

MEETING #5: FINDING OUR VOICES

1. Munch and Mingle 20-30 minutes Materials = snacks

Give 20-30 minutes for catching up. Before the discussion part of the meeting begins, the girls will have a brief meeting. See the next section for more details.

2. Getting Ready to Lead - Girls' Meeting Materials = none

5-10 minutes

For this month's book club, hopefully each girl thought of a question or idea to use as a springboard for conversation. Before the discussion begins, girls go somewhere private - the kitchen, a bedroom, etc - and make a plan.

They can decide in what order they will share. They can decide if one of them will be responsible for keeping the conversation on track, or if they will all share that responsibility. Maybe they will decide that they want to do an activity first, or think up one question to get the discussion started.

After this short meeting, the girls and parents gather together again.

3. Book Discussion!



45 minutes

Materials = book

Everyone should have her own book handy for reference, plus a copy of or access to this guide for the discussion questions.

This month, the girls are running the show. How exciting for them! It's rare for kids to get the opportunity to drive a conversation that includes adults. Most of us grown-ups take that leadership position by default. So, this role reversal might feel a bit awkward. Make sure that you support your daughters as they take this risk and try something new. You can show support with your body language, and by keeping your attention focused on them. **Resist the urge to jump in and "rescue" them if they flounder.** They know that you are there, and will ask for help if they need it.

Girls might start the conversation with a group question in which everyone shares a response. Then, the girls will take turns guiding the conversation. Each girl will start by sharing her prepared question or idea about the book. Then, the rest of the book club members (parents and kids) will have a chance to respond. Sometimes, one idea will develop into a deep conversation. That's great!

After each girl has had a chance to guide the conversation, make sure to congratulate them on their bravery and leadership skills. It's not easy to facilitate a group conversation. When the girls have finished their planned material, anyone in the group can share additional thoughts or questions about the book.

Refer to the ideas below for possible discussion questions.

El Deafo Discussion Questions:

1. Cece's first best friend Laura is pushy and sometimes mean. Cece fantasizes about standing up for herself or ending the friendship. But, she doesn't, because being friends with Laura is better than being in her "bubble of loneliness." Do you agree with that?
2. Cece seems to be looking for the perfect friend. Is there any such thing? What do you think of her friendships with Laura, Ginny, and Martha?
3. All though the book, Cece has a hard time expressing herself. By the end of the book, she seems to find her voice. What has changed for her to help her get past her shyness?

Book Club Tip: This month, try to be especially aware of the language you use to disagree. Politely disagreeing with others is an important skill.

Model using phrases such as, “I see the story/character differently,” and “I enjoyed hearing your take on that. My interpretation is different...” Try to use evidence from the text to support your ideas. Readers frequently have differing interpretations of a story, which is part of why reading alongside other readers is so interesting

4. Closing



5 minutes

Materials = none

Next month’s book is going to be the last scheduled book club for this school year. Thank you so much for being part of the Girls Leadership Parent and Daughter Book Club pilot program!

Before saying good-bye today, you might want to get out your calendars and set a date for the next meeting. You will also want to build in some extra time, or arrange a separate time, to discuss a few business matters, such as whether the book club will continue throughout the summer, whether the book club will continue next school year, and whether you will make any changes to how the group functions.

Welcome to the fifth month of Girls Leadership Parent & Daughter Book Club!

This month's book selection is *El Deafo* by Cece Bell. This is our Book Club's first graphic novel, but it won't be our last! There are lots of reasons to love graphic novels for young readers. For one, the comic book style appeals to kids and motivates them to read. Even reluctant readers get excited about reading graphic novels. They are a "gateway drug" to enthusiasm about reading in general.

Girls Leadership Co-Founder Rachel Simmons says that girls' early friendships are their relationship classroom. As they navigate the waters of friendship, they learn powerful lessons about how they will be treated, how they will treat others, and how they will communicate. The understandings and habits they form can shape their future relationships - platonic, romantic, and professional.

Cece deals with typical relationship issues, such as having a hard time speaking up when friends are mean or insensitive. In conversation or role play, you and your daughter could think about what it would sound like if Cece actually said some of the things she imagines. What might happen next? Sometimes talking about fiction feels safer than talking about real life.