

BOOK CLUB TO GO!

Welcome to Kirkwood Public Library Children & Teen “Book Club To Go!” Each kit contains 6 copies of the selected title. Also included is background information about the book and author, specific discussion questions, reviews and read alike.

The kits circulate for 6 weeks. As the library patron who has checked out this kit, you will be responsible for collecting the materials and returning the full kit to the library.

Please visit our web site www.kirkwoodpubliclibrary.org/book-club-kits.asp to search for other book club kits or contact the Children’s Desk for assistance finding additional titles.

Juvenile and teen “Book Club To Go!” titles include:

Flipped by *Wendelin Van Draanen*

Island of the Blue Dolphins by *Scott O’Dell*

The Giver by *Lois Lowry*

Main Street: Welcome to Camden Falls by *Ann M. Martin*

The Seven Wonders of Sassafras Springs by *Betty Birney*

Boston Jane by *Jennifer Holm*

All the Way Home by *Patricia Reilly Giff*

The Alchemyst by *Michael Scott*

A Mango-Shaped Space by *Wendy Mass*

Charlotte’s Web by *E.B. White*

Wenny Has Wings by *Janet Lee Carey*

Anne of Green Gables by *Lucy Maud Montgomery*

The Moves Make the Man by *Bruce Brooks*

Cornelia & the Audacious Escapades of the Somerset Sisters by *Lesley M. M. Blume*

Yankee Girl by *Mary Ann Rodman*

Sponsored in part by Stifel Nicolaus

So B. It by Sarah Weeks

Goose Girl by Shannon Hale

The House of the Scorpion by Nancy Farmer

Whales on Stilts by M. T. Anderson

Small Steps by Peg Kehret

Nory Ryan's Song by Patricia Reilly Giff

The Thief Lord by Cornelia Funke

Discussion Leader Guide

Tips on How to Lead a Book Discussion

- Prepare ahead of time. Read the book, biographical information about the author and book reviews provided in the kit. Prepare 10-15 open-ended questions ahead of time or use the questions included with your Book Club To Go Kit.
- Hold your discussion in a comfortable environment with seating that encourages all to participate.
- Begin by introducing yourself and, if people are not all familiar with each other, have them go around and introduce themselves.
- Think of yourself as a facilitator. Use questions that require more than a yes or no answer.
- Your job as a leader is to keep the discussion moving.
- Be a good listener and observer. Listen for quiet members and try to draw them into the discussion. Watch for someone anxious to get into the conversation and help them to find a gap in the conversation.
- Push members beyond “I just didn’t like it” statements. Ask them to describe what they liked or disliked about the book. Books that inspire strong reactions—positive and negative—lead to some of the best discussions.
- Respect everyone's opinion. Not everyone will like the book. When there are differing views, encourage discussion about the reasons for liking or disliking a book. Let it be known that the group is non-judgmental and everyone's opinion is valued. Often the best discussions happen when there is less agreement.
- Balance the discussion between personal thoughts and responses to the book. Groups that spend a lot of time reminiscing personal reflections are no longer book discussion groups.
- Don't use the discussion questions as if it were an exam. Rather use them as conversation starters.
- Choose a favorite passage or two from the book. Reading aloud can bring a new perspective to the passage.
- Don't worry too much about short silent periods, but be prepared with your own notes to get the discussion started again.
- Be sure to end on time and thank everyone for their participation.

(Thanks to Mid-Hudson Library System)

Further Book Discussion Resources

Books

- *Book Crush for Kids and Teens: Recommended Reading for Every Mood, Moment, and Interest*, by Nancy Pearl
Kirkwood Public Library 011 PEARL Juvenile Parenting
- *Gentle Reads: Great Books to Warm Hearts and Lift Spirits, Grades 5-9*, by Deanna J. McDaniel
Kirkwood Public Library 028.55 MCDAN Juvenile Parenting
- *The Kid's Book Club: Lively Reading and Activities for Grades 1-3*, by Desiree Webber and Sandy Shropshire
Held by other libraries in the Municipal Library Consortium
- *The Kids' Book Club Book: Reading Ideas, Recipes, Activities and Smart Tips for Organizing Terrific Kids' Book Clubs*, by Judy Gelman and Vicki Levy Krupp
Kirkwood Public Library 028.55 GLEMA J
- *The Mother-Daughter Book Club: How ten busy mothers and daughters came together to talk, laugh and learn through the love of reading*, by Shireen Dodson
Kirkwood Public Library 372.41 DODSO J & 374.2 DODSO
- *Reading Raps: A Book Club Guide for Librarians, Kids and Families*, by Rita Soltan
Kirkwood Public Library 027.62 SOLTA J
- *The Teen-Centered Book Club: Readers into Leaders*, by Bonnie Kunzel and Constance Hardesty
Kirkwood Public Library 027.62 KUNZE

Web Sites

- NoveList

<http://www.kpl.lib.mo.us/information.asp> and click on the NoveList icon



- Hennepin County Library Bookspace Book Clubs

<http://www.hclib.org/pub/bookspace/BookClubsKid.cfm>

- Warren Newport Public Library

<http://www.wnpl.info/BookDiscussion/index.htm>

- Kids Read.Com

<http://www.kidsread.com/clubs>

- Teen Reads.Com

<http://www.teenreads.com/clubs/index.asp>

Background about the Book – The Thief Lord

Prosper and Bo are orphans on the run from their cruel aunt and uncle. The brothers decide to hide out in Venice, where they meet a mysterious character who calls himself the "Thief Lord." Brilliant and charismatic, the Thief Lord leads a ring of street children who dabble in petty crimes. Prosper and Bo relish being part of this colorful new family. But the Thief Lord has secrets of his own. And soon the boys are thrust into circumstances that will lead them, and readers, to a fantastic, spellbinding conclusion.

Barnes and noble.com

About the Author



The German author, Cornelia Funke was born 1958 in Dorsten, Westphalia. Following university, she worked for three years as a social worker in an educational project, working with children from difficult backgrounds. Following a post-graduate course in book illustration at the Hamburg State College of Design, she worked as a designer of board games and as an illustrator of children's books. Disappointment in the way some of the stories were told, combined with her desire to draw fabulous creatures and magical worlds, rather than familiar situations of school and home, she was inspired to write her own stories for young readers.

During her time as a social worker, she had worked with children from deprived backgrounds and discovered the sorts of stories that grasped their imaginations. These were the stories she wanted to write – ones that would appeal to bookish children and to inspire those children who hadn't had yet had positive reading experiences.

As a reader, Cornelia has always loved good fantasy, particularly British fantasy authors such as J. R. R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*, C. S. Lewis' *Chronicles of Narnia*, and J. M. Barrie's *Peter Pan*. Cornelia Funke's own success is now international, demonstrating the universal appeal – and power – of *her* storytelling.

Cornelia Funke researches for each novel meticulously. For example, before writing *Inkheart*, she researched about booksellers, book collectors, book thieves and even book murderers as well as reading about martens and fire eaters. She then imagined the characters and the places they might go, writes down plot lines for the first 20 chapters. Then, and only then - after about six months – she writes the first sentence. A major novel will take her about a year to write. She always does her own sketches – in pen and ink (her grandfather was a famous etcher), she creates a picture of her own characters to help her write about them.

Three of the four novels she has published with Scholastic are being made into movies – *The Thief Lord*, *Inkheart* and *Dragon Rider! Inkspell* is her newest novel that was published in Fall 2005.

As of 2006 she lives in Los Angeles with her 16-year-old daughter Anna and 11-year-old son, Ben. Sadly, her husband, Rolf, died of cancer in March 2006. They had been married for 26 years.

Wikipedia.com

Reviews – The Thief Lord

What is shocking in the case of "The Thief Lord" by Cornelia Funke, one of Germany's most popular kiddie-lit writers, is that the book lives up to the audacious claim. It's got the magic, the adventure, the awkward boy heroes and the plucky chick sidekick. It's even been edited by Barry Cunningham, the man who "discovered" Rowling and published the Harry Potter series in England. But "Thief Lord" is also just a darn good yarn - the charming tale of a band of urchin-thieves, a magical carousel and two orphaned brothers. Written in German, set in Italy and now translated into English, the postmodern fairy tale was just released in Britain, where it sold out in 10 days. In September, it'll arrive in the States with the British vernacular largely intact. "You don't have to Americanize everything for children to understand it," Cunningham says. "I find that quite condescending." Besides, the whole European vibe sure worked for Harry.

Barnes and Noble.com

Imagine a Dickens story with a Venetian setting, and you'll have a good sense of Cornelia Funke's prizewinning novel *The Thief Lord*, first published in Germany in 2000. This suspenseful tale begins in a detective's office in Venice, as the entirely unpleasant Hartliebs request Victor Getz's services to search for two boys, Prosper and Bo, the sons of Esther Hartlieb's recently deceased sister. Twelve-year-old Prosper and 5-year-old Bo ran away when their aunt decided she wanted to adopt Bo, but not his brother. Refusing to split up, they escaped to Venice, a city their mother had always described reverently, in great detail. Right away they hook up with a long-haired runaway named Hornet and various other ruffians who hole up in an abandoned movie theater and worship the elusive Thief Lord, a young boy named Scipio who steals jewels from fancy Venetian homes so his new friends can get the warm clothes they need. Of course, the plot thickens when the owner of the pawn shop asks if the Thief Lord will carry out a special mission for a wealthy client: to steal a broken wooden wing that is the key to completing an age-old, magical merry-go-round. This winning cast of characters--especially the softhearted detective with his two pet turtles--will win the hearts of readers young and old, and the adventures are as labyrinthine and magical as the streets of Venice itself. (Ages 9 and older)

Amazon.com

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314-821-5770 kirkwoodpubliclibrary.org

Read Alikes **The Thief Lord**

City of Ember by Jeanne DuPrau

The Unknowns by Benedict Carey

The Mirror's Tale by P.W. Cantonese

The King of Mulberry Street by Donna Jo Napoli

The Seeing Stone by Kevin Crossley- Holland

Discussion Questions: The Thief Lord

Discussion questions

1. Was it a good idea for Prosper and Bo to run away to Venice? Why or why not?
2. Is Victor really a good detective or is he lucky?
3. Why do you think Scipio pretends to be the Thief Lord?
4. Why is Prosper so protective of Bo?
5. Why does Bo look up to the Thief Lord?
6. Would you make the same choices that Prosper makes?
7. Why doesn't Victor turn in the boys when he finds them?
8. Why does Ida help the boys?
9. What do you think happens to Renzo and Morosina in the end?
10. If you could become a grown-up right now, would you?
11. Why did Barbarossa choose to go with Prosper and Bo's aunt?
12. Who are you most like in the book and why?

GENERAL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

The following questions can be applied to any book. You can tweak the questions for your specific book. They can be cut into strips and passed around in a basket to help facilitate discussion.

My favorite part of the book was...

A better title for this book would be...because...

(Name of character) reminds me of myself because...

My least favorite character was...because...

If I were (name of character, -----) I would (wouldn't) have...

(Name of character) reminds me of someone I know because...

I changed my mind about...because...

I would (wouldn't) like to read another book by this author because...

This book made me think...When I finished this book, I still wondered...

This book reminded me of...

I'd like to tell the author...

What happened in this book was very realistic (unrealistic) because...

This book was better (worse) than the movie version because...

When I started reading his book, I thought...

I didn't like...because...

This book made me realize...

If I could talk to (name of character), I would say...

One thing I have noticed about the author's style is...

If I could be any character in the book I would be...because...

I was surprised when...

I think the main thing the writer was trying to say was...

The most important thing about this book is...

I predicted that...

I think the writer must be ...because...

I would change the ending...