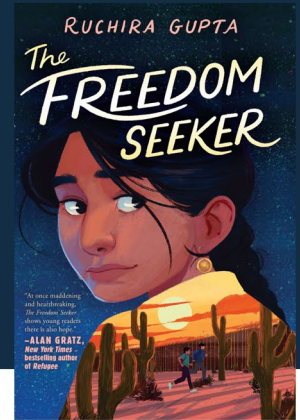


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Parent-Child Discussion Guide The Freedom Seeker



Parent-Child Discussion Guide

A shared journey of hope, courage, and compassion

About the Guide

This guide helps parents and children (ages 9–14) explore *The Freedom Seeker* together. The story of Simi, a girl from India, and José, a boy from Honduras, highlights real-life issues of migration, resilience, and friendship. Through thoughtful questions and creative activities, families can engage in meaningful conversations and learn more about the world around them.

Story Summary (For Parents)

Simi flees India with her mother to escape religious persecution. Along the way, they meet José and his mother, who are escaping violence in Honduras. Together, the two families journey across Mexico into the Sonoran Desert in the U.S., enduring hardship, fear, and uncertainty. Despite cultural and language differences, Simi and José become close friends. They support one another through blistering heat, hunger, fear of capture, and the deep worry of family separation.

Their bond becomes a source of strength—showing how kindness and courage can cross any border.

Guided Conversation Starters

Religious Tolerance & Belonging

- **Child:** Why was Simi's family in danger in India?
- **Parent:** How can we show respect for people who believe differently from us?

Immigration & Crossing Borders

- **Child:** What did José and Simi teach each other while crossing the desert?
- **Parent:** What would you do if you had to leave your home and didn't know if you'd be safe?

Friendship & Helping Others

- **Child:** How did Simi and José help each other during the hard parts of the journey?
- **Parent:** Why do you think their friendship was important to their survival?

Courage & Resilience

- **Child:** What brave things did Simi and José do to protect themselves and their moms?
- **Parent:** When have you had to be brave or help someone else be brave?

Creative Activities to Do Together

1. Draw Their Journey

Create a joint travel map of Simi and José's path—label the countries, deserts, and challenges they faced. Add hearts or stars where they helped each other or found hope.

2. Side-by-Side Character Chart

Compare Simi and José:

- Where are they from?
 - What are their biggest fears?
 - How do they show strength?
- Talk about how people from very different places can still have a lot in common.

3. Kindness Passport

Make a "passport" where your child stamps each kind act they do—just like Simi and José "carried each other" through kindness in the desert.

Real-Life Connections

Gently talk about why kids like Simi and José might leave their home countries. Use maps or news articles to learn where Honduras and India are, and what challenges people there might face.

Questions to ask:

- What might make someone leave everything behind?
 - Why is it important to help newcomers in our schools or neighborhoods?
 - How can friendships help people feel safe?
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Books to Read Together

- *Inside Out & Back Again* by Thanhha Lai
 - *Esperanza Rising* by Pam Muñoz Ryan
 - *Front Desk* by Kelly Yang
 - *The Only Road* by Alexandra Diaz (also about a boy from Guatemala)
 - *The Breadwinner* by Deborah Ellis
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Wrap-Up Reflections

Ask these after you finish the book:

- What does friendship mean to you after reading about Simi and José?
 - What moment from their journey stood out to you the most?
 - How would you welcome someone like Simi or José into your school or neighborhood?
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Bonus Family Activity: Samosa & Storytelling Night

Make or buy samosas and tortillas to represent both Simi and José's cultures. Share family stories, read your favorite scene from the book aloud, and make a "friendship flag" that shows how people from different places can support each other.

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