



# Jodi Picoult

## Book club discussion questions

### Between the Lines

1. How is "The Beginning" like many fairy tales? How is it different?
2. Oliver explains how "we all have lives outside the lives that we play when a Reader opens the book." (p.12) How does this make you feel? Have you ever thought of a book like that?
3. Give some examples of "what you see isn't always what's true."
4. "I guess I have to believe there's more to the world than what's inside these pages." (p.17) How does Oliver's statement fit your own life?
5. When there is "suddenly a blinding light, and our sky cracks open along a seam", what is happening?
6. What does Delilah see that wasn't there before in her many readings of the book?
7. How does Delilah get to be somewhere else than her life? (p.27)
8. Why does Delilah identify so much with Oliver?
9. Do you have a friend/classmate like Jules?

10. Why are real fairy tales NOT for the faint-hearted? Have you read many fairy tales?
11. What does Oliver do so Delilah will notice him? Would you react the same way?
12. "Did you really think that a story exists only when you're reading it?" (p. 53) Discuss.
13. At one point Oliver asks Delilah how she knows that SHE isn't just a character in someone else's book. Have you ever considered that?
14. Delilah reads books "because you can always count on a book to stay the same." Why do you read books?
15. When Delilah closes the book, then re-opens it to page 43, she is crushed to see Oliver is gone. Where is he? (p.62) What does this show us about Oliver?
16. If you had written your own story, what would it be? How would it be different from your real life? How would it be the same?
17. What happens to the spider Oliver manages to get out through the tear in the page?
18. "What makes a treasure a treasure...is how rare a find it is, when you need it most." (p.82) Oliver is given three items from the mermaids: a fire extinguisher, a megaphone, and a shark's tooth. How do these items help Oliver later, making them "treasures" when he needs them most? What ordinary items have become treasures for you? Discuss.

19. "When the book is closed, any of us can wander anywhere; there's no privacy." (p.88) What book would you like to be able to wander around in? Why?
20. Have you ever had a crush on a character in a book? Who? Why?
21. "The world we live in is bigger than just the fairy tale; in fact, it's as spacious as the imagination of the woman who created us." How is this shown by the characters' free time activities? (p.91)
22. What can Rapsclullo's easel do? (p.102) Why is this crucial to Oliver?
23. What does Oliver have to do for Rapsclullo to get him to paint Delilah's room on the magic easel? Why that particular song?
24. When Oliver tells Delilah he wants to be alone right now, what does she realize? (p. 133) To what extent do both of these characters have trouble fitting into their respective worlds?
25. Why are Delilah and her mother hooked on fairy tales?
26. What feelings does Delilah share about her parents' divorce? Why is she drawn to Oliver? (p.146)
27. How does Seraphima's inability to tell the difference between real life and the story add humor to the book?
28. Delilah is angry that Oliver isn't talking to her when she's at the doctor's office. What does she do to make Oliver upset enough to talk? Why?
29. How does Oliver overcome the dragon?
30. When Oliver goes to Orville for help, what does he see in his future? (p. 218) Why is it upsetting?

31. Why is Jules so upset? Does Delilah react like Jules expects?
32. There is a completely different world that happens between the lines. (p.232) Discuss.
33. How does Delilah react to the knowledge that Oliver had her written into the story? How does this reaction surprise Oliver?
34. "What seemed exciting—trying to get Oliver out of the book—is absolutely terrifying now that I'm stuck inside it myself." (p.239)..Have you ever been in a situation where something that seemed exciting turned out to be terrifying?
35. How do Oliver and Delilah react when they see each other after their fight?
36. What happens when Pandemonium strikes the copy of Between the Lines held by Delilah?
37. How does the pearl necklace travel to Delilah's world? (p.278)
38. The act of reading is a partnership? Discuss.
39. When Delilah sees Oliver enter the room, what does she do? Who is Edgar? How is he similar to Oliver...and how is he different?
40. How does Delilah's mom react when Delilah calls her at Jessamyn West's insistence? Would your mom react the same way?
41. How do Delilah and Edgar bond? (p.303)
42. "Was that all it took to be brave? Knowing that someone believed in you?" (p.313) Discuss.

43. What happens when Edgar flips through the book to find the part Delilah is reading?
44. How do Delilah, Edgar, and Oliver figure out how to free Oliver? Does it work?
45. What do Edgar and Oliver figure out? How does Oliver prove to Delilah that he's really Oliver?
46. To whom does a story belong? The reader? The writer? The characters who inhabit it? Do you believe that once a story is told it can't be changed any more...because it already exists in the world in someone's mind?
47. What do you think happens after the book ends?
48. If you could choose, what book would you like to be in?