



Escape from Mr. Lemoncello's Library

by Chris Grabenstein

Escape from Mr. Lemoncello's Library is a fast-paced novel that's perfect for older kids to read independently leading up to the book club meeting. Younger readers will likely be best off reading with an adult over a series of weeks, and talking about the events of each chapter, since there are many storylines to keep tabs on. Because each character brings a unique skill set to the challenge, kids might think about teamwork and how they would solve the puzzles as they read.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. At the beginning of the book, Kyle is grounded for breaking a window while playing a game against his brothers. What did that opening scene teach you about Kyle? How does Kyle feel he fits in with his two brothers?
2. Once Kyle learns Mr. Lemoncello is a judge for the competition, he rewrites his essay. What does this show about Kyle? How did Charles Chiltonington go about writing his essay? What approach would you have taken?
3. Some students decide not to stay overnight at the library. Why did Rose Vermette and Kayla Corson choose to leave? Would you have wanted to stay? What other commitment would be more important to you than the contest?
4. Haley Daley "looks like a walking toothpaste commercial," the author writes. But what is she like beneath her physical appearance? How does she surprise the other characters? Do you think Haley's approach to the game was fair?
5. Mr. Lemoncello is quite unique. What do you think Mr. Lemoncello was like as a kid? What skills do you think Mr. Lemoncello relies on in his work as a gamemaker?
6. Kyle and Akimi team up to work together and gradually add other members to their team. Would you have joined Kyle's team or worked alone? Do you think Kyle is a good leader?
7. What are the best qualities of Kyle's other teammates, Akimi, Miguel, Sierra, and Haley?
8. Charles really believes he can win and, even if his methods aren't always nice or fair, some of them prove effective. What do you think ultimately leads to his loss? What do his methods show about the kind of person he is?
9. Sierra and Kyle have very different interests. Where do they find common ground? What do these characters learn from one another over the course of the book? What is your biggest interest?
10. Why do you think Mr. Lemoncello wanted to host kids at the library before opening it up to the greater public (and grown-ups)? Is there a place you think helps shape the person you are? How or why?



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A FEW MORE JUST FOR FUN:

1. What were your favorite features of Mr. Lemoncello's library? If you were designing a library, what features would you include? Do you like your current library the way it is or would you add bells and whistles if you could?
2. Libraries are places to do in-depth research. Have you ever researched anything intensely (and not necessarily for school)? What was your approach and what did you learn?
3. Bonus Question from Chris Grabenstein, author of *Escape from Mr. Lemoncello's Library*: What do you think about Mr. Lemoncello's motto, the phrase engraved under his statue: "Knowledge Not Shared Remains Unknown." Is that why we need public libraries — to make sure that knowledge is shared with everybody (not just those who can afford to pay for it)? Why do you think the first time we meet Charles Chilton the scene takes place in his family's home library?