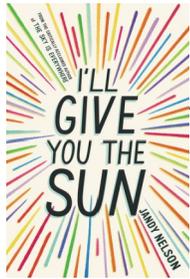


Books by the Stack



I'll Give You the Sun by Jandy Nelson

A story of first love, family, loss, and betrayal told from different points in time, and in separate voices, by artists Jude and her twin brother Noah.

Why you'll like it: First love, family, loss, betrayal

About the Author: Jandy Nelson is an American author, born in 1965. She received a BA from Cornell University and MFAs in Poetry and Children's Writing from Brown University and Vermont College of Fine Arts and has worked as a literary agent for many years. Her New York Times bestselling second novel, *I'll Give You the Sun*, received the 2015 Michael L. Printz Award for Excellence in Young Adult Literature and from Australia, the 2016 Silver Inky Award which is presented to an international book. Both *Sun* and her debut, *The Sky Is Everywhere*, have been YALSA Best Fiction for Young Adults picks and on multiple best of the year lists including the New York Times, Time Magazine, NPR, have earned many starred reviews. (Bowker Author Biography)

Questions for Discussion

1. Why do you think Nelson tells the story through the two voices of Noah and Jude and at two different ages, i.e. Noah at 13 and Jude at 16? What impact does this have on the development of the plot, our understanding of their characters and on the reader? What are the underpinning messages of the book?
2. "*Love is only half the story*" is the quote on the front cover of the book. What do you think this means and what do you think the other half of the story is?
3. Jude tells Oscar "*I gave up practically the whole world for you. The sun, stars, ocean, trees, everything, I gave it all up for you*" (p.365). What was she trying to express to him? What would you give up the sun for and why?
4. The book deals with the big themes in life – grief, sexuality, families, relationships and most of all love, in all its forms. Art is one of the central platforms for the expression of these themes. Discuss how the characters react to it, use it to bring meaning to their lives, make sense of the world around them, harness their creativity and ultimately, help their healing.
5. What did you think about the ending of the book – did it complete the story in a satisfying and believable way for the reader? How might it have ended differently?
6. In the book, the sculptor Guillermo Garcia is described as "*the kinds of man who walks into a room and all the walls fall down*" (p.177). What does that mean and what does it tell you about him as a character? Can you think of any real people for whom this description might also fit?
7. When Noah is talking about his father, he says he draws him "*so big I can't fit all of him on the page, so I leave off his head*" (p.15). What does this say about Noah's relationship with his dad? Does the reader get to know Dad's character as well as the other characters and what impression does he leave on the reader?

- 8.** At the beginning of the book, every time Jude and Noah played rock, scissors, paper, they always choose the same thing (p.25), whereas at the end of the book they chose differently (p.394). What does this say about their future lives and the relationship between them?
- 9.** After the death of their mother and its aftermath, both twins change dramatically in their outlook, behavior and personalities, each becoming something they are not. Why do you think this happens?
- 10.** Which is your favorite character of the book and why? How do you feel the main characters deal with their grief and what impact does this have on the other?
- 11.** Ghosts and the supernatural feature prominently throughout the story. How does the book manage to make Grandma Sweetwine, who is dead, such a real, solid character? Do you believe that it is the ghost of her mom that keeps breaking Jude's sculptures and if so, why do you think she is doing it? What influence does the spirit of Oscar's mom have?
- 12.** Prophet the parrot and his "*Where the hell is Ralph?*" refrain is one of the humorous elements of the story. Why do you think the author included him and what part does he play?

(Questions provided by publisher)



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