

Discussion Questions

Little Bee by Chris Cleave

1. What is the importance of names . . . real and assumed . . . in Little Bee?
2. What are Sarah and Little Bee like? Whose company do you prefer, and why?
3. What do Sarah and Little Bee learn from each other?
4. Little Bee is funny and endearing, but also full of painful events. How do the characters in this novel deal with tragedy?
5. What is the significance of Little Bee ' s revelation about what happened when she first arrived at Sarah and Andrew ' s house? How does it change your understanding of her character, and how does it affect the plot of the novel?
6. How is growing up an important theme in Little Bee?
7. Why did Chris Cleave choose to have the principal characters alternate as narrators? What effects does this have on the reader?
8. In what ways is Little Bee a political book? Does it offer the reader any political messages or lessons?
9. There are many stories within the book . . . Little Bee imagines telling her story to her friends back home, for example, and comments on the importance of a refugee possessing a credible story. In what other ways is Little Bee a story about stories and storytelling?
10. What is your favourite part of the novel, and why?
11. If you have read Chris Cleave ' s novel Incendiary, how do you find it similar to and different from Little Bee?
12. What are your thoughts on Lawrence ' s character?
13. How is Charlie ' s choice of superhero alter ego important to the themes of the book?
14. How do you feel at the end of the novel?
15. Will you recommend Little Bee to your friends? Why, or why not?