

# THE KAYLA CHRONICLES



By Sherri Winston

## Thematic connections

- ❖ Friendship
- ❖ Feminism
- ❖ MultiCulturalism
- ❖ Activism

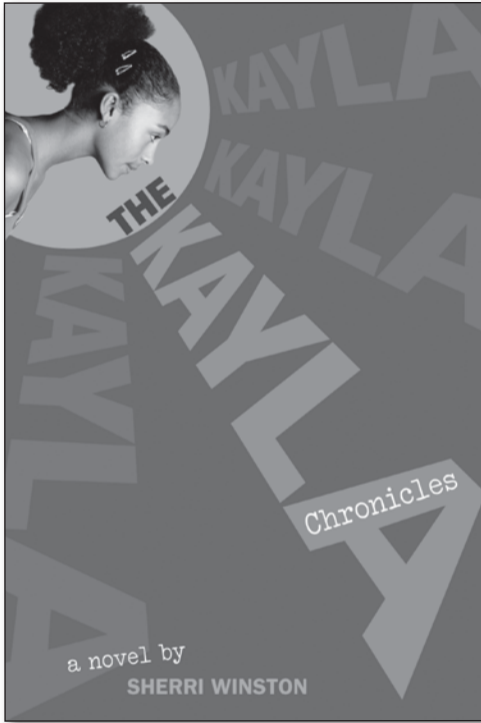
**Ages 12 and Up**

*The story of one  
spunky girl's journey  
to learn to be her  
true self.*

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Defining herself as an outcast, Kayla isn't happy about her image, but her friend Rosalie is not bothered by being different. How does this difference between their self-images prove to be the beginning of the end of their friendship?
2. Why does Kayla agree to Rosalie's plan for Kayla to try out for the Lady Lions Dance Team? How does the plan backfire?
3. Why did Kayla originally establish SPEAK in her middle school? How does Rosalie change the purpose and motivation for the club in high school?
4. After Kayla's grandmother JoJo dies, she feels separated from her family members who have been living in Africa. Why doesn't Kayla seem to care that she is not a part of her family? How does Kayla's father embarrass her and diminish her as a person of value?
5. Grandmother Belle is critical of Kayla's clothing and hair, not to mention her beliefs about feminism. How does Belle's attitude eventually change toward Kayla? What does she give Kayla to help make peace between them?
6. Why is Kayla concerned that she could morph into a mini Rosalie? What does Kayla do to prevent this from happening?
7. Kayla's father makes especially hurtful comments to her about her physical appearance and her attitude toward family. How does Kayla react to her father's criticism?
8. Why is it so important to Rosalie to expose and disempower the Lady Lions? What does she say to Kayla to coerce her compliance?
9. Rosalie and Kayla begin to grow apart even before Kayla makes the dance team. What are their differences? How do they resolve them?
10. Because Kayla was raised by her Grandmother JoJo, a feminist literary professor, Kayla possesses many feminist political views. How do these views confuse Kayla as she tries to come to terms with her desire to dance with the Lady Lions, date Roger Brown, and dress in a more stylish manner?
11. What special skill does Kayla possess that assures her a spot on the dance team? What almost causes her to lose her spot?
12. On page 93, Roman tells Kayla, "Girl, you can't let haters rule your life." Does Kayla take his advice to heart? How does she finally handle the situation with Rosalie?
13. What is the desired outcome of the "Kick the Crown" event? Why is Rosalie so upset at the event? How does Kayla handle Rosalie's betrayal?
14. When does the ice begin to melt in Kayla's family? How does Kayla's understanding of her mother's loss help mend their relationship? What brings Kayla and her sister together?
15. How do Kayla's experiences help her learn about the young woman she is and the strong woman she wants to become? How does the influence of her Grandmother JoJo and her family affect the woman Kayla will one day become?

## about the book



Kayla Dean, junior feminist and future journalist, is about to break the story of a lifetime. When she decides to write an exposé on her high school's dance team, she transforms from a bushy-haired fashion victim to a glammed-up dance diva. But can she be a strong woman and still wear really cute shoes? Smart and witty, Kayla's story is sure to appeal to anyone who's ever tried to make sense of life's absurdities.

*The Kayla Chronicles*  
by Sherri Winston

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## about the author



Sherri Winston is a columnist for the *South Florida Sun-Sentinel*. She lives in Fort Lauderdale with her two daughters.

## praise for *The Kayla Chronicles*:

“A **fun, sassy, lighthearted** story.”—SLJ

“More novels are needed like this one about a **diverse, smart, talented**, black young lady determined to leave her mark on society.”—VOYA

★“A **refreshing departure** from YA books’ tendency to emphasize underprivileged teens of color, this novel set among well-heeled African Americans, rolls together gender politics and a friendship rift into a **buoyant, thoughtful comedy**.”

—Booklist, starred review