

Reading Guide
for
SILENCE

DEBORAH LYTTON



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Reading Guide

1. Stella has a very specific dream—to sing on Broadway—and she fears that her deafness will prevent her from achieving that dream. What do you dream of doing? Is letting go of a dream a bad thing?

2. Imagine if you lost one of your senses. How would you react? What would you miss the most? What do you think you would learn from that loss?

3. Hayden and Stella both struggle because of their disabilities. In what ways do they turn their disabilities into strengths? How can you take the things that are difficult for you to do and turn them into strengths?

4. Hayden shows Stella how to find happiness by utilizing her other senses—sight, smell, taste, touch—and as a result, Stella discovers other talents she has besides singing. What hidden talents do you think you might have that you would like to develop?

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5. Hayden's silence was self-imposed because of the trauma he had suffered. If you have suffered a traumatic experience or abuse, it may be hard to speak out about it. Is there someone close to you that you would trust to listen to you and who could help you?

6. Hayden's grandfather uses his sculptures to speak for him, and Stella finds her voice in poetry. What are some other ways people can communicate their feelings? Do you have an outlet for expressing yourself?

7. Stella decides to forgive Lily, even though she knows things will never be the same between them. Would you forgive Lily if you were Stella? In your life, is there someone you would like to forgive?

8. How important do you think popularity is to Stella at the beginning of the book? How does this change after her accident? How important is popularity to you?

9. Stella and her sister, Emerson, become extremely close after the accident. Emerson makes Stella feel better just by being in the room with her. How do you think Emerson helps Stella the most? Do you have a sibling? Are there times when your sibling has made you feel better just by being there?

10. Stella is inspired and humbled by Marisol, her Rainbow Girl, because of Marisol's courage and grace. Stella wants to make a difference. Is there someone in your life who inspires you with his or her courage? What can you do to inspire others? How can you reach out to someone in need?

11. The beach is a place of healing for Stella just as the plant nursery is a place of peace for Hayden. Share some details

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about how the beach and the plant nursery help Stella and Hayden. Where is your place of peace or healing?

12. Do you think Stella and Hayden would have fallen in love if Stella had not hit her head at the pool? How can we be more open and accepting of the people in our lives?