

READING GROUP GUIDE

What the Wind Can Tell You

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Softcover, 216 pages, Middle Grade Fiction, Ages 8-12

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Before you read (predict)

Read the text on the back of the book. Are there any words you don't know? Try to predict what might happen in the book. Isabelle and Julian go on adventures. What might those be? Her eyes are opened to a world of possibilities. What could those be? Isabelle has her own needs. Think of three things you need. Her parents have fears. Think of three things her parents might be afraid of.

Chapters 1-4:

Julian uses a wheelchair. Think about what that would be like. Do you know anyone who uses a wheelchair? Make a list of the places you go in the course of a day. Which places are wheelchair-friendly? Which places are not wheelchair-friendly?

Everyone in Isabelle's family has a special gift, from memory to speed eating. Do you have something you consider your special gift or talent? If you could have a special gift, what would it be, and why?

Chapters 5-9:

Do you believe that Las Brisas is a real place? Or do you think Las Brisas is all in Isabelle's imagination? Find three scenes or sentences from the book that would support your view.

When Isabelle and Julian travel to Las Brisas, they go to real places but see them in a new and different way. Think of a familiar, favorite place that you like to visit. Then imagine what it would be like in Las Brisas. What would be different? What would be the same?

Chapters 10-end:

Isabelle's grandfather has a complicated relationship with Julian. Why was he still hoping for a grandson? How did Isabelle change her grandfather's view of Julian?

Which character in *What the Wind Can Tell You* would you most like to meet? What would you ask him/her? Think of five questions you'd want to ask Isabelle. Think of five questions you'd want to ask Julian.

ACTIVITIES

Arts and crafts: Make a pinwheel

With just a few simple supplies (card stock, a pencil with an eraser, and a straight pin), you can make a pinwheel that really spins in the wind. Kids can make these with just a little help from an adult.

Get inspired: <https://www.hgtv.com/design/make-and-celebrate/handmade/kids-craft-easy-pencil-pinwheel>

Arts and crafts: Make flash cards

In the book, Isabelle and her family use some Spanish words. Were there any you did not recognize? Make flash cards with the word pairs on the provided page. Print the page out onto heavy card. Fold the page in half vertically and glue the unprinted sides together. Cut out each word pair.

Creative writing: Write a bicycle wheel poem

Using the provided template, write a poem in the shape of a bicycle wheel. Think of a theme for your poem. Come up with one sentence about the theme and write this sentence around the outside of the wheel. Then, for each spoke of the wheel, add one word that relates to your theme.

TAKE IT FURTHER

Music: Make a song

Julian has a music therapy teacher who sings silly songs, makes him smile, and gets him to keep rhythms and play various instruments. Choose a song you know and try writing some different words to the same tune. Write two new verses. For one verse, write lyrics that would make someone feel excited, silly, or happy. For the other verse, write lyrics that would comfort someone if they were sad.

Science: Research the wind

Isabelle has done a lot of research about wind to prepare for the science fair. She knows that Mount Washington, in New Hampshire, is the windiest place in the United States. Research wind and find five fun facts about wind.

Hola	Hello
Si	Yes
Gracias	Thank you
Cálmate	Take it easy
Tia	Aunt
Tio	Uncle
Abuelo	Grandfather
Abuelito	Grandpa
Abeula	Grandmother
Frijoles	Beans
Ochento y dos	Eighty-two
Sinvergüenza	Rascal
Mariposa	Butterfly
Sol	Sun
Amorcita	Sweetie
Chanchito	Little piggy

