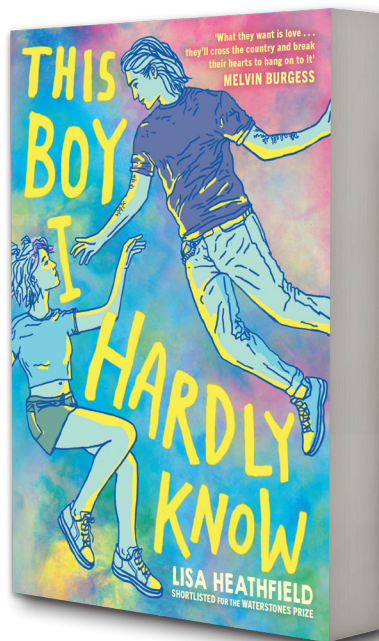


THIS BOY I HARDLY KNOW YA BOOK CLUB DISCUSSION GUIDE



ABOUT THE BOOK

Sixteen-year-old Dusty is smart, talented and fiercely protective of her younger sister Poppy. They've been moved from foster carer to foster carer, until one day the unthinkable happens: Dusty and Poppy are separated, and no one can say when they will see each other again.

Devastated but determined, Dusty has to find a way to reach Poppy. Everything seems stacked against her until she meets beautiful, fearless Cooper at her children's home, and together they decide to run . . .

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Lisa Heathfield's YA novels have all won or been shortlisted for awards, including the Waterstones Children's Book Prize (twice), the YA Book Prize, the Virginia Reader's Choice Award, the North East Teen Award, the Fabulous Book Award, the Leeds Book Award, the Concorde Book Award, the Stockport Children's Book Award, the Southern Schools Book Award and the GDST Award.

Having worked in a school for students with mental health challenges and also a residential children's home, Lisa now teaches teens who are unable to be in school for a variety of reasons. She lives in Brighton, UK, with her husband and three sons.

BOOK CLUB QUESTIONS

FIRST IMPRESSIONS & NARRATIVE STYLE

- What are your first impressions of Dusty and Cooper? What do you learn about each of them in the opening chapters?

CHARACTERS & RELATIONSHIPS

- What are Dusty and Cooper's experiences of the care system? How have these experiences shaped who they are?
- Do you think Dusty and Cooper's bond is so strong because their experiences are similar? Why or why not?
- Which character can you relate to the most, and why?

CHALLENGES & THEMES

- What challenges do the characters face? How do they try to overcome them?
- How is the theme of trauma explored in the story? What impact does it have on the characters and their relationships?
- Dusty and Cooper travel to both Blackpool and Newcastle. Does it add to the sense of tension that they're in places they've never been before?

ENDING & REFLECTION

- What were the most memorable moments or scenes in the book, and why did they stand out to you?
- Do you have a favourite quote? Why did it resonate?
- How did you feel about the way the story ended? What do you think might have happened to the characters afterwards?
- How would you feel if Dusty and her sister Poppy hadn't ended up together?
- When you reflect on the book as a whole, how did it make you feel?

PLOT & STRUCTURE

- If you could change one aspect of the plot, what would it be, and how would it alter the story?
- Did the title of the book or the cover design take on new meaning after you finished reading?

AUTHOR & CONTEXT

- Do you think the story would have been different if the author didn't have experience working in a children's home? How might that have changed the portrayal of the care system?

REAL-WORLD CONNECTIONS

- Did the book make you think differently about the challenges of growing up in care?
- Many children's homes are run as for-profit businesses, what are your thoughts on this after reading the book?

ASK THE AUTHOR

- If you could ask the author five questions about writing this novel, what would you want to know?

