

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 6–8 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.

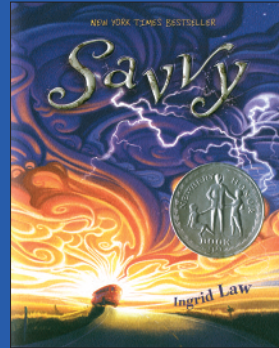
Decide how you will choose books, and how the discussions will be run.

This is another one that sounds a little scary but totally isn't. 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 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

Extraordinary Things Are On the Way



Savvy

by Ingrid Law

ISBN: 978-0-8037-3306-0 (HC)
Ages 9-11 • Grades 4-6 • \$16.99

- Newbery Honor
- ALA Notable Book
- Texas Bluebonnet Award Master List
- Boston Globe-Horn Book Award Honor Book: Fiction and Poetry
- New York Public Library (NYPL) "100 Titles for Reading and Sharing"

★ "Wholly engaging and lots of fun"
— *Booklist*, starred review

★ "A vibrant and cinematic novel"
— *Publishers Weekly*, starred review

★ "A marvel-ladden debut"
— *Kirkus Reviews*, starred review



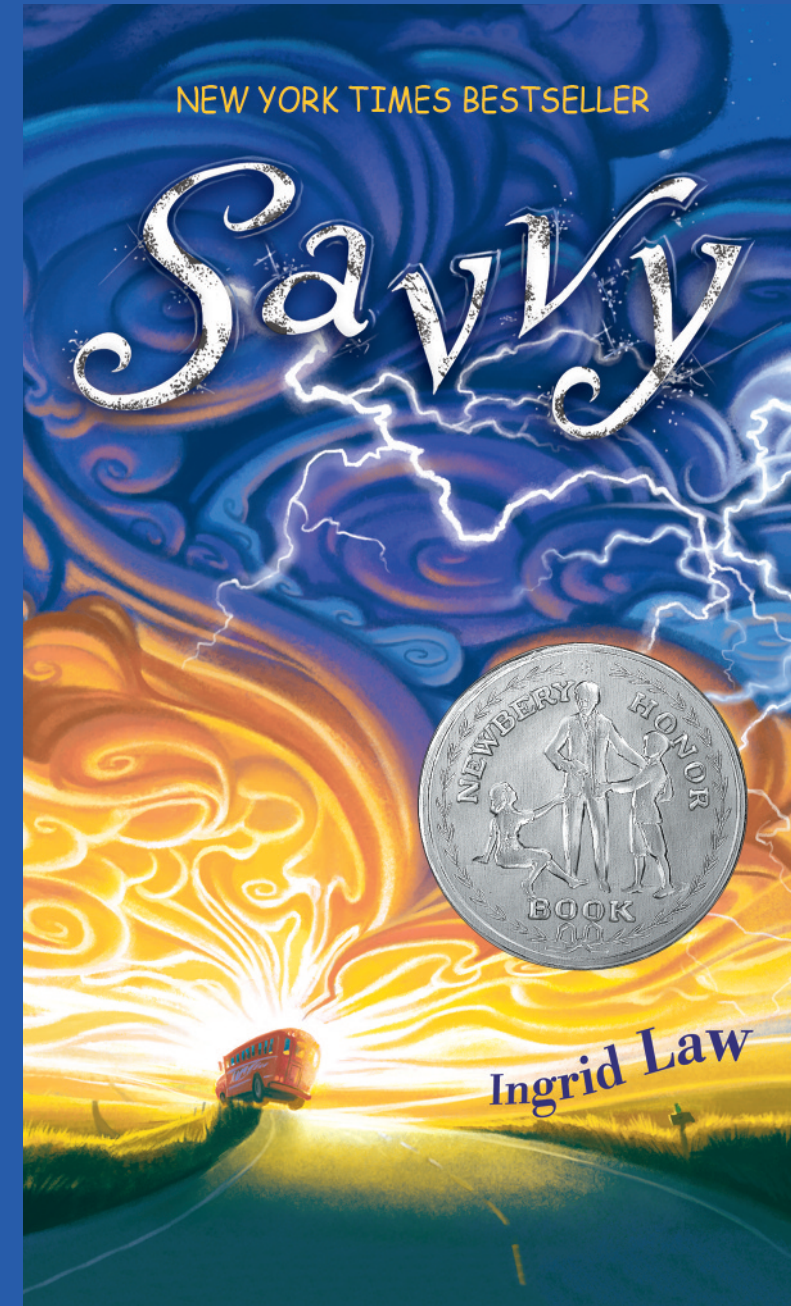
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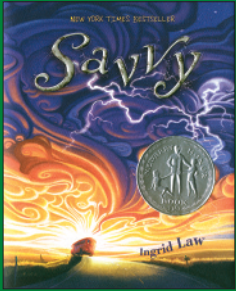
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DISCUSSION GUIDE



ABOUT THE BOOK



For generations, the Beaumont family has harbored a secret. They each possess a “savvy”—a special power that strikes when they turn thirteen. Grandpa Bomba moves mountains, Mibs’s older brothers create hurricanes and spark electricity...and now it’s the eve of Mibs’s big day. As if waiting for her savvy to show up wasn’t hard enough, Mibs’s family gets scary news two days before her birthday: Poppa has been in a terrible accident. With the hope that her new power will save Poppa, Mibs sneaks onto a salesman’s bus bound for the hospital...only to find the bus heading in the opposite direction. Suddenly, Mibs finds herself on an unforgettable odyssey that will force her to make sense of growing up—and of other people, who might also have a few secrets hidden just beneath the skin.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



INGRID LAW has sold shoes, worked in a bookstore, helped other people get jobs, and assembled boxes for frozen eggplant burgers. She and her thirteen-year-old daughter live in Boulder, Colorado, in a lovely old mobile home that they like to believe is a cross between a spaceship and a shoe box. They enjoy writing on its walls and painting on its ceiling, and have two harps, a flute, and a ukulele, as well as a fondness for muffins. Visit her at www.ingridlaw.com

PRE-READING POINTS

- Interview three adults to find out what they remember about turning thirteen. Did they look forward to it? Dread it? Why? Do they wish they could go back to being thirteen again now?
- If you could go on a road trip, who would you want to come along with you? Where would you want to go? What might happen along the way? How might a road trip change a person’s view of things?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Mibs wishes, at least temporarily, that her savvy could “give [her] the muscle to turn nasty girls into slimy green frogs or to glue their mouths shut tight with a nod of [her] head.” (p. 17) Why do the girls in Mibs’s class make fun of her? What would you do in her place?
- The Beaumonts have to keep their savvies a secret from everyone. Would that be difficult for you? Do you think everyone has a secret? Who would you trust with your big secrets?
- Describe Mibs’s relationship with her parents and siblings. How is it complicated by their savvies? What are the positive and negative aspects of having siblings with extraordinary powers?
- Grandpa says to Mibs, “Your savvy’s in your blood. It’s an inheritance, like your brown eyes or your grandma’s long toes or her talent for dancing to polka music.” (p. 121) Are people born with special talents or do they have to work at developing their unique abilities? Are there any talents you wish you had?
- Explain how Mibs ends up on a bible delivery bus with Bobbi, Will, Fish, and Samson. Where do they hope to arrive? How do things go awry? Which scene in their wild adventure is your favorite?
- Slowly, Mibs discovers the way her savvy works. How does she figure it out? How is it different from the savvy that she originally hoped for? In the last year, what have you, like Mibs, discovered about yourself?
- How does Lill Kiteley end up on the bus? What would you say is her special know-how? How does she use that know-how during her time on the bus and how does it affect the passengers?
- How does Mibs’s relationship with Will and Bobbi change over the course of the adventure? Who do you think changes the most in the story?
- Fish and Rocket have a terrible time scumbling their savvies. How does this cause a ruckus for the Beaumont clan and others who know them? Are there any parts of your own personality that you have a difficult time controlling? Is it better to tone down parts of yourself so that you fit in or is it more important to be yourself completely?
- Momma warns Mibs that, “You can’t get rid of part of what makes you *you* and be happy.” (p. 186) What makes you *you*? How do you let that special part shine through?
- When Mibs thinks about Will’s obvious feelings for her she realizes that it “[makes her] feel too young and too old at the same time.” (p. 223) Do you feel like kids today are forced to grow up too fast? How might different aspects of modern life (the media, school, friends, etc.) affect the ways in which kids mature?

- After listening to so many voices in her head throughout the novel, what does Mibs discover about the voices that she and others listen to? Is there anything that boosts or stifles your confidence? How can you drown out the voices that don’t matter?
- What do you think makes Poppa wake up at last? Do you think it has anything to do with one of the Beaumont’s savvies?

RESEARCH & ACTIVITIES

- *Savvy* is peppered with a cast of quirky characters whose odd adventures mimic our own struggles. Create a chart to make connections and explore relationships in this fantastic novel. List the characters in one column and make room for a description, their savvy, and what problems they face.

Character	Description	Savvy/Talent	Conflict or problem
Mibs Beaumont			
Rocket Beaumont			
Fish Beaumont			
Momma Beaumont			
Poppa Beaumont			
Grandpa Bomba			
Will Meeks			
Bobbi Meeks			
Lester Swan			
Lill Kiteley			
Rosemary Meeks			

- Ingrid Law has created a distinct type of “magic” in *Savvy* that has more in common with tall tales than with wands and sorcery. What story elements are usually found in a tall tale? How are those elements incorporated into *Savvy*? Write your own tall tale.
- “[Rosemary Meeks] smelled like Lysol and butterscotch and had her own set of matching right and wrongs—like suitcases she made other people carry.” (p. 17) Inspired by Ingrid Law’s wildly imaginative yet down-home descriptions, invent a character who could join the cast of *Savvy* or write a description of Samson or Gypsy at the tumultuous age of thirteen! Try to use one real word in a unique descriptive way like the author used the words “savvy” and “scumble.”
- Create a playlist for the movie soundtrack of the book or choose songs that you think best represent five characters from the novel. In a brief journal entry, explain why you picked these songs.