

In the Year of the Boar and Jackie Robinson
Discussion Guide
Grades 5-6

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

- How would you feel if you were told to move to a country where you had never been before?
- How do you make friends in school?
- Do you have a favorite sports team or player? How do they influence you?
- Frontload vocabulary for chapter 1-3 (see vocabulary guide)

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

- What is the thing making grandfather angry, grandmother sad, and mother smile? (Ch.1)
- Why did Shirley want to buy the cigarette by herself? What happened then? How did it end up? Support your answer with details from the text. (Ch.2)
- What did Shirley do in order to be a good ambassador? (Ch.3)
- How has Shirley been feeling so far? Why? □ Ch.1-4)
- Who is Mabel? What happened between Shirley and Mabel? (Ch.5)
- How did the conversation between Shirley and her father shape her thinking? (Ch.6)
- Who is Senora? Why did Shirley “could not bear to see the sadness on Senora’s face”? (Ch.7)
- What has Shirley’s life in the U.S been like? Do you like it? Why or why not? (Ch.2-7)
- Describe Shirley’s father and mother. What are the similarities between them? (Ch.8)
- Who is Emily? Why did Shirley immediately know they would become friends? (Ch.9)
- Mid-autumn Festival is a major festival for family union in China and Shirley totally forgets it. Have you ever forgotten an important holiday or event? How did you feel? (Ch.10)
- Who is Jackie Robinson? What happened in the World Series? How did it affect Shirley and her classmates? (Ch.6, Ch.11)
- What happened between Emily and Shirley? Summarize it within 5 sentences. (Ch.12)
- Why did Shirley call 1947 the year when the dream came? What do you think Shirley means by “double happiness”? (Ch.1-12)
- How has Shirley changed through the whole year? Give three examples. (Ch.1-12)

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After Reading: to summarize, question, and reflect.

- Who were the people in the story who were Shirley's strength resources? What kind of people would you consider as power resources?
- What are the good and not so good things about moving to a new place?

If your students enjoyed this book...

- Encourage them to continue to discuss it and refer to it in other lessons and conversations.
- Let them explore more about the topic by reading other books with similar themes, structure, characters, or content.