

CONVERSATION STARTERS

FOR YOUNG READERS

GET YOUR KIDS TALKING

Your whole family can take part in our One Book, One Community thanks to our titles for young readers. Just like *Room*, these books address themes of resilience, family, community and feelings of isolation. Help your kids join the discussion using these conversation starters.

- **Read with your kids.** Whether you read aloud together or read the book separately, it's good practice to read what your kids are reading.
- **Make it fun.** Keep it casual by asking questions while you read. It shouldn't feel like a pop quiz for your kids.
- **You know your kids best.** Ask the questions that you think will really get your kids talking. Or ask your own questions based on your kids' interests.
- **Pause.** Be sure to give your kids time to think and answer before you jump in with your own answer to every question.

IVAN: THE REMARKABLE STORY OF THE SHOPPING MALL GORILLA (Recommended for ages 5-8)

- How do you think Ivan felt when he was taken away from his family?
- Why were people angry that Ivan lived in the shopping mall?
- Why do you think they brought Ivan to the zoo instead of releasing him back into the wild?
- Where do you think Ivan belonged? What does belonging mean to you?

THE ONE AND ONLY IVAN (Recommended for ages 9-12)

- Ivan says that "With enough time, you can get used to almost anything." Do you agree? What is something you have gotten used to over time? Is there something you could never get used to?
- What does Ivan learn from the television in his cage? Are the shows on television the same or different from real life? What have you learned from television? Is it the same or different from your life?
- When Ivan arrives at the zoo, why does he have a hard time joining the other gorillas? What does he need to do to be accepted? How do you feel when you are in a new place with new people?
- What does each character think it means to belong? What does belonging mean to you?

STOLEN (Recommended for ages 12-19)

- *Stolen* is an epistolary novel (in the form of a letter). Does that format improve the story?
- What is Ty's ultimate goal in bringing Gemma to Australia? Where does it come from?
- How would you describe Gemma at the beginning of the story? How does she change throughout her ordeal?
- Do you think Gemma's character evolution is due more to the environment she's in or knowing Ty?
- Do you think the setting, the Australian outback, contributed to the overall story?
- Gemma is clearly suffering from Stockholm Syndrome (falling for your abductor). How would you react in her situation?
- While Gemma was the one stolen, how could the title also apply to Ty?
- The author has said, "Having feelings for the 'wrong' person is very common, and yet having such feelings is not a crime. It's what you do with those feelings that really determines your true mettle." How does this apply to Gemma?
- We don't get a whole lot of background information about Gemma's life back home. Based on the details we are given, what do you think it was like?
- In the end, do you think Gemma makes the right decision to tell the jury the truth about Ty? What do you think you would do?