

El Deafo
Discussion Guide
Grades 3-7

Before Reading: to activate schema, build background knowledge, and set a purpose.

- Use RIF's [El Deafo Anticipation Guide](#) as a pre and post reading activity.
- Get to know the author, Cece Bell, by reading her blog post, "[Ask the Author: A Conversation with Cece Bell.](#)"
- The setting of this book is during the 1970s-era. To build excitement and background knowledge, explore the internet to look at fashion, music, and other trends.
- This book is a memoir that is written as a graphic novel. Use RIF's [How to Read a Graphic Novel: Anchor Chart](#) to teach text features.

During Reading: to engage students, check for understanding, and make connections.

- The captions on pages 4-6 are shaded gray. Why do you think the author did this? What is she trying to show?
- How do Cece and her mother realize that she cannot hear? What are their reactions?
- Why do you think the author included a diagram of the phonic ear on page 39? What does it teach you about the phonic ear?
- Is Ginny a good friend? Why or why not?
- Why does Cece imagine herself as El Deafo? How does she change when she becomes El Deafo?
- How does Cece feel about the sign language classes? How does her mom feel about the sign language classes?
- Is Martha a good friend? What qualities does Martha have that make her a good friend?
- Why do you think Martha runs away from Cece when Cece shows Martha her new glasses?
- How does Cece feel about Mike Miller? How can you tell?
- Do you think Mike is a true friend to Cece? Why or why not?
- How does Cece become a hero in her class?
- How do Cece and Martha become friends again in the end?

After Reading: to summarize, question, and reflect.

- Why do you think the author, Cece Bell, wrote this book? Why do you think she chose graphic novel as the format? Has your thinking about graphic novels changed? How so?
- Give your students the opportunity to write their own personal narrative or memoir in a graphic format using RIF's [Design Your Own Graphic Novel](#) template.

If your students enjoyed this book...

- Check out RIF's [Disability Pride Collection](#) for more books featuring people and characters with differing abilities.