

Book Club Questions

The Comfort of Crows by Margaret Renkl

1. The book opens with a New Year's game called "First Bird." If you had to choose a bird or other animal to represent this year for you, what would it be and why?
2. The book begins with two epigraphs, including one by Mary Oliver: "To pay attention, this is our endless and proper work." What does this quote mean? How does paying attention change our lives, and in what ways is it "work"?
3. Epigraphs precede many of the essays in the book. Did this add to or change your reading experience? Did you have a favorite? Why?
4. There are beautiful scenes throughout the book surrounding communities of animals (crows, bluebirds, etc) and how they behave together. What can we take away from their interactions to help us be better humans?
5. In *The Comfort of Crows*, each season ends up having its own distinct personality. Do you have a favorite season, and if so, what makes it special? Has your favorite season changed over time?
6. Throughout the book, Renkl discusses how the seasons have shifted as the effects of climate change take an increasingly large impact on the environment. What are three actions you can take to help your wild neighbors as their environment changes?
7. There are many examples of the resiliency of nature, as well as its fragility, throughout the book. What do you find to be the most surprising thing about nature? What do you think our landscape will look like ten, fifteen, or twenty years from now?
8. How do the changing seasons connect us back to previous generations?
9. Discuss how the changing seasons connect back to the seasons of life (leaving for school, coming back for the holidays or summer break, etc). What seasons do you have strong memories
10. Renkl's brother created all the art in the book. Do you have any siblings? Have you ever worked on a big project together? What do you imagine it would be like?
11. How did the art affect your reading of each chapter? Did you have a favorite? Could you always see the connection between the art and the writing?
12. What is the role of faith in the book, religious or otherwise?

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