



THE HURRICANE GIRLS

KIMBERLY WILLIS HOLT BOOK CLUB GUIDE

ABOUT THE BOOK

Born in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, Greer, Joya Mia, and Kiki are seventh graders and the best of friends. After an accident leaves Greer's little sister paralyzed, Greer is forever changed by the experience and blames herself. Kiki and Joya Mia will do anything to help Greer let go of this emotional burden, and a plan is hatched to compete in a triathlon. Each girl will participate: Kiki will swim, Joya Mia will cycle, and Greer, if they can persuade her, will run—something she once loved to do.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why do the girls choose to compete under the team name The Hurricane Girls? How did Hurricane Katrina impact each of their families? How does the theme of destruction and rebuilding relate to their struggles in the book?
2. Joya Mia notes that Greer and Kiki “were her best friends, but they were as different as gumbo and pozole” (p. 24). How are the three girls different? How do these differences affect their friendship?
3. In what ways are the relationships Joya Mia and Greer have with their younger siblings similar? How are they different? How do they change over the course of the book?
4. While deciding whether to continue modeling, Joya Mia says, “People made too much of looks” (p. 230). What do you think she means by this? How does this affect all the girls? How do they push back against it?
5. When Greer confronts the scene of Darby's accident, she realizes that her memory of the event is a false one. How does this false memory affect her relationships with her mother and sister? Do you think anyone is to blame?
6. Her friends and family accuse Kiki of never finishing what she starts. Why do you think she struggles with this? Has this ever happened to you? Why does she finally decide to commit to the triathlon?
7. While learning to swim, Kiki remarks that “friendship sure came at a huge cost” (p. 93). Do you think she's right? If so, is the cost worth it?
8. As they drift apart, the girls begin telling each other lies and keeping secrets, each asking “what real harm would come of her small lie?” (p. 103) Were the lies harmless? Is it ever okay to lie? How can you fix a harmful lie?
9. The color red appears at important moments throughout the story. What red items did you notice in the book? What do you think the color symbolizes?
10. Greer's father calls their hurricane experience a “good story” even though her mom says it was “horrible” and “devastating” (p. 241). What makes something a good story? Can a story be painful and good? Do you have examples?