

MEETING #1: GETTING TO KNOW YOU! & YOU & YOU!

1. Munch and Mingle 20 minutes Materials = snacks

As the first book club members arrive, you'll want to give about 20 minutes for mingling and maybe eating (depending on what your book club decided about food).

If your club doesn't know each other well, you might only need 10 or 15 minutes for mingling at this first meeting. When it's time to start the first activity, make sure everyone is seated in a way that they can make eye contact with everyone else.

For this meeting, parent-daughter pairs should sit together.

Book Club Tip: If the members already know each other, it could be hard to stop chatting. Encourage the group to move along to the next activities so you have enough time for the book discussion.

2. Book Club Mad Libs



5 minutes

Materials = pen,
Mad Libs printout

How Mad Libs work: One person, usually the host, should have a copy of the Mad Libs page printed out. She will read what type of word is called for, and the girls can shout out their answers. The host should write down answers quickly, trying to be aware of writing down suggestions from different girls. Then, read the whole goofy page out loud. For this age group, an adult may need to define "confidential" and "present" for the girls.

We created this Girls Leadership Book Club Mad Libs activity to serve two purposes.

First, doing something goofy together breaks the ice. Second, the finished product - while silly - contains some ideas that will be important to your club. For example, in your meetings, you'll want to avoid gossiping about those who aren't present, and to keep things said in book club private. Girls shouldn't have to worry that something they've shared in book club will be repeated on the playground.

Lastly, you'll want to have phones and other distractions put away. It might be nice to touch on these rules for just a moment before continuing. The facilitator could ask if anyone has questions or any ideas for other rules that the group should adopt. Popular rules include: be on time, participate, and have fun!

3. Parent-Daughter Interviews



15 minutes

Materials = none

During this brief activity, parents and their daughters will face each other and ask each other about their favorite book. All the interviews take place at the same time.

Interview question: “What is your favorite reading experience, and why?”

Give about 5 minutes for the interviews. Once all the pairs have finished, each person will take a turn introducing her parent or daughter by saying,

“This is my parent/daughter (name), and her favorite reading experience was when....”

4. Book Discussion!



45 minutes

Materials = book

When we start a community, whether it’s school or community outreach or book club, one of the first things we do is get to know each other. We learn about each other’s lives, form bonds, and build trust. That’s what this first meeting is all about (though the bonding obviously won’t stop here).

4. Book Discussion!



45 minutes

Materials = book

That's what we do as readers, too. When we pick up a book, our brains immediately seek clues about who the main characters are based on what they are doing or saying. We begin to relate to them, and become invested in them. The characters become our friends, in a way.

Book Club Tip: Have a rule in which anyone can pass. No one should feel obligated or pressured to share.

As you read this book, everyone - parents and daughters included - should have marked or recorded a spot in the story in which the character Pacy reminds her of herself. Now, we'll use that reading work to build community in our clubs. Give some time for everyone to share the part of the book she related to most. No need to go around in a circle. People can speak up in whatever order they wish (popcorn style).

You might find that, as people share, other people in the group want to respond with questions or comments. That's great! Getting a dialogue going is the goal. Let this happen. Just make sure to keep an eye on the time so that everyone who wants to share has a chance.

4. Book Discussion!



45 minutes

Materials = book

Once everyone has shared a part of the book in which Pacy reminds her of herself, you could open up the conversation with an open-ended question, like:

“Did anyone notice a part that was especially interesting?”

There are endless variations on this question; you might ask if readers found a part that was surprising, confusing, funny, amazing. Your club might ask everyone to share her favorite part of the book.

Book discussion will get a lot easier and more natural the more your club meets. Eventually, people will show up saying things like, “There was one part of this book that was so intriguing. I don’t quite know what to make of it, and I can’t wait to hear what all of you think!”

But that might not happen in this first meeting.

These discussion questions are your safety net, so you know that your club will always have fodder for conversation. Use whichever ones you want, in whichever order works for your club.

"The Year of the Dog" Discussion Questions:

- In "The Year of the Dog", Pacy's family is always telling stories. Does your family like to tell stories? What kind? Are there any stories that get told over and over again?
- How do you think Pacy feels when she first meets Melody?
- Pacy and Melody quickly become friends. What does Melody do or say that gives us a clue about what kind of friend she is?
- What are some of the traditions that Pacy's family has? Are your family traditions similar or different?
- What is Pacy's response when she is disappointed, like when she loses the science fair or doesn't audition for the role she wants? What do you think of her response?
- What do you think of Pacy's observation that there aren't many Chinese people in books and movies? Why does she say that "No one Chinese is important?"
- Pacy's Mom says that friendship is "easier when you know people who understand," like Melody. But the Chinese girls at camp are cruel to Pacy. What makes Melody and Pacy's friendship so strong? Is it more than just having a similar cultural background?
- In this book, Pacy tries several different talents to find the thing that she wants to be when she grows up. What are some of your unique talents? What would you like to be when you grow up?

5. Closing - Why Parent & Daughter Book Club?



5 minutes

Materials = none

We launched this book club pilot for a few reasons. First, we wanted to give girls and their families a way to be part of the Girls Leadership community, even if they don't live in one of the cities where we offer workshops. We wanted to give girls and their parents another opportunity to strengthen their relationships with each other and with their communities. And, we wanted all of our girls to be exposed to books that feature strong female main characters.

Why did you join the GL Parent & Daughter book club? There's probably a variety of reasons within your book club. Take a few minutes and go around the group now. Each person should share why the GL book club interested her.

Book Club Tip: If you haven't already set your date for next time, this could be a good time for everyone to get out their calendars and do that.

Don't forget to take a picture of your book club meeting. Tell us where you are, what your club name is, and tag Girls Leadership or email dorothy@girlsleadership.org so we can see your photo! We can't wait to check out all the clubs in action.