you become a Christian?
3. Who does Christiana warn about the fruit from Beelzebub's trees? Which of her children do not listen? Why does Christiana tell her children not to eat the fruit? What are some reasons I might tell you not to do something — even if you really, really want to do it?
4. What does Prudence ask the children? How do they respond to her questions about what they believe? Who has asked you about your faith? What do you say when someone asks what you believe? If you're not sure how to answer all their questions, would you like me to help you figure out what to say?
5. The pilgrims are often asked who they are, where they came from and where they're going. Why is it important to remember where you came from? How can you remind yourself of where you're going in life? How can you look for reminders? What are some of the dangers about forgetting where you're headed?

- How does a peaceful spot along the way affect Christian and Christiana? What is wrong about Christian oversleeping? What is bad about Christiana being forgetful? What might this story's "sleeping" and "being forgetful" symbolize? How can you keep convenience and being comfortable from hurting you on your journey?
- Who are some of the characters in *The Pilgrim's Progress* that Christian or Christiana came across? What are some of their negative reputations? How do Christian and Christiana respond to them? Would you have offered to travel with them? Explain. Why is traveling with them the right thing to do? How should you treat people like this on your journey?
- How is your faith journey similar to Christian's? How is it similar to Christiana's? What part of the journey do you relate to the most?

The Pinballs



This drama, coming-of-age book by Betsy Byars is published by HarperCollins Publishers 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:

- What has happened to the three children in this book to bring them to the Masons' home?

What does Carlie wish she could do about the bad things that have happened to her? What are some bad things that have happened in your life? How do you deal with the hard things in your life? Read Matthew 6: 14-15 and Mark 11:25. Discuss why forgiveness is important.

- How does Carlie treat the others at the Masons' house? Why might she act this way? How do Thomas J. and Harvey treat Carlie at first? How would you have treated Carlie? How can you show God's love to people who are mean to you? Are you dealing with any mean people right now? Tell me about this person.
- What is foster care? Why are the kids in the book sent to foster care? How do they feel about being in foster care at the beginning of the book? How do they feel by the end of the book? How would you feel if you were placed in foster care? Why might kids in foster care want a permanent home? Why can't some kids be adopted?
- Why is Harvey sent to the hospital at the end of the book? How does he feel when he's at the hospital? What is depression? How do Carlie and Thomas J make Harvey feel better? What can you do to help someone smile today?

Pinky and Rex and the Double-Dad Weekend



This humor book in the "Ready-to-Read" series by James Howe is published by Aladdin Paperbacks, an imprint of Simon & Schuster

Children's Books. This book is written for kids ages 4 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:

- What kinds of things do you like doing with your dad (or grandfather, or uncle, etc.)?
- What are some things your dad does best?

Pippi Longstocking



This humorous book by Astrid Lindgren is published by Viking, a division of Penguin Books USA Inc. First published in 1945 in Swedish;

first published in English in 1950; reviewed edition published in 1985. 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:

- Should Pippi play with loaded guns? What are some of the potential dangers of doing this? What would you say if you were at a friend's house and he or she pulled out a gun? Who should you immediately tell?
- What are some of Pippi's behaviors that get her into trouble? What would your parents and teachers do if you behaved like

- Pippi? Why is self-discipline a valuable character trait?
- How does Pippi feel about living without parents? How would you feel about living by yourself at your age? What would be the benefits? What would be the problems with this arrangement?
 - Why does Pippi tell so many lies? What are some of the reasons it is important for you to tell the truth?
 - What are some positive qualities about Pippi? What are some ways she helps others? What would be good about having a friend like her?
 - What does Pippi do when someone, such as a robber or bully, is threatening her or another person? When is it good to stand up to someone? In what situations should you respect authority and do what you're asked to do?

- The pirates believe the Pirate Captain is harsh but fair. Does he treat the pirates fairly? How do you feel about the pirates being made to walk the plank? Is there another way the Pirate Captain could have handled the situation?
- How do the Pirate Captain and the Bishop of Oxford describe The Holy Spirit? What does the Bible say about who the Holy Spirit is? What do you think the role of the Holy Spirit is in our lives?
- Darwin's motives for wanting the lecture to be a success are to further his career and get attention from women. Have you ever wanted to be successful at something for selfish reasons? What was the situation and what was the result?
- The Bishop of Oxford is killing young women so he can look younger. How important is a person's appearance? What does the Bible say about what God sees when He looks at us?

- What are Jack's and Annie's reaction to Captain Bones kidnapping them and saying that he won't free them until they help him? Would they have helped him if he had asked? How should he have asked for their help?
- Why might Captain Bones hate books? What does he consider to be "something good"? What kind of books do you like? What do you think is "something good"?
- What do Pinky and Stinky do when Captain Bones shoots his pistol into the air? How are they "gold-greedy" pirates? What does it mean to be greedy? What is something you really like or want? How can you keep from being greedy about it?
- Why is Jack tempted to look inside the treasure chest? Why does he leave without opening it? Why was that a good choice? What was more important than Kidd's treasure?

The Pirates! In an Adventure with Scientists



This humorous book by Gideon Defoe is the first in "The Pirates" series and is published by Pantheon Books, a division of Random House Inc. This book 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:

Pirates Past Noon



This fantasy adventure book by Mary Pope Osborne is the fourth in the "Magic Tree House" series and is published by Random House. *Pirates Past Noon* 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:

Pitchers' Duel



This sports fiction book is seventh in the "Chip Hilton Sports" series by Basketball Hall of Fame Coach Clair Bee. It was published by Grosset & Dunlap in 1950, updated by Randall and Cynthia Bee Farley and republished by Broadman & Holman Publishers in 1999. *Pitcher's Duel* 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 did you think of the way Chip handled the people who wanted to tarnish his reputation and get Coach Rockwell fired? What would you have done in his situation?
2. What would you do if you had to choose between accepting a college scholarship and playing for a major league team?
3. Chip demonstrated a great deal of respect for his coach and his mother. Do you think kids today show that kind of regard for authority figures in their lives? Why or why not?

Point Blank



This action/thriller is the second book in the “Alex Rider” series by Anthony Horowitz and is published by the Penguin Group. *Point Blank* 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. Alex has a strong sense of what’s right and what’s wrong. On what does he base his sense of right and wrong? Are all people’s consciences as reliable as Alex’s? As a Christian, should you rely solely on your conscience when it comes to deciding what is right and wrong? What kind of guidance does the Bible give about right and wrong?
2. What would being a part of a family mean to Alex? Why might

Alex like to be a part of our family? What wouldn’t Alex like about being a part of our family? As Christians, we are adopted into God’s family. What does this mean to you, to be a son or daughter of the King and a member of our heavenly Father’s family? What might it mean to Alex?

3. What do all of the students at Point Blanc do? Why does this alarm Alex? What would you like about all kids acting the exact same? Why is it important that all kids not act the exact same? Why do you think God made each person uniquely different? How has God made you uniquely different? Why is it important for you to be yourself instead of trying to act, talk, dress and think like everyone else?
4. Why doesn’t Alex want to go on the secret spy mission to France? What spurs him on to solve the case once he arrives? How does Alex sacrifice to serve and free others? What happens as a result of his sacrifice? What have you had to do to sacrifice for others? What happened as a result of that sacrifice?

Polar Bears Past Bedtime



This fantasy adventure book by Mary Pope Osborne is the 12th book in the “Magic Tree House” series and is published by Random House. *Polar Bears Past Bedtime*

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 do Jack and Annie use to make them brave? What makes you brave? Who can help you be brave? Why is asking God for courage better than using a mask?
2. Why does the seal hunter make the masks? Who do we thank for our food, our home and everything we need? Why?
3. What happens when Jack and Annie go on the ice? Why is it dangerous to walk on ice? How do you know if things are safe?
4. Why doesn’t the magic tree house take Jack and Annie back after they answer the first riddle? Where is the place Jack and Annie love best? Where is the place you love best? Describe it.
5. What animal do Annie and Jack play with in the Arctic? What differences are there between the polar bears in the story and polar bears in real life, perhaps that you’ve seen in the zoo? What would you do if you saw a wild polar bear? Explain.

Pop



This coming-of-age, contemporary, drama by Gordon Korman is published by Balzer + Bray, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers. *Pop* is

written for kids 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 the football team treat Marcus? Why don't they want him to join the team? How does Coach Barker treat Marcus? How does Marcus react to the bullying and unfair treatment? Discuss a time when you felt like a teacher or a coach was showing preferential treatment to your peers. How should you address bullying when adults know what's going on but do nothing?
2. How does Marcus give in to peer pressure? What are the consequences of his actions? What should Marcus have done when Charlie convinces him to sugar Mr. Oliver's shop? Discuss a time when you felt pressured to do something wrong. What did you do? What should you do if an adult is pressuring you to do something wrong?
3. Why does Marcus hide Charlie's involvement in the pranks on Mr. Oliver? What consequences does Marcus face because he doesn't tell the truth? What would you have done if you'd been in Marcus' shoes? Discuss how the truth set Marcus free. Read John 8:32. How has the truth set you free in your own life?
4. What is Charlie's condition? How does his family treat him because of it? How does Marcus treat Charlie when he finds out? Do you know someone in your life with Alzheimer's or a form of dementia? How do the people in their lives treat them? How can you be a godly light in the lives of someone struggling with Alzheimer's or similar conditions?
5. How does Charlie die? Do you think Charlie's death was an accident or a suicide? Why or why

not? How can you help someone you know who is struggling with depression or suicidal thoughts? What should you do if you're struggling yourself?

Poppleton in Winter



Winter is written for kids 5 to 8.

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

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

1. What does Poppleton do in response to warnings about his icicles? Tell about a time when you did or didn't heed a loved one's advice. How did it turn out? When Poppleton loses his icicles, what does he gain instead? Tell about a time when you gained a good friend.
2. What does Cherry Sue do to Poppleton's nose when she grows frustrated? What does she do to make things right with Poppleton? Tell about a time when you needed to forgive someone. Tell about a time when you needed to ask for forgiveness.
3. What does Poppleton invite Patrick to do after they build his fence of icicles? What happens as a result of their sharing a meal together? Read Hebrews 13:2. Why is it important to show hospitality to others? What other virtues does hospitality allow us

to practice? (Read Galatians 5:22 for a clue!)

4. What do all of Poppleton's friends do for him on his birthday? Why is it important to show kindness to others? What is one kind act that someone has done for you? What is a kind act that you've done for others?

The Pox Party



This first historical fantasy volume in "The Astonishing Life of Octavian Nothing: Traitor to the Nation" series by M.T. Anderson is published by

Candlewick Press, an imprint of Walker Books. *The Pox Party* is written for kids 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. Do you think what happened to Octavian could really have happened to anyone back in the time of the Revolution? Does the idea of a "pox party" seem unrealistic? (Note: In an interview captured at the back of the book, the author points out the historical credibility of some of the experimentation carried out on the fictional Octavian. He also mentions that pox parties* were a real happening.)
2. How could the scientists in this book have been so wrong in their assumptions?
3. The scientists, such as Mr. Sharpe and Mr. Gitney, talk about God and Christianity. Does their

behavior appear Christian-like to you? Explain.

4. Even though Octavian is highly educated and smart, he comes to a point where he feels like a slave because of the way he is treated. Do you think the way we're treated by others has any impact on what we accomplish in life? How can a person overcome the prejudices of others?
5. For the most part, the scientists treat Octavian's mother like a distinguished lady. When does she realize she is still just a commodity to them?
6. What does the Bible say about slavery? How does God want Christians to respond when they witness people of different ethnicities being treated unequally?
7. Why is Dr. Trefusis willing to risk his life to help Octavian escape?
8. How would you feel if you walked into a secret room in your house and discovered you were the test subject in an experiment? What would you do?
9. How did you feel when you read about the gruesome way Octavian's mother was treated prior to (and following) her death?

Predator's Gold



This second **ateampunk, coming-of-age book** in the "Mortal Engines" series by Philip Reeve is published by Scholastic. *Predator's Gold* is

written for kids ages 11 and up.

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

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

1. Why does Freya not know how to properly dress or bathe herself? Why does she avoid asking for help? Have you ever been in a situation where you didn't know what to do but were too embarrassed to tell anyone you were confused? How can admitting ignorance be an act of bravery?
2. Why does Hester originally stare at Smew, Freya's chauffeur? How does she feel when people look at her in a similar manner, with curiosity and pity? Have you ever felt tempted to stare at someone with a disability, or someone with unusual features? What are good ways to interact with a person whose appearance surprises you?
3. What does Uncle teach the Lost Boys about normal nonthieving people called Drys? Are they less intelligent than Lost Boys? How do you know this? Why do Lost Boys consider it their right to burgle Drys? If you viewed your enemies or people outside your social circle as less than human, how would that change how you treated them? How can you exercise sympathy for people you disagree with, or appreciate their inherent human value, even when they don't aren't like you or don't agree with you?
4. Why does Caul admire Tom? How does Tom's altruism affect Caul's actions aboard Anchorage and at Rogue's Roost? How could your good example affect others you don't even know? Have you ever witnessed another person performing acts of kindness? If

so, how did their actions inspire you?

5. Why does Gargle save Caul from hanging? What is Gargle's attitude toward bullying? How can mistreatment cause people to perpetuate the very mistreatment they received? How can you help break the self-perpetuating cycle of bullying when you see it?

Pretties



This second **futuristic fantasy book** in the "Uglies" series by Scott Westerfeld is published by Thorndike Press, an imprint of Thomson-Gale.

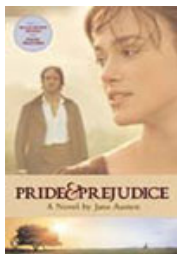
Pretties is written for kids ages 12 and up.

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. Does any of the technology in Tally's world seem like it could be real someday?
2. When are technological breakthroughs good, and when can they be dangerous?
3. Tally and Zane realize that they need more than parties and attractive bodies to enjoy life. What do you think are some of the keys to having a fulfilled life?

Pride & Prejudice



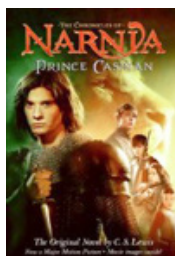
This historical romance by Jane Austen is published by Penguin Group and is written for adults but is sometimes studied by high school classes.

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. Nearly every interaction in this book revolved around the social class system of the era. Do you think social rank and family name still play a role in society today? Give some examples.
2. Do our misunderstandings, preconceived notions and judgments sometimes keep us from really getting to know others (as was the case with Elizabeth and Darcy)? Can you think of a time when you really liked someone once you got to know him, even though you didn't at first?
3. Which male/female relationships in the book did you admire, and why? Which did you dislike, and why?
4. What does the Bible say about pride and about prejudice?

Prince Caspian



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

HarperCollins is the publisher. *Prince Caspian* 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. As a child, Caspian hears stories about the Old Narnians, but his uncle Miraz says they aren't true. Why don't the Telmarines believe in talking animals, dwarfs, or any of the other creatures? Do all of the Old Narnians believe in Aslan? How can you tell whether something you hear is actually true?
2. Nikabrik the dwarf says that he'll follow any leader who will get rid of King Miraz. Does it matter to him whether that leader is good or evil? Why do Trufflehunter and Caspian say they don't want ogres or hags to help them overthrow Miraz? How are these two perspectives different? Which do you feel is godly? Explain.
3. What happens when a hag and a werewolf offer to help Nikabrik? How do you decide if a person will be a good friend? How can God help you know whom to trust?
4. Why was Lucy the first person to see Aslan? What does Edmund

say about her being the first of them, originally, to find Narnia? When the other children finally believe her, why can't they see Aslan? What does the Bible say about walking by faith?

5. When Miraz trips and falls during their swordfight, what does Peter do? Why does he step back to let Miraz get to his feet? What do Miraz's own men do to him while he is down? How is Peter's character different from those of the Telmarine soldiers?
6. When Aslan asks Prince Caspian if he thinks he is prepared to rule Narnia, what does Caspian say? Why does Aslan say this is a good answer? What new laws does Aslan make for Narnia? What does Aslan do for the Telmarines who want to leave Narnia?

Princess Academy



This modern fairy tale by Shannon Hale is published by Bloomsbury USA and is written for kids ages 9 and up.

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

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

1. Miri questions and argues against the rules of the academy a number of times. Do you think she's right in doing this?
2. Is Miri's behavior respectful, or should she have acted differently toward authority figures?
3. Does Miri do the right thing by helping the other girls pass their princess exam, or is she cheating?

- How did you feel when you learned that Britta's father had involved her in a lie so she could marry the prince?

The Princess and the Goblin



This fantasy adventure book by George MacDonald was originally published in 1872 by Strahan & Co. It currently is available online and is in the public

domain so various publishers have re-published it. *The Princess and the Goblin* 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:

- What is Princess Irene supposed to do whenever she is scared? Where does the thread lead her? What path does she take to reach her grandmother the first time? What good comes out of it? What path does she take to reach her grandmother the second time? What good comes out of it?
- When does Curdie first feel the thread? Where does the thread lead him? Why can Curdie now feel the thread when he couldn't feel it before?
- How is faith in God similar to the thread that Princess Irene and Curdie follow? What do you use to keep you on the right path? Have you put your trust in the One who has woven that thread for you? If you haven't, would you like to? If so, [click here](#) to find out how.
- What does the book say are characteristics of a prince or princess, such as a true princess would never lie? Does Irene have the qualities of a princess? What does Curdie do that demonstrates princely qualities? What qualities of a prince or princess do you possess?
- What scares the princess? Is her grandmother strong enough to handle the plans of the goblins? What scares you? Is your God strong enough to handle situations that scare you?

The Princess Bride



This fairy tale, adventure book by William Goldman is published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. *The Princess Bride* 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:

- What about Westley and Buttercup's story made Goldman say that life isn't fair? Have things happened to you that don't seem fair? Knowing that God is just and sovereign, how can you stay encouraged when life seems unfair?
- Why do Fezzik's parents encourage him to fight? Do you agree with them? Has there been a time when I asked you to do

something, and you didn't understand why?

- Why do people make fun of Fezzik? Have you ever been teased for a talent or an ability you have? What does the Bible say about the purpose of our differences? (See Ephesians 2:10 and 1 Corinthians 12.)
- Why does Buttercup agree to marry Humperdink? Why does she go with him even after Westley saved her from the Fire Swamp? Why does she go with Westley after marrying Humperdink? How is marriage portrayed elsewhere in the book? What does the Bible say about marriage?
- Why does Inigo spend 20 years learning how to fence? Is he seeking justice for his father, or revenge? What's the difference? What does the Bible say about vengeance?

The Princess Diaries



This first pre-teen/teen chick-lit book in the "Princess Diaries" by Meg Cabot is published by HarperCollins Publishers. *The Princess Diaries* 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:

- Mia gets to experience things many young women only dream about—dating the most popular boy in school, being made

over (complete with designer hair, makeup and clothing) and discovering she is royalty. Which of these things do you dream about?

2. What do you like best about Mia—her unpretentious attitude, desire to help others, adolescent imperfections or something else?
3. Mia cheats on a test, demonstrates a bit of remorse and lies to her friends and family with little regret. Her intentions were usually good. Does this make her actions OK? Think about one of those situations. What could she have done instead?
4. High school students use and discuss drugs and alcohol. Mia doesn't use them because she cares for her body. How are Mia's reasons for not doing drugs or drinking alcohol similar to or different from yours?
5. What is God's plan for sex and purity? How is this similar to or different from what Mia believes?
6. Who in this story stood up for the underdog? How did this action affect the story? How would your doing this affect a situation in your life?
7. Mia took quite a few stands. What stands do you take? How do you assert yourself?
8. Mia learned more about friendship. Why is it important to choose friends wisely?

A Princess of Mars

(basis for the movie *John Carter*)



This science fiction book by Edgar Rice Burroughs is the first book in the “Barsoom” series and is published by Penguin Classics, a division of the Penguin Group.

The book and its sequels are the inspiration for Disney’s *John Carter science fiction movie*. *A Princess of Mars* 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. John Carter sees the green Martians and is appalled because he thinks they are hideous. Have you ever judged someone based on his looks? By what should you judge people?
2. Ignorant of Barsoom’s customs, John Carter angers Dejah Thoris when he does not ask her to marry him after he fights for her. Have you ever unintentionally made someone angry? How was the situation resolved? Is there anything you could have done differently?
3. The keeper of the atmosphere factory helps Carter, but then regrets his decision soon after. Have you ever regretted helping someone? Why did you feel this way?
4. How do the green Martians and the red Martians treat their eggs and children differently? With the low death rate and lack of resources, are the green Martians

justified in their actions? Why or why not? How does our society treat children?

The Princess Plot



This chick lit mystery is the first book in the “Scandia” series by Kirsten Boie and is published by Chicken House, an imprint of Scholastic, Inc.

The Princess Plot 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 Jenna’s pride in being “star quality” put her in an unwanted position? How does Norlin’s pride cause him to change his appearance and political views? Has vanity ever hurt you? Explain.
2. What role do the media play in this story? Do you agree with Malena’s friend Liron, that whoever controls what goes into people’s minds controls what will happen next in the country? How is this applicable in our society today? Explain.
3. Where in our world are people exploited, the way the northern Scandians were by the southerners? What can you do to advocate for those people?
4. Why does Bolstrom tell Norlin they must encourage the southerners to fear the northerners? Is he right that fear usually turns

to hate? How have you seen that played out in your own life?

5. Why is it important for Jenna to realize that no matter who her father is, she is still Jenna? What roles do your friends and family play in determining what kind of person you are? What role does God play in determining the kind of person you are?

The Problem Child



This fantasy book by Michael Buckley is the third in the “The Sisters Grimm” series and is published by Amulet Books, a division of Abrams. *The*

Problem Child 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 doesn't Grandma Relda want Sabrina and Daphne to learn about magic? What happens to Sabrina when she begins to use magic? How can you tell that she isn't ready for that kind of power?
2. Why is the Little Mermaid so unhappy? What does she do to make herself feel better? Talk about a time when you were sad. What did you do to make yourself feel better? What are some good ways to make yourself feel better?
3. How do the Everafters feel about the Grimms? How do the Grimms feel about the Everafters? Talk about a time

when someone treated you badly because you were different. How did that make you feel? If you saw someone being treated badly, how would you react?

4. Why doesn't Grandma Relda want Sabrina and Daphne to look for their parents? How does this make Sabrina feel? How does Sabrina react? What else could she have done instead of being disobedient? Talk about a time when you thought we treated you unfairly. What can you do when you feel that way?

Problems in Plymouth



This historical, adventure, Christian fiction by Marianne Hering and Marshal Younger is the sixth book in the “The Imagination

Station” series and is published by Focus on the Family in association with Tyndale House Publishers Inc. *Problems in Plymouth* is written for kids ages 7 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 Hugh say to Patrick and Beth about doing what's right? If people disagree about what is right and wrong, how can we know the truth? How do you decide what is right or wrong in your own life?
2. What rumor does Hugh start? What happens as a result? Can you think of a time in your life when you were affected by a lie

or rumor? Why is honesty always a better choice?

3. Why does Bradford say that the Pilgrims must honor the treaty? How is keeping the treaty a good witness to the Native Americans? What can you do to be good witness for Christ?
4. What happens when the Pilgrims go to rescue Squanto? How do the Pilgrims help the injured Native Americans? Have you ever made a mistake that hurt another person? How did you make it right?
5. How do the Native Americans and Pilgrims give thanks for friendship and a good harvest? What are you thankful for? How do you express your thanks?

Prodigy



This science fiction, dystopian novel by Marie Lu is the second in the “Legend” series and is published by G.P. Putnam's Sons, a division of the

Penguin Group. *Prodigy* 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. Metias tells June that few people ever kill for the right reason. Do you agree? Explain. For what reasons should a nation declare war on another nation? For what reasons shouldn't a nation declare war on another nation?
2. Does Razor prove trustworthy? How do you judge whether

someone is telling you the truth? Who can you talk to if you're unsure of a friend's truthfulness? Has someone you trusted ever lied to you? How did you find out? How did you treat that person after the lie?

- Day and June are fictional 15-year-olds. In what ways do they act like ordinary teenagers? How do they differ from the teenagers you know? In what ways do their ages affect the decisions they make?

Prom and Prejudice



This teen romance by Elizabeth Eulberg is published by Point, an imprint of Scholastic, Inc., and written for kids ages 13 to 18.

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

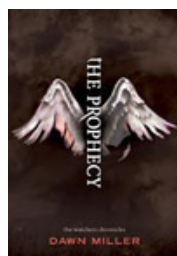
If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

- In what ways does Darcy show prejudice against Lizzie? How is she prejudiced against him? What could they have done from the outset to avoid mutual anger and misinformation? What can you do to defuse conflicts or misunderstandings with people you don't know well?
- Have you ever known people like Wick, who take advantage of others to gain wealth, status or popularity? Have you ever used someone else to get something you wanted? What would you want to change about your behavior? Has someone ever used you to get something she or

he wanted? How did that make you feel?

- Why does Lizzie say you become a better person when you have to work for things? Think about a situation where you had to earn something rather than having it given to you. How did you feel about yourself afterward?

The Prophecy



This supernatural thriller is the first book in the "Watchers Chronicles" series by Dawn Miller and is published by Zondervan. *The Prophecy* is written

for teens ages 15 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:

- Why do you think the Watchers have drifted apart after having been such a close circle of friends in their middle-school years? Why might their faith have dwindled? How could not keeping in touch with good Christian friends hurt your relationship with God? Explain.
- How do Sam, Jenna, Carly, and J rescue Jonah? What would you do if you found yourself in a situation like they did?
- Have you ever sensed that you were being prompted to do something that you didn't think was right? How did you keep from following through on that temptation?

- What kind of spiritual warfare is going on in this book? What kind of spiritual warfare goes on around you? How is it the same? How is it different? What part does free will play into this?
- How might dabbling in drugs make one more susceptible to other temptations?

P.S. I Like You



This contemporary romance book by Kasie West is published by Point, an imprint of Scholastic Inc. and is written for kids ages 14 to 19.

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

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

- Describe Cade's dad. Why does his behavior hurt Cade so deeply? When has someone significant in your life repeatedly hurt you? How did you respond?
- If you were Lily replying to Cade's notes about his dad, what would you say? How can you encourage a friend who is going through a tough time?
- What are some of Cade's behaviors that bothered Lily in the past? Is he intentionally being mean? How is Lily misunderstanding his actions? Explain your answer. When has a misunderstanding kept you from getting to know someone?
- Why do Cade and Lily continue to write letters, even though they could text? Why does Lily purposely avoid learning the identity

of her pen pal? When have you had a little mystery in life that made your days more exciting?

5. Why is Sasha so cruel to Lily? When has someone been rude to you out of jealousy? How did you respond?

P.S. I Still Love You



This contemporary romance book by Jenny Han is the second book in the “To All the Boys I’ve Loved Before” series. It is published by Simon & Schuster BYFR,

an imprint of Simon & Schuster Children’s Publishing Division and is written for kids ages 16 and up.

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

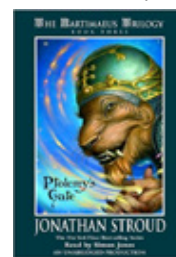
If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. Why does Peter’s mom tell Lara Jean to be easy with Peter’s heart? Why is Lara Jean surprised by this request? Why is it important to consider the other people’s feelings? What are some guidelines you could set for yourself to help you respect other people’s feelings?
2. Why does Lara Jean compare herself to Peter’s ex-girlfriend? In what ways does Lara Jean feel that she’s not Gen’s equal? In what areas of your life do you tend to compare yourself with others? How can these types of comparisons steal your joy? Since these feelings of inadequacy are common to nearly everyone, what are some ways that you can let your friends and family know

that you value them for who they are and that you’re not comparing them to others?

3. When the video of Peter and Lara Jean kissing is uploaded to the internet, how do people’s comments to Peter differ from what they say to Lara Jean? Why does Margot worry about how society’s double standards may affect Lara Jean? What is God’s view of sexual activity outside of marriage? What does that mean to you?
4. Why is the outcome of the game of Assassins so important to Lara Jean? What lies does she tell in order to get closer to her targets? How important is honesty between friends? Is it OK to lie to someone under playful circumstances, such as a board game or athletic match? How can choosing honesty in trivial matters help prepare you for tougher moments where truth-telling is more difficult?
5. Why does Ms. Rothschild tell Lara Jean that her relationship with Margot and Kitty is especially important, even in comparison to her relationship with her dad? If you have siblings, how strong are your relationships with them? In what ways can your relationship with your sibling(s) be important to you now, 10 years from now, and 30 years from now? What can you do to invest in your connection with your brothers or sisters and take an active interest in their lives? What’s one thing you can do today to show your sibling(s) you care for them? ?

Ptolemy’s Gate



This fantasy book by Jonathan Stroud is third in the “The Bartimaeus Trilogy” series published by Hyperion 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. How does Bartimaeus describe the Other Place? How does Kitty feel when she visits the Other Place? How is the Other Place different from what you’ve learned about the description of hell? How do we know that hell isn’t the current “home” of demons? When will Satan and his followers be cast into hell?
2. How does Makepeace plan to overthrow the government? What do Nathaniel and Bartimaeus do to stop Makepeace? How are the demon Nouda and the demon Bartimaeus different when they possess humans? What does the Bible say about demon possession? Is there any such thing as a good demon?
3. What is Mandrake’s birth name? Why doesn’t Mandrake use his birth name? In the Bible, whose name has power?
4. What is the most important thing to the government magicians? How does their love for power and their selfishness hurt them? What do they use to try and get

more power? What do you do when you feel weak? Where does the Bible tell us power comes from?

The Pumpkin War



This contemporary book by Cathleen Young is published by Wendy Lamb Books, an imprint of Random House Children's Books, a division of Penguin Random

House LLC and is written for kids ages 8 to 12.

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

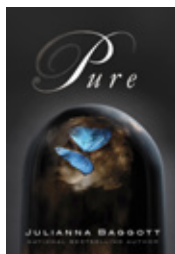
If your children have read this book, consider talking about the story using these discussion questions:

1. Why is Billie upset with Sam? How does she treat him? Does being right excuse her behavior? Explain. What does the Bible say is more important than being right? How have you shown love to those who have upset you?
2. What did Billie's grandpa do as Billie's dad was growing up that causes her dad to harbor bitterness against him? Why does Billie's grandpa return? What do you think of his description that carrying hurt around is like drinking poison and expecting the other person to die? Have you ever held on to bitterness or hurt or anger? Explain when you did. How did those emotions feel? Did your refusal to let go help or hurt you? What should you have done?
3. How does Sam show Billie and her grandpa love? What helps Billie realize how deep her

mother's love is for her? What helps you know we love you? How have you demonstrated love well in the past?

4. Why do Sam and Billie talk about Einstein so much in this book? What do you think about Einstein's saying that "to learn anything about anything, you have to learn everything about everything"? What do you think he meant to express in this statement? How might that idea relate to you?
5. What happens to Billie's anger after Billie lets go of her desire to win? In what ways are competitions healthy? How can they be bad? What are some healthy ways that you have competed?
6. How does Billie respond to all of the advice and encouragement from her friends and family about Sam? How do her family and friends rebuke her? Who do you have in your life who will tell you the truth, even when you don't want to hear it?

Pure



This sci-fi, futuristic, dystopian book by Julianna Baggott is published by Grand Central Publishing, a division of Hachette Book Group Inc. 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. Why does Bradwell believe there is beauty in the scars the Wretches bear? When have you experienced a tragedy or trial that helped you grow as a person? What beauty has come out of that experience?
2. How does Partridge feel about his father? When have you felt angry toward a parent or someone in authority because you felt he or she was making bad choices? What did you do?
3. How do most of the characters in this book feel about God? Which characters still demonstrate a little hope for the future? How do you hold on to hope in a sinful and dark world? How does your relationship with God differ from a forced, state-run religion?
4. How do the men in charge, like Ingership and Partridge's father, treat and view women? How did Jesus treat women in the Bible? Why might men in power, who don't believe in God, make women into lesser beings? How are men and women different but equal in God's eyes? How does God want men to treat women? How does He want women to treat men?
5. How did you feel about El Capitan and Pressia both performing mercy killings in this book? What activities do you see in society today that could be considered a "mercy killing"? Based on what the Bible says about human life, how do you think God views "mercy killing"?

6. How did Jesus treat the “least of these” in His society?

Pygmalion



This play by George Bernard Shaw is published by Penguin Group and is written for adults but 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. Did Eliza transform into a different person mainly because she learned how to speak differently, or did something else change in her? Explain.
2. What did you think of the way Professor Higgins and Colonel Pickering tried to create Eliza “in their own image?” Did they help her by reinventing her? Or did they just make her life more complicated? How might this apply to Christians? How can we ensure that, when we share the Gospel, we point others to Christ rather than trying to make them like us?
3. What did you learn about gender and class inequalities during this time period? Do these prejudices still exist today? Give some examples.
4. Do you think Henry and Eliza will end up together? Why or why not?
5. Eliza felt like a duchess only when she was treated like one, not because she could speak or behave like one. Do you think it’s possible to make individuals better by treating them better than they’re used to being treated?