



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

CRASH LANDING

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GENRE: YA fiction

THEMES: coming of age, friendship, LGBT, identity, family

SUITABLE FOR: Grades 9–12, Ages 14–18

GUIDED READING LEVEL: Fountas and Pinnell Z

LEXILE: HL710L

COMMON CORE STANDARDS: RI.11.1,2,3,4,5,6,7
W.11.1,1a,1b,1c,1d,1e,2,2a,2b,2c,2d,2e,2f,4,5,6,9,9b
SL.11.1,1a,1b,1c,1d,2,3,4,5,6
L.11.4,4a,4b,4c,4d,5,5a,5b,6

SUMMARY:

A searing ode to queer identity, growing up in an immigrant community, and carving a place for yourself in the world with the help of your friends.

Jay Wong is spending the last languid days of summer 2010 trying to land a kickflip and begging for something (anything!) to make her senior year different—to finally give her some stories worth telling. When she meets Ash Chan, it seems like she’s getting what she asked for. Ash is confident, intensely independent, and hell on a skateboard—nothing like anyone Jay knows and exactly how she wishes she could be.

Offering to film Ash’s submission to an upcoming skate contest introduces Jay to a side of Vancouver she’s never seen and gives her the chance to push back against the expectations placed on her. But Ash has a secret, and Jay is increasingly desperate to figure it out. As things between them ride the fine line between friendship and something more, Jay has to decide just how much Ash will impact all the choices she still has to make about where she’s going and who she wants to become.

Please remember that the suggested questions are meant to serve as a starting point. Educators are encouraged to select questions that work best for their style of teaching and will help them meet their goals when covering the topics in this book. Questions and prompts should be tweaked and/or reformatted to best fit your students, context, and community to ensure equity and inclusion.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is Jay's first impression of Ash? What is Ash's first impression of Jay?
2. How does the title of the book relate to the story? What literary devices does the title demonstrate in relation to the story?
3. Throughout the story, Jay is in the process of learning more about different facets of her identity. Who does she speak with about race, class, gender, and sexuality, and how does each person respond? What factors might impact both Jay's willingness to have these conversations and how the conversations unfold?
4. Jay and her parents have different visions for Jay's future after graduation. What are Jay's intentions for her future? What are Ma Mi's intentions for Jay's future? What do their intentions reveal about their personalities and values?
5. Ash refers to Haku, a character from the movie *Spirited Away*, as androgynous. What does she mean by that term?
6. When Jay runs into Wendy at a party, she meets Wendy's boyfriend Justin for the first time, and Wendy begs Jay not to tell their parents about him. Why is Wendy worried about them finding out, and what does this imply about their parents' views? Why do you think Jay and Wendy have different expectations of how their parents might react?
7. Ash mentions that Asian parents enroll their kids in classical music lessons so they can better assimilate into Western society. What do you think she means by this?
8. Find one example of how Jay describes her gender or sexuality at the start of the book and another example toward the end of the book. How do the two descriptions compare?

9. Jay refers to some of the students at George Van as *FOBs*. What does this acronym mean and how does Ash respond to Jay's statement? What does Jay's use of the term say about her understanding of Asian-Canadian identity and experiences?
10. Ash and Jay read *Orlando* by Virginia Woolf for their final English assignment. What is the significance of this book in Ash and Jay's relationship? How do their respective interpretations of the novel reveal their distinct ideas about the dynamic between them?
11. What is Ash's relationship to speaking Cantonese? What is Jay's? Explain how they differ and why you think that might be.
12. Jay represents a desire to know more about different types of sexualities and gender identities. Have understandings of race, class, sexuality, and gender changed since the 2010s when this book was set? Are there aspects of society that exist today that might have shaped her story differently?
13. What are some of the generational norms that Jay describes as being part of an immigrant Chinese family? Which of these norms do Jay's character try to break in this story and why?
14. Pick a character in the story who experiences pressure from their parents and answer the following:
 - What kinds of pressures are they facing?
 - Why do you think their parents are pressuring them? What do you think is motivating the parents to act this way?
 - What does the character feel in response to the pressure?
 - How does the pressure impact their choices throughout the book? Do they let it guide them or do they rebel against it? Why do you think they make this choice?
15. What is the model minority myth and who does it impact? How does Wendy's experience differ from Jay's when it comes to the model minority myth?
16. Why do you think Jay hesitates when she receives her acceptance from the Amsterdam Institute? What has changed about Jay over the course of the story, and how does that influence her choices about her future?