

Sixth Grade Glommers, Norks, and Me

Classroom Discussion Guide

About This Guide

This guide includes discussion questions intended to provoke thought and insight into the themes of the book, which include friendship, loyalty, cheating, peer pressure, and divorce.

About This Book

In *Sixth-Grade Glommers, Norks, and Me*, first-time hardcover novelist Lisa Papademetriou enters the wild kingdom of middle school while truthfully (and often uproariously) tackling the issues of growing in and out of friendship, dealing with new step-parent and a dad who live out of town, surviving the soccer team, and discovering that your lack of fashion sense is your own worst enemy. Heroine Allie Kimball can't wait to start sixth grade. Her best friend, Tamara Thompson, will be at the same school—just as they've always planned. But soon Allie discovers that middle school is populated with all kinds of strange new beasts, like glommers—girls who never go anywhere alone, norks—nerds whose social disease can contaminate all who come near, and worst of all, squashes—crushes that make you feel like your heart has been stepped on.

Suddenly, middle school seems less like a fun adventure, and more like a bizarre nature special. Allie's sense of humor, candor, and her hilarious invented definitions give a unique voice to this fresh and funny novel about the chalkboard jungle of sixth grade.

For Discussion

1. Actions can show us a lot about a character. Allie and Tamara have been close for many years. Name one thing that each girl does that reveals her character.
2. Both Allie and Tamara change over the course of the novel. How does each one of them change? Who changes more?
3. Allie's friendship with Orren causes her a lot of heartache. Why doesn't she just end her friendship with him? Do you agree with her choices?
4. Divorce is a recurring theme in the novel. What does Allie learn about her parents that helps her in her friendship with Tam?
5. Describe Allie's relationship with her brother, Lionel. Does it change over the course of the novel? Why or why not?
6. Why do you think Renee treats Allie so badly?
7. Allie learns a lot from her new friends on the soccer field and from her coach. What are some of the lessons she learns that help her deal with her changing friendship with Tam?
8. Why does Allie make up weird words? Why does she have such a hard time finding a word to describe herself?
9. How is Allie's relationship with her mother different from her relationship with her father? Imagine Allie was living with her father, instead of her mother. Do you think that Allie might have treated Orren and Tam differently?
10. Tam makes fun of Allie's new friends, Jack and Elena. Why do you think Tam doesn't like them?
11. Allie says that Orren is a pecooliar dude. How are Allie and Orren alike? How are they different?
12. Allie helps Tamara cheat on a science project. Is it ever all right to help someone cheat? Why or why not?

Projects

Write a scene in which Allie discovers that she and one other character in the book (your choice) must spend a week working together on a report for class.

Create your own mini-dictionary. Think of five words that you and your friends use that you think grown-ups or others might not know. Write down the words along with their definitions.

Create a collage. Find photos that represent different aspects of your personality (funny, athletic, kind, et cetera) and interests and glue them onto a piece of 8 by eleven inch poster board. Try to represent as many different aspects of yourself as you can. Now title your poster. Can you come up with a word or a phrase to represent yourself?

Many times, Allie doesn't say what she truly feels. See if you can. Choose a character in a novel. Pretending you are that character, write a letter to one of the other characters. Tell him or her honestly how you feel about his or her actions.