

## HOW TO START YOUR OWN BOOK CLUB

Think it would be hard to start your own book club? Think again!

All you need is a little bit of organization and some friends who are as excited about the books they read as you are.

Here are a few tips to get you started:

**The best way to find people to be in your reading group is to ask your friends.**

Think of all the people you know who like to read, and ask them to join. If you still don't feel like you have enough people, ask each of your friends to bring someone else. You can usually get a good discussion going with six to eight people, but any number that is comfortable for you will work. If you're having trouble finding enough cool people to form your reading group, check with your school, local library, or bookstore to see if there's a group that you can join.

**Figure out when and where you want to meet.**

Some groups meet once a month, some meet every other month. You could get together at someone's house, in a park, on the beach, or in your school's library. If it sounds too official and overwhelming to decide all the "wheres" and "whens" right now, don't worry! It's your group and so you get to make all the decisions. All you have to do is get together once, and you can work out the rest of the details later.

**Decide how you will choose books and how the discussions will be run.**

Maybe you have a favorite author that you and your friends would like to focus on. Or maybe you want to take turns picking your favorite book. Maybe one person likes to talk and would like to lead the discussion, or maybe you would rather just all get together and talk about the books you are reading. If you get stuck, you can often find discussion questions online (try the publisher's website) or at your local library or bookstore.

The most important thing to remember is that there's no right or wrong way to have a reading group. Do what you're comfortable with and always have fun, and your group will be a success!

For more discussion guides to get your group going, visit [www.penguin.com/teachersandlibrarians](http://www.penguin.com/teachersandlibrarians).

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## ABOUT THE BOOK



Eon has been studying swordwork and magic hoping that he will be chosen as a Dragoneye—an apprentice to one of the twelve energy dragons of good fortune. But Eon has a dangerous secret. He is actually Eona, a sixteen-year-old girl who has been masquerading as a twelve-year-old boy. Females are forbidden to use Dragon Magic; if anyone discovers she has been hiding in plain sight, her death is assured.



In *Eona*, the heroine, along with fellow rebels Ryko and Lady Dela, is on the run from High Lord Sethon's army. The trio must also find Kygo, the young Pearl Emperor, who needs Eona's power and the black folio if he is to wrest back his throne from the self-styled Emperor Sethon. Through it all, Eona must come to terms with a new identity and power and learn to bear the anguish of the ten dragons whose Dragoneyes were murdered.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



photo credit: Naomi Jones

Alison Goodman ([www.alisongoodman.com.au](http://www.alisongoodman.com.au)) is also the author of *Singing the Dogstar Blues*, a genre-bending coming-of-age story that received multiple starred reviews. Her book *Eon* was an ALA Best Book for Young Adults, won the Aurealis Award, and was named a James Tiptree, Jr. Honor Book, a *Locus* Recommended Reading Selection, and an Amelia Bloomer Master List Selection. Alison was the O'Hearn Memorial Fellow at Melbourne University, holds a Master of Arts, and teaches creative writing at the postgraduate level. She lives in Melbourne, Australia.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- How do the maps and images featured in both *Eon* and *Eona* enhance the reading of each book? Do you like the use of such images? Why or why not?
- In what ways are luck and fortune important to characters in *Eon* and *Eona*? How does the characters' belief in luck and fortune influence their behavior? Explain how these concepts affect your life and behavior.
- On page 70 of *Eon*, Eona thinks: "Fear made misers of us all." What does she mean by this? Do you agree?
- In *Eon*, how do the secrets "Lord Eon" must keep affect his friendships? Do you agree with his choice to keep such secrets? Why does he feel he must keep them?
- How are the struggles for status in *Eon* similar to or different from those you've experienced in your own life?
- In *Eon* it is revealed that Eon is actually Eona, a sixteen-year-old girl disguised as a twelve-year-old boy. Discuss the challenges Eona faces in hiding her gender and identity. How do gender and identity affect the other characters in the novel?
- Discuss Eona's relationships with Ido and Kygo in *Eona*. What do these relationships add to the plot? How might they affect Eona's future relationships?
- What price must characters pay to be healed by Eona? Do they think the price is worth paying? Would you be willing to pay such a price to survive?
- Kygo and Ryko often feel betrayed by Eona. Why do they feel that way? Discuss the importance of trust in friendship and relationships. How are Kygo's and Ryko's experiences similar to (or different from) your own?
- How do the story's characters use violence to achieve their ends? Is their choice to use violence justified? Under what circumstances would you feel justified to use violence?
- Discuss the many things that the Imperial Pearl symbolizes over the course of the story. Think of an item that symbolizes many things of importance to you, your community, and your country. What does this item symbolize? What have you done to care for, protect, and, perhaps, alter this item? Why?

- On page 552 of *Eona*, Sethon says: "Love is such an exploitable weakness." Why do you think Sethon feels this way? Do you agree or disagree with this concept of love?
- How does Eona both fail and succeed to use power for the greater good? If you were in her situation, would you make the same choices she makes when wielding power?

## ACTIVITIES

- **The Dragon's Story** Consider all you learn about the Mirror Dragon in *Eon*: what is the Mirror Dragon and what does the character want and need from "Lord Eon." Then choose one of the important scenes or series of scenes in which "Lord Eon" tries to call or unite with the Mirror Dragon. How might the dragon feel and think during the scene(s)? Write the scene(s) from the perspective of the Mirror Dragon—tell the dragon's story.
- **Maimed or Protected?** Consider the reasons Eona's master gives in *Eon* for what he did to Eona's hip. Do his reasons and the results justify his actions? Formulate your answer to this question into a thesis statement. Then use examples from *Eon* to write a persuasive Maimed or Protected? essay on the choice Eona's master made and the role Eona's damaged hip has played in her life.
- **Quest for the Chinese Zodiac** Alison Goodman used elements of Japanese and Chinese cultures to create the world in *Eon* and *Eona*, including the Chinese zodiac. Research what the Chinese zodiac is, how it was developed, and its historical importance to the peoples of China and research the ways it's important to contemporary Chinese peoples. Use your research to create a multimedia presentation on your Quest for the Chinese Zodiac.
- **A New Life** At the end of *Eona*, the Emperor and Eona have lost significant sources of spiritual and magical power. How might this loss change them? What might they have to do next to repair the damage from the wars and start better lives? Write a New Life epilogue to *Eona*, in which you describe how the characters and their world transform.
- **Women and Power** Think of a powerful woman who impresses you. She could be a woman you know, like your mother, aunt, sister, or neighbor. Or she could be a woman you've researched who has made significant achievements in any discipline. You might instead choose a strong female literary character. List the many ways this woman is powerful, as well as her many accomplishments. Then write a Women and Power personal essay that articulates how and why this powerful woman inspires you.