



Book Club in a Bag

Discussion Questions

“A Different Kind of Daughter” by Maria Toorpakai

1. Maria’s father is described as being an unconventional thinker. What role did he play in helping Maria achieve her goal? Would you consider him a different kind of father?
2. Maria’s mother is an educated who continues to work in the school system despite attacks. Maria’s sister is a member of the National Assembly. Would you consider these two women different kinds of daughters as well? Please justify your answer.
3. As a result of the family’s unconventional life, they moved around often and lived in poverty with the constant threat of violence. Do you think you would be able to follow a similar path in order to provide opportunities for your children?
4. Toorpakai is described as an angry child until she found sports. Despite the constant threats, do you think following her passion as an athlete in some way saved Toorpakai?
5. How does Toorpakai’s writing style contribute or distract from her message? Do you feel she tried to clearly state the facts or tried to sensationalize her story to shed light on her message?
6. Discuss one aspect of the memoir that you found inspirational.
7. Toorpakai is described as fighting violence, sexism, and persecution. Would you agree with this assertion? Please defend your argument.
8. The first time Toorpakai surpasses a group of men playing volleyball, she is beaten and called a “Dirty Girl.” Do you think this kind of oppression and perception of women is present in North American society today?
9. The book abruptly ends with Toorpakai’s arrival in Canada. Do you feel this ending offered hope for the start of a new life?

These questions were created by Clarington Public Library staff to enhance your discussion of the book.

Book Club in a Bag

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