



DISCUSSION GUIDE:

WHY WE PLAY WITH FIRE BY GISELLE VRIESEN

Pick and chose topics for your students delve further into and have them answer the questions below.

These discussion guide questions are designed to be used either in the middle of reading *Why We Play with fire* or at the end.

Fantasy World

Magic and Myth: In *Why We Play With Fire* our main characters travel through magical worlds that have different creatures and magical systems. How are each of these worlds in the book different from ours?

Creatures and Characters: If you could create a magical creature for this story, what would it be like?

World Building: Close your eyes and picture the house for the children of gods. What do you see, hear, and smell?

The Hero's Journey

Call to Adventure: What event sets Thea on her journey?

Challenges and Trials: What obstacles does Thea face along the way? How does she overcome them?

Transformation: How does Thea change and grow throughout the book?

Finding Yourself

Identity: Thea feels different from others in her hometown because of her mixed-race heritage and empathetic powers. Have you ever felt that way? How did you deal with it?

Self-Discovery: What does Thea discover about herself during her journey?

Inner Strength: Throughout this story, Thea finds strength and resilience within herself. What are some of her other strengths? What are some of yours?

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Leading the Way

Leadership Qualities: What makes Thea a good leader? What might make her a bad leader?

Taking Charge: Think of a time when you had to be a leader. What was it like?

Teamwork: How do the other characters help Thea on her quest and how does she help them?

Senses Alive

Sensory Details: Find examples in the book where the author uses words to help us see, hear, smell, taste, or touch what's happening. List your favourite here:

Word Pictures: Pick your favorite descriptive sentence or paragraph from the book and draw a picture of it.

Character

Deepest desires: When Teal, Tiana, and Thea are in Jotunheim they face their deepest desires and hopes in a tempting but deadly river. Explain what you think these hopes/desires reveal about each character.

Reflect: What might you see in the river?

Language Magic

Figurative Language: The author uses similes and metaphors to create vivid pictures in our minds. Can you find some examples?

Make Your Own: Try writing one or more sentences using similes or metaphors to describe an event in this story.

Nature's Role

Setting: How does the natural world (forests, etc.) affect Thea's journey?

Connection: What kinds of interactions/relationships does Thea have with nature?

Our World: What can we learn from this story about taking care of our planet?

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Myths and Legends

Storytelling: Why are myths and legends important in this story?

Cultural Connections: How do myths connect us to our past, to our own culture(s), and to other cultures?

Create a Myth: Make up a short myth or legend that could fit into this story's world.

Connect to your lineage: Research a myth from the mythology of your ancestors (if you know your ancestry) or research a myth from a mythology that you feel close to. How do you feel about it?

Living on the Edge

"Outsider": How does being an outsider affect Thea's experiences?

Belonging: Even though Thea and everyone in Malachite feel like outsiders, they find their place with each other. Have you ever felt like you didn't belong somewhere but then found your place?

Acceptance: What does this book teach us about accepting people who are different from us?

Rites of Passage

Thresholds: What is a rite of passage? Reflect on some rites of passage that Thea goes on throughout this story.

Transformation: Have you gone through any rites of passage in your life? What was it and how did you feel about it?

Embracing Ancestry

Connection: How does Thea connect with her ancestors in the book?

Ancestry: Why is it important for Thea to embrace her ancestry?

Embodiment: How do you connect with your own ancestry or family history?

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Self Trust

Thea's journey:

- What challenges does Thea face that test her self-trust?
- How does she overcome these challenges?

Your Journey:

- What are some ways you can build self-trust in your own life?
- Why is it important to believe in yourself, even when things are difficult?

Trusting Others

Thea's journey:

- Who are the important people who support Thea, and how?
- How do they show their trust in her?
- How does she learn to trust them in return?

Your Journey:

- Why is it important to have people you can trust in your life?

Self-Mastery

Thea's journey:

- What new skills or abilities does Thea develop over the course of the book?
- How does Thea gain control over her fears and doubts?

Your Journey:

- Why is it important to face your fears and work towards improving yourself?

More Activity Ideas

"I Trust Myself Because..." Statements: Write down several reasons why you trust yourself and your abilities.

Trust Circle: Sit in a circle with people who care about you, and share one thing you appreciate about the person next to you, building trust and recognizing where it comes from.