

This month's book club selection is based on Caribbean folklore. It's a tale about Corinne, a girl who must save her family, friends, and home from evil creatures she'd thought were the stuff of fiction: the jumbies.

As Corinne fights against the jumbie who calls herself Severine, she's afraid that the creature's magic will be too much for her. Her father is already bewitched and unable to help, or even recognize, his daughter. It's the new friends she's met who come to Corinne's aid, fighting by her side despite the dangers.

As you read, you might think and talk about how Corinne finds the strength to stand up for herself, even against a seemingly unbeatable adversary. What gives her that inner determination and perseverance? Where do you get your perseverance and will to keep going when a situation is particularly challenging?

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 your club, 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

Before girls and grown-ups arrive, the hosts might consider whether nametags might be helpful. If any of the people in attendance might not know each other, think about what you can do to put people at ease, and set a warm tone. Leave a little time for a "soft start" during which people can arrive, snack, and catch up or meet each other.

Ice-Breaker, 10-15 minutes

For today's ice-breaker, we're going to try something different: a group power pose!

Some research suggests that standing in a powerful, expansive pose - some people call this a "superhero pose" - can make a person feel more confident and

even help them perform better on a task. The idea became famous when Amy Cuddy, a social psychologist at Harvard, gave a TED talk on the topic, called “Your Body Language May Shape Who You Are.” (Cuddy’s TED talk is about twenty minutes. If the group wants to watch it and discuss together, that could be fun. Otherwise, it could be a fun video for girls and grown-ups to watch on their own later.)

So, let’s try it all together and see how we feel. Everyone stand up and get into a power pose. This is a pose that makes you appear bigger and take up more space. Try spreading your feet a little wider than normal and holding your arms out to your side or fists on your hips. Raise your chin. Puff out your chest. Breathe deeply.

Now, hold this pose for two minutes. Afterward, discuss how it felt. Did it make you feel more confident? What if you were trying out for a sports team, or meeting with a teacher to discuss a grade? Do you think this pose would help you feel more prepared to tackle a challenge or an important conversation?

Book Discussion, 30 minutes or so

You might decide to start the discussion with every member saying her favorite part of the book before reading discussion questions. 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 come up with your own discussion questions, or bring up any ideas that came up while you were reading.

- What is Corinne’s relationship with her Dad like? How does the author give us clues about their relationship?
- Corinne and her friends Dru, Bouki, and Malik are all very different. What makes them a good team? Do you tend to make friends with people who are similar to or very different from you?

- How do you think Corinne feels when she realizes that her dad is under Severine's spell and can't help her?
- When Dru finds out that Corinne is part jumbie, she feels scared and runs away from her friend. How do you think this would make Corinne feel?
- Corinne expects Bouki and Malik to run away from her, too, but they don't. They want to help her fight the jumbies. Who are some people who would stand by you no matter what?
- Severine is a jumbie with powerful magic. At first, it doesn't seem likely that Corinne and her friends will be able to defeat her. What qualities or ideas give Corinne the confidence to face Severine? What gives her the strength to beat Severine? What are some of your qualities that help you when you have to face a big challenge? Are you stubborn? Persistent? Resourceful?

Leadership Goals, 15 minutes

There are times in the story when Corinne must do what she thinks is right, even if others disagree or don't believe her. In order to do what she knows she has to do, she puts aside her worry about what others think and uses her own judgement as her guide.

This is not an easy thing to do in our lives. Many people feel preoccupied with what others think of them, and might hesitate to act in a way that others might think is weird or wrong. Yet, if we let others' ideas rule our actions, we are abandoning our truest selves.

Talk in pairs or as a group about whether you tend to feel worried about what others think of you, or whether you are comfortable acting however you'd like, no matter how others respond. Or, maybe, it's more complicated than that. Maybe certain people or situations feel safe, like you can be yourself, but in other situations you feel the need to be careful.

Share your experiences. Think about how it has felt to you in the past to be true to yourself. What helped you to do that? In what ways can the members of this group support each other so that everyone has space to be who they are, not who someone else has decided they should be?

Closing, 5 minutes

Before everyone goes off their separate ways, make sure you've chosen a date for your April 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 Group** bit.ly/GLbookFB so our community can keep growing our list of great titles.

The Jumbies series by Tracey Baptiste - Further adventures of Corinne and her friends as they protect their beloved island from evil forces.



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