

Happy New Year! Here's to reading more wonderful books together in 2018.

For this month's book club, 2nd and 3rd grade girls and grown-ups will read *Make Way for Dyamonde Daniel*, a story about a girl who is facing big life changes - a move to a new neighborhood and her parents' break-up - with confidence, resilience, sass, and humor.

As you read, you might notice the character traits that help Dyamonde get through these adjustments. For example, Dyamonde acknowledges positive changes that have happened in her life, not just the losses. While she misses her old neighborhood, she appreciates that her new neighborhood is super lively, with lots of kids and good people watching. She also realizes that it's better for everyone now that her parents aren't fighting anymore. Adult and kid readers could discuss whether focusing on the positive is a strategy that they could use in their own lives. Sometimes, simply practicing gratitude is enough to shift a person's perspective from negative to positive.

On the following pages, you will find some suggestions for how your book club meeting might go. Feel free to use whichever of these questions and tips works for you, and substitute as you wish. The best book discussions develop organically as people listen closely and respond to each other.

### **Munch 'n' Chat, 20-30 minutes**

As grown ups and girls arrive, allow some time for snacking and catching up. Snacks don't have to be fancy at all; it can be as simple as a picnic blanket in the backyard, or sitting around the coffee table eating popcorn and lemonade.

### **Ice-Breaker, 10-15 minutes**

If your club has been meeting since the fall (or if this is a continuation of previous years), you probably don't have to suggest that people sit next to someone new. At this point, everyone is probably feeling quite comfortable together - the girls rushing into the house to catch up on all the latest and the grown-ups feeling like they know each other well enough to get past small talk.

There might be some clubs that are just starting out, though, and in those cases, depending on how well all the participants know each other, you might encourage people to sit so that they're not in their grown-up/girl pairs.

Once seated, everyone asks her neighbor a discussion question, like: “When’s the last time you dealt with a big change?”

Give five minutes for pairs to discuss. Then, give 5-10 minutes for pairs to share a bit about each other’s answers. It might sound something like, “Julia went through a big change when her family got a puppy.”

### **Book Discussion, 30 minutes or so**

These questions about *Make Way for Dyamonde Daniel* might help you begin your book talk. Some groups might have time to get to all of these questions, but many groups will pick one or two questions and spend the whole meeting discussing those. Feel free to write your own discussion questions.

- What kind of person is Dyamonde? How do you know (what does she do or say that give clues about what kind of person she is)?
- Dyamonde and Free have both just moved to the neighborhood, but they handle being new very differently. How do they each deal with their situations? Have you ever been new to a town or school? How did you feel about it? What did you do? Compare yourself to Free and Dyamonde. Which one are you most like?
- Dyamonde has complicated feelings about her new home. What does she like about it? What does she dislike?
- What changes so that Dyamonde and Free become friends? What’s the turning point?
- What are some of the things Dyamonde does to keep a positive outlook? What do you do to stay positive?

### **Leadership Goals, 15 minutes**

Participants can talk to each other in pairs or as a whole group about the idea of resilience. We use the term resilience to talk about the super important skill of believing that everything’s going to be all right even when life gets hard.

What do you do when life gets hard? What are your resilience strategies? As group members share their resilience strategies, try learning from each other to see if someone else has a strategy that you'd like to try. You might also decide that you'd like to try Dyamonde's strategy of focusing on the positive.

## **Closing, 5 minutes**

Before everyone goes off their separate ways, make sure you've chosen a date for your February meeting. Happy reading!

## **Further Reading**

If you really loved this book, and you'd like to read more books like it, here are some suggestions. If there are other books you would like to recommend, we'd love to hear them! Please share them on our **Girls Leadership Book Club Facebook page**, so our community can keep growing our list of great titles.

*El Deafo* by Cece Bell - This super funny graphic novel tells the story about Cece, who loses her hearing due to a childhood illness. She has to wear a powerful hearing aid to school, which she imagines gives her super powers and turns her from an ordinary girl into... El Deafo!

*Ivy and Bean* series by Annie Barrows - This sweet series is about the adventures of two friends who could not be more different.

*Ruby and the Booker Boys: Brand New School, Brave New Ruby* by Derrick Barnes - Ruby is a marvelous main character - a mix of tough, sweet, funny, and ambitious. In this first book in her series, Ruby starts third grade at her brothers' school and tries to find a way to make her mark - but finds herself making trouble, instead.