

Discussion Guide: *Choir Grrrl*

1. Why does Alondra feel that she has to stay in the band with her sisters and follow her dad's plan for the tour, despite her own doubts about it?
2. What does Alondra like about choral music? What does she like about emo? Do you think the two types of music have anything in common?
3. Alondra has complicated feelings about her voice being "cute," "pretty," or "delicate." How are "girly" qualities typically seen in the emo music scene, and how does this compare with Alondra's personal preferences?
4. Alondra comes to question "the idea that any of us should know who we are or what we want at thirteen." Can you think of a time when you felt pressured to make a commitment or a decision that felt very important but turned out to be, in Nicco's words, "not that deep"?
5. In your opinion, which adults in Alondra's life fail her at certain points in the story? Which adults come through for her, and in what ways?
6. Pick one instance of a character using music to express emotion. How does the music make communication easier? What can it not do that a conversation can?
7. What does Xochitl eventually reveal about her motivations for tearing down the Yniguez sisters? Does it change your opinion of this character? Why or why not?
8. How does Alondra's sonnet bend the rules of the form and defy Mrs. Sharp's expectations? How does it fulfill Mrs. Sharp's instruction that it express "big, deep feelings"?
9. What adjustments do Alondra's parents make in their approach to the kids' musical activities after Alondra shares her struggles with them?
10. Contrast the opening scene of the novel with the ending scene. What has changed for Alondra between these two scenes?