



Book Club & High School/College Discussion Topics

Note from the Author

“I’m a long-time independent writing teacher. I’ve always appreciated ideas to consider and poem prompts to go with the books I teach. Here are some places to start, if you’d like.”

— Molly Fisk

Curriculum

8 Questions For Discussion:

The poems in *Walking Wheel* are loosely connected. What do you think binds them together?

Was reading the book different for you than reading a novel written in prose? How?

How can you tell *Walking Wheel* is set in the past?

Which of the types of work Miles & Phoebe do have you done yourself? Have your parents done? Have your grandparents done?

Was there anything in the book you'd never heard of, or were there words that were new to you?

What would you miss most in your current life if you lived in 1875?

The book includes descriptions of sex, menstruation, and childbirth with varying degrees of specificity, which a lot of historical fiction leaves out. Did that surprise you? Make you uncomfortable? Teach you something new?

People in 1875 kept a sharp eye on the weather. How much do you think about weather in your own life?

3 Poetry Prompts:

Historical fiction in verse is primarily made up of third-person description and persona poems. Write a poem set in the past in someone else's voice, where they are the “I” speaking about something they can see. You can have the someone be a human being, but you can also speak as anything else: river, laundry line, ice skate, road sign.

Write a poem about a mundane job you've done regularly and go into specific detail as much as you can.

Miles & Phoebe make most of the food they eat. Write a poem that contrasts what you eat that is homemade with what you eat that is not. If you want some structure, you can do it as a pantoum, a form that lends itself well to conversation or argument.