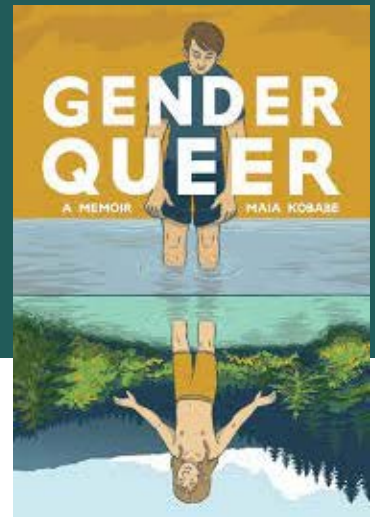


Discussion Questions

Gender Queer by Maia Kobabe



- What are this book's depictions of Maia's first memories of gender, from early to late childhood? What are Maia's feelings around each of these depictions? If you're comfortable sharing, what are some of your first memories of experiencing or noticing gender? What did that feel like?
- What techniques does Kobabe use as an author to help us get to know the many character's in Maia's life, such as eir family and friends? Which character(s) do you most relate to? Which characters do you least relate to?
- Discuss the influence of gay/queer media on Maia's life. Which of the artists, movies, TV shows, books (listed on pages 72-75), etc. were you previously familiar with, and which are new to you? What are some examples of queer/gay media in the timeline of your life, and how did they shape your understanding of gender and sexuality?
- How does fan fiction shape Maia's identity and sense of connection?
- Discuss Maia's experience with the Queer Straight Alliance in high school. Was there such a group in your school or community when you were young? In your current community, what LGBTQIA2S+ groups exist?
- What was it like for you to read about Maia's experience with menstruation? How did it make you feel?
- Talk about what "coming out" means throughout this book. What, and who, does "coming out" involve? What, and who, helps Maia in this process? What makes the process difficult?

- Talk about Maia's experiences with emotional intimacy. Which relationships are fulfilling for Maia? What is it about these relationships that makes them fulfilling? Which relationships are troubling for Maia? What is troubling about them? How do relationships, both the positive and negative ones, fit into dominant culture's norms of socializing (friendships, dating, family, etc)? How do they fit into Maia's sense of sexuality?
- Discuss Maia's exploration of eir sexuality (first crushes, experiences with pleasure, fantasies, body awareness, attractions to others, etc). How do these experiences shape eir identity, relationships, and sense of gender?
- Discuss Maia's experience in sex education and at the doctor's office. How do you think could these experiences could have been different to better serve em as a person?
- Who do you think is the audience Maia had most in mind when writing this book?
- What are the metaphors Maia uses to describe eir experience with gender? Which most resonated with you? What other metaphors can be helpful for thinking of gender?
- What do you think of the visual/graphic element of this book? What are some of the visuals that most stood out to you?
- Talk about pronouns in the book. What is Maia's experience with pronouns? Ultimately e loves and adopts the Spivak pronouns e/em/eir. What is eir experience coming out with these pronouns? What helps empower em?
- What is your take-away Churchland's neurobiological explanation of gender?
- This book was the most banned book in the U.S. in 2021 and has drawn a lot of rebuke from people who cite its sexually explicit nature and illustrations. Share your thoughts.