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BOOK CLUB GUIDE Discussion Questions

★ Chapter 1 – What do you learn about Skyler and her personality in the first chapter? What do you learn about her mother?

★ Chapter 2 – When she’s asked what she likes to do, Skyler has a hard time coming up with answer. Why is it such a difficult question for her? How would you answer that question?

★ Chapter 3 – What is Skyler’s relationship like with her mother? Which sentences give you clues that help you understand how Skyler feels about it?

★ Chapter 4 – How are Skyler and Ella different? Find evidence in the text that shows this.

Skyler and Ella are still getting used to a new kind of friendship. How can you tell they’re both a little unsure of how to act with each other?

★ Chapter 5 – What writing tips does Marissa give Skyler?

★ Chapter 6 – Why isn’t Skyler very happy that Zara is her Italian tutor? What do you know about Zara so far?

★ Chapter 7 – Skyler asks herself this question about Zara, “Is she being tough because she doesn’t care—or because she’s afraid to care?” Which do you think it is?

★ Chapter 8 – An example of what’s called “Show, don’t tell” in writing is, “We do the short walk to the bus station and are in Venice before the third song on my iPod is finished.” How does the author “show” the reader how long it takes instead of “telling” how long the ride is?

★ Chapter 9 – Do you think Skyler is starting to enjoy writing? Why or why not?

★ Chapter 10 – Skyler writes a postcard to Ella and says, “Mom didn’t ever stop to make a work phone call or check her e-mail. Not once.” Why is this such a big deal to Skyler?

Skyler resists Zara’s idea to follow Marissa and Logan, but eventually goes along with it. Why do you think she changes her mind?

★ Chapter 11 - In Chapter 11, Skyler says, “But then I remember all the languages floating in the air.” Why would so many different languages be spoken in Venice?

★ Chapter 12 – Skyler and Zara are having trouble getting along, but they also have moments where they seem to really appreciate each other. Where do you see evidence of this in Chapter 12?



★ Chapter 13 – Zara has been very confident, but in Chapter 13, Skyler sees a different side to her. Why is Zara acting differently?

When Skyler talks to her mom after getting in trouble, tells her, “I don’t have time for this” and Skyler responds with, “You ever have time.” How does this illustrate the core issue in their relationship?

★ Chapter 14 – When Skyler interviews Daniela about her life and the glassmaking business, she tries so hard to write down what Daniela says that she’s overwhelmed. What tips does Marissa give her?

★ Chapter 15 – Skyler has a hard time focusing on her blog post assignments, but easily writes to Ella for an hour. What is the difference between the two types of writing?

★ Chapter 16 – In Chapter 16, Skyler says, “All the newness of Italy has made my usual get-out-there-and-talk-to-everyone self a little hesitant.” How can unfamiliar people and places make you act differently?

★ Chapter 17 – Referring to writing, Logan tells Skyler, “... it’s like you’ve convinced yourself you can’t do this.” Do you think that’s true? Why or why not?

★ Chapter 18 – Skyler decides she wants to stick with the writing internship. Do think she’ll put in more effort and be more focused this time?

When it’s time for Skyler to go on her first gondola ride, she wants her mother to go with her. When her mother says she can’t, how does Skyler feel? Why?

★ Chapter 19 – The girls let their feelings toward each other get in the way of enjoying the gondola ride. Do you think Zara is at fault or is Skyler part of the problem too?

★ Chapter 20 – Skyler’s fifth-grade teacher used to ask students “Are you proud of your work?” before they turned it in. How is that different from just finishing something or checking it over?

This is the second time that Skyler made a mistake with her posts because she was rushing to go do something with her mom. Why was it so important to her to finish the post quickly?

★ Chapter 21 – Skyler decides that she wants to write about Venice for herself. What does she specifically want to have the stories for?

★ Chapter 22 – Sometimes authors hide what are called “Easter Eggs” in their stories for readers to find. When Skyler picks up a book to read, she says the title is *No Place Like Home*. Why do you think the author might have included that particular book in this story? How is it connected to the author?

Skyler finds out they will probably be staying in Italy for the year and she isn't sure how she feels about it. Do you think you'd like to spend a year in a foreign country? Why or why not?

★ Chapter 23 - Authors include little details about their characters to make them realistic. Why do you think Skyler always answers Ella's questions in mint green?

★ Chapter 24 – Ella is the type of person who needs a plan while Skyler likes to see where things lead her. Which character are you most like? Why?

★ Chapter 25 – Skyler says that working on her stories was fun when it was just for her. How is that different than writing something that's assigned?

★ Chapter 26 – Logan says something to Skyler at the end of Chapter 26 that makes her realize something about what she's been writing. What do you think that is?

★ Chapter 27 – Skyler decides to share the emails between her and Ella with Marissa, which means she's sharing some potentially embarrassing things. Why do you think she's willing to do this?

★ Chapter 28 – Skyler turns down a chance for the teen reporter role for the magazine which she wanted all along. Why isn't it something she wants to do anymore?

★ Chapter 29 – Skyler and her mother have a conversation on the train that shows how they've come to understand each other. What have they both realized because of their summer together?

The chef tells Skyler, “We get to decide our own menus.” Why does it feel like he's taking about her life when he says this?

★ Chapter 30 – Skyler gets a couple pieces of really great news. What are they and how does she react?



- ★ Chapter 31 – Zara and Skyler are finally real with each other and apologize for the way they’ve acted. What finally pushes Zara to make things right?
- ★ Chapter 32 – In a postcard home, Skyler reminds her future self “You have plenty of time to figure it all out.” What does she mean by this and how does it relate to the theme of the book?

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