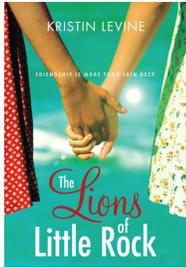


# Books by the Stack



## *The Lions of Little Rock* by Kristin Levine

As twelve-year-old Marlee starts middle school in 1958 Little Rock, it feels like her whole world is falling apart. Until she meets Liz, the new girl at school. Liz is everything Marlee wishes she could be: she's brave, brash and always knows the right thing to say. And to stay friends, Marlee and Liz are even willing to take on segregation and the dangers their friendship could bring to both their families.

**Why you'll like it:** Awe-inspiring. Believable. The Sixties. Memorable.

**About the Author:** Kristin Levine received her Bachelor of Arts in German from Swarthmore College and a Masters of Fine Arts in film from American University. Before becoming a writer, she worked various jobs—from an au pair in Vienna, Austria to a professor of screenwriting at American University. Currently she lives in Alexandria, Virginia, with her two daughters.

### Questions for Discussion

1. As the novel opens, readers learn that Little Rock has been a hotbed of national conflict due in large part to the governor's stand against integration. Given what you understand about the story's setting during this perilous time in the history of the American South, predict what will be the most difficult challenges to be faced by Marlee and Liz.
2. Consider the novel's title. Explain the significance of it, and offer evidence of the ways it supports the themes of Levine's work.
3. When considering Sally's poor treatment of Marlee, Judy asks Marlee why she chooses to be Sally's friend, and Marlee thinks, "This was true. But she was also familiar. I like familiar." What can readers learn about Marlee from her explanation? Are you the kind of person that craves the things that you know best? If so, why?
4. Early in the novel, Marlee shares, "You see to me, people are like the things you drink." She likens her brother to a glass of sweet iced tea on a hot summer day, her father to a glass of milk, cold and delicious, that on occasion goes sour. Her mother is like strong hot black tea, while her sister is like an ice cold Coca-Cola.
5. Do you agree with Marlee's assessment of her family? Why or why not?
6. Describe your early observations of Marlee's family. Do you consider them a strong family unit?
7. How do the opposing viewpoints regarding the issue of integration impact their relationship? Are there any ways that make them similar or different than your own family?
8. Marlee shares that she prefers numbers to words. Why do numbers provide her comfort? In what ways are words unsettling to Marlee? In your personal life, do you know anyone like Marlee?

9. In your opinion, how do Marlee's actions serve as a catalyst for her mother? In what ways does recognizing her daughter's convictions help her grow as a person? Offer textual evidence to support your position.
10. Describe Liz. What makes her such a dynamic character? Does she remind you of your classmates? In your opinion, is she a good friend to Marlee? Why or why not?
11. Discuss the character traits that allow Marlee and Liz to ultimately persevere. How are these characters similar to each other? In what ways are they different? Which character are you most like?

*(Questions issued by publisher)*

