

# Quiz! Which Lauren Myracle character are you?

## 1 On Saturday night you would rather:

- a. Gab on the phone and gossip with your friends
- b. Hang out with your dreamy new boyfriend
- c. Go to the mall with the coolest girls from school
- d. Stay home and listen to the latest album on iTunes

## 2 Your favorite outfit is:

- a. *Simple*: jeans and a favorite tee
- b. *Comfortable*: you like to look cute, but not at the expense of being practical
- c. *Trendy*: you're always up on the latest fashions
- d. *Whatever*: fashion's not really your thing

## 3 You're easily annoyed by:

- a. Someone slow to get a joke
- b. Anyone who is childish
- c. Someone who is mean to others
- d. You don't get annoyed! Everybody has their flaws.

## 4 People compliment you on:

- a. *Your kindness* – you know how to listen and you make a really great friend
- b. *Your creativity* – you have a vivid imagination and are a terrific storyteller
- c. *Your adaptability* – you know how to work it with any crowd
- d. *Your self-confidence* – you are very outgoing and always know what to say

## 5 After school, flipping through the TV, you stop on:

- a. A rerun of your favorite kids' show
- b. A funny performance on Comedy Central
- c. A steamy daytime soap
- d. A celeb fashion-crisis special on E!

## Scoring

- 1 a-2, b-3, c-1, d-4
- 2 a-4, b-1, c-3, d-2
- 3 a-3, b-2, c-4, d-1
- 4 a-1, b-5, c-4, d-2
- 5 a-5, b-4, c-3, d-1

## Results

### 5-8 You are Amanda

You love keeping up with trends, and can't wait to keep growing up. Each year gets more and more exciting as you make new friends and try new things.

### 9-12 You are Cinnamon

You march to your own beat and are self-assured enough to own any situation. People love you for your confidence – you always know what to say and when to say it.

### 13-16 You are Winnie

You love life and accept any situation with a sense of humor and a big heart. Growing up is tough, but if there's anyone who can gracefully make it through, it's you!

### 17-20 You are Dinah

What a sweetheart! You are very loving, and make a loyal friend. Your kindness is contagious, and people can't help but feel good when you're around.

The  
Winnie  
Years

# by Lauren Myracle Discussion Guide





• *Friendship is a big theme in your books. When you were in junior high, how did your friends influence you?*

Friendship is a big theme in my books, you're absolutely right. I'm fascinated by the way humans interact, and on top of that, I just plain LIKE humans. Some people don't. I do. I love and rely on my friends so much.

That said, junior high had its excruciating moments, for sure. I went to a private prep school where there was a lot of wealth, a lot of beauty, a lot of privilege . . . and then there was me, who had none of those things. I had a small group of wonderful friends, though, and I tried in a very intentional way not to care about "popularity." (And you know what? It was books that taught me that I was probably better off—especially in the long run—if I wasn't popular in the conventional sense of the word! Go, books!)

• *You seem to have a knack for remembering the embarrassing parts of growing up. Which ideas in your books came from real life experiences?*

Oh good heavens. First of all—thanks! (I think...) In the Winnie books, I have to say that most of the embarrassing things came from real life. In fact, I, um, can't think of any that didn't. But you know what? One reason I write (besides self-therapy) is to let girls know that it's okay to be goofy/uncertain/dorky or whatever. Celebrate who you are, now and forever. And try your hardest to laugh at the embarrassing stuff and then just move on.

• *Share a little bit about your writing process. Do you write every day on a schedule? Where do you write?*

Well, the first thing I should explain is that I've got three kids: Al, who's eleven; Jamie (a boy Jamie, not a girl Jamie), who's nine; and Mirabelle, who's five. So my day starts with getting them up, and getting them where they need to go. And then I go STRAIGHT to Starbucks and get busy writing. I write there because 1) the coffee rocks (and just hush, you anti-Starbucksers!); 2) there are no laundry-machine-ish distractions; and 3) it's just the most efficient way of getting in as much writing time as I can.

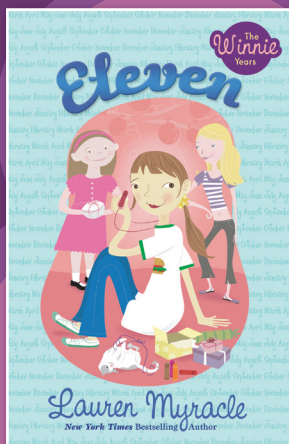
Sometimes people want to know if I compose with paper and pen or on a computer, and for me, it's keyboard all the way. There's some lovely and mysterious link between my brain and my typing hands. AND I finally got a groovy MacBook and decorated it with Hello Kitty stickers and Pandapple stickers, and I must say, I love it.

## Mothers and Daughters to discuss

- 1 In *Eleven*, Mrs. Perry casually suggests that Winnie invite Dinah to the Halloween party. When Winnie says that Dinah's "not the Halloween type," Mrs. Perry delicately says, "It's your decision." If your mom wanted you to invite someone you didn't like to a party, how would you react? Do you think that Mrs. Perry handled the situation well? What about Winnie?
- 2 Throughout the series, Winnie often comments on Dinah's close relationship with her father. Many kids today are raised by a single parent—perhaps you are one of them, or know someone who is. How do you think this affects the process of growing up? What are the differences between mothers and fathers? As a girl, how would life be different being raised only by your father, or only by your mother?
- 3 In *Twelve*, Winnie seems mortified to go bra shopping with her mom. Why do you think she's so embarrassed? Is she afraid that wearing a bra will make people not like her? Is there something else that's making her hesitate?
- 4 In *Thirteen*, Winnie finds out that Mrs. Perry is pregnant and in *Thirteen Plus One*, we see what life is like at home with a new baby. How does Mrs. Perry's pregnancy and Maggie's arrival affect the Perry family? If you got a brand new sibling today, how would you feel?
- 5 Middle School was an eventful time for Winnie, and more changes are ahead with Sandra heading off to college and Winnie about to start High School. How has Winnie changed since *Eleven* and what do you think lies ahead? How have you changed over the years?

*Look for more discussion questions on the back of each attached bookmark!*

# Eleven

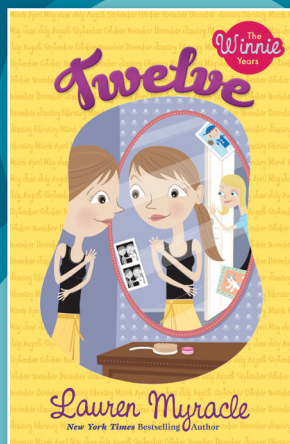


Lauren Myracle

The Winnie Years

Winnie knows that change isn't all it's cracked up to be, especially when it means her best friend, Amanda, might be dropping her for someone else. Throw in a grumpy teenage sister, a cat who gets trapped in the wall, and a crush who has pink eye, and you've got one big mess—one that Winnie's not going to clean up! Winnie's decided that *she's* going to remain exactly the same, no matter what the rest of the world does. But every month brings hilarious adventures and crazy ups and downs. A lot can change in a year . . . maybe even Winnie.

# Twelve

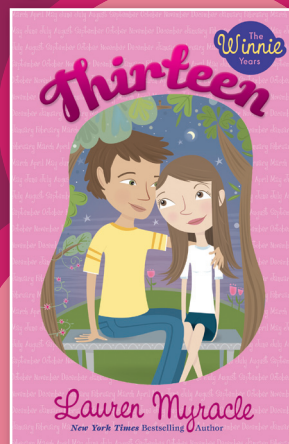


Lauren Myracle

The Winnie Years

Eleven was big—a new best friend *and* a new worst friend—but twelve is going to be *huge*. Last year everyone else changed, but now it's Winnie's turn to “develop”: junior high, pierced ears, sleepaway camp, and bra shopping with Mom—in *public*. Ack! It's a whole new year of big changes and small moments for Winnie, the beloved, quirky-cool heroine of *Eleven*. Funny, sweet, real, and sometimes really awkward, being twelve is fabulous!

# thirteen



Lauren Myracle

The Winnie Years

Winnie Perry is a teenager—at last! And it's a really big deal. A *ginormous* deal, which, wouldn't you know it, brings ginormous problems along with it. Winnie's bff#1 is growing up too slowly, while her bff#2 is growing up too fast, leaving Winnie stuck in the middle. Winnie's boyfriend, Lars, is fabulous . . . except when he's not. And as for Winnie's family, well, BIG changes are in the air. Beloved bestselling author Lauren Myracle returns with first kisses and near misses for everyone's favorite birthday girl.

# thirteen plus One



Lauren Myracle

The Winnie Years

Winnie Perry has finally gotten the hang of junior high—gaining two fabulous BFFs and a perfect (mostly . . . okay, sometimes) boyfriend in the process—and with graduation just about the corner, the countdown to high school has begun. With so much to do and only a summer to do it, one thing is for sure: eleven, twelve, and thirteen were big—bigger than big—but adding one more, and turning fourteen, is going to be *epic*.

Ages 10 up • Grades 5 up

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# thirteen plus One

## Questions for Discussion

- Winnie makes a to-do list with everything she wants to accomplish before she starts high school. What do Winnie's goals say about who she is now and who she wants to be? Do you think the list is a good idea? What would you put on your to-do list?
- Winnie is upset about Lars's birthday gift and their separation. Do you think her feelings are justified? How does Winnie's time with Alphonse help her realize what she really wants?
- Winnie gains a new baby sister at the same time that her older sister is getting ready to leave for college. How do Maggie's arrival and Sandra's approaching departure affect Winnie's summer? How do Winnie's relationships with her sisters and brother Ty change over the course of the novel?
- Amanda says that Winnie's friends are "realer" than her own. What does she mean by that? How are Dinah and Cinnamon realer than Malena, Gail, and Aubrey? Is Winnie realer than Amanda?



# thirteen

## Questions for Discussion

- Inspired by Ty's classmate with leukemia, Winnie decides to grow her hair out for Locks of Love. Have you ever thought about donating something special to you to charity? Why or why not?
- Winnie's boyfriend Lars starts hanging out with two sophomore girls who are not nice to Winnie. If you were going out with someone who acted like that, how would you feel? Would you stand up for yourself?
- When Dinah tells Winnie that her hair is greasy, she decides to come to school dressed entirely as "Ugly Girl." Besides the fact that it's Halloween, why do you think she does that? What point is she trying to make? How do you feel about Dinah and Cinnamon's reactions?
- Winnie is shocked to find out that Amanda got drunk at a party and fooled around with a boy. Why do you think she did that? By the end of the story, it seems that Amanda has changed. What do you think is the cause of this change?



# twelve

## Questions for Discussion

- At summer camp, Winnie and Amanda become best friends again, as if nothing had come between them. What do you think is different? Why do you think Winnie didn't want Dinah to come?
- When Winnie has a substitute teacher, the class plays a hurtful prank. Even though she knew it was wrong, why do you think Winnie went along with it? Have you ever been part of a prank on a teacher or other adult? How did it make you feel?
- Cinnamon is sometimes mean to Dinah, which Winnie usually picks up on. Why do you think Winnie never says anything? If you were Winnie, would you stand up for Dinah?
- During a surprise "three-way calling attack," Winnie says some things about Dinah that really hurt her feelings. Why do you think Winnie says those things? Is it okay to talk about a friend behind her back? Even though Cinnamon initiated the call, do you think that Winnie is to blame for Dinah's reaction?



# eleven

## Questions for Discussion

- On the way to the drugstore, Winnie and Amanda act out a fantasy about being orphans chased by villains. When they get to the drugstore, Amanda seems embarrassed by Winnie's actions. Why do you think this is? Do you think Winnie understands Amanda's embarrassment?
- Sandra tells Winnie that she's outgrown her friend Angie. Why do you think this bothers Winnie so much? Do you think that friends can outgrow each other?
- At the beginning of the story, Winnie doesn't seem to like Dinah at all, but by the end, they're best friends. Why do you think Winnie has a change of heart? Did Dinah do anything different?
- Gail Grayson seems to control everything that goes on in sixth grade, from what games to play on the playground to who should be friends with whom. Why do you think the girls let this happen? Do they admire Gail? Is it something else?

