

THE LENGTH of a STRING

Questions for Discussion

1. Imani is the only black girl at Hebrew school, and there are very few people of color at her junior high. Have you ever been in a situation where you were different from everyone else in some way? How did you feel?
 2. If you were adopted, would you want to search for your birth parents? Why or why not?
 3. Imani thinks that Madeline wants her to search for her birth parents out of her own curiosity. Do you agree that Madeline is being selfish, or do you think she's just trying to be a good friend? What about Parker?
 4. Anna's parents sent her to live with another family to escape a dangerous situation. If you were living someplace unsafe, would you want to stay there with your family or leave by yourself? If you were a parent, would you send your child away for his or her safety? How is Anna's story relevant to today's world?
 5. Anna's diary is from 1941 and 1942. Did you discover anything new, interesting, or surprising about that time period? Do you think life was very different then than it is now?
 6. Why do you think Imani becomes so invested in Anna's life and her diary? Is there a particular story, real or fictional, that deeply resonated with you? Can you remember the first time you "saw yourself" in a book?
 7. How do Imani's feelings about the Holocaust—and her attitude towards learning about it—change throughout the story? Did your thoughts about the Holocaust change at all while reading *The Length of a String*?
 8. Why is Imani's mom so unwilling to talk about Imani's adoption? How did you feel about her character, and did your thoughts change at all by the end of the book?
 9. Have you read many books with Jewish characters or seen the Jewish community represented in TV shows or movies? How does Imani's experience of being Jewish compare with your own (if you're Jewish) or your perception of the Jewish culture (if you're not)?
 10. What was your reaction to the ending of *The Length of a String*? Were you hoping for something different to happen? Do you consider the ending happy or sad? If you were to write the sequel, what story would you tell?
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