



Book Club in a Bag

Discussion Questions

By Any Other Name by Jodi Picoult

1. Discuss Shakespeare and how his historic significance informed your reading experience. Were you surprised to learn the true identity of The Bard? Do you believe Emilia is the true playwright now? Why or why not?
2. Discuss the use of the framed narrative – the story behind the story – in the novel. Did you enjoy the alternating chapters between Emilia and Melina's individual points of view? Did you prefer one to the other, and why? Why do you think the author chose to tell the story this way?
3. "Being a woman," says Melina, "means being told to speak up for yourself in one breath and to shut up in the next." Do you agree? Cite examples from the book and popular culture that support this.
4. What does the book have to say about the nature of art and artifice, truth and deception? In what ways might you reconsider a woman's place in the history of letters now that you've read this book?
5. Could you catch the various references to Shakespeare plays and sonnets in the book? Which ones were your favorites?
6. Discuss the power and permanence of putting lived experience into words. What does the act of storytelling mean to Emilia, Melina, and other characters in the novel? What does it mean to you?
7. Emilia Bassano is a real-life historic figure who lived during Shakespeare's time. Did Emilia feel real to you in the world of this novel? And if so, in what ways? What did the author do to bring her to life on the page? How is she similar to, or representative of, women today?
8. What was your biggest takeaway from the novel?

The above questions were taken from
<https://www.jodipicoult.com/pdfs/By-Any-Other-Name-Discussion-Questions.pdf>
to enhance your discussion of the book.

Author Biography

Jodi Picoult was born in Nesconset, New York on May 19, 1966. She received a degree in creative writing from Princeton University in 1987 and a master's degree in education from Harvard University. She published two short stories in Seventeen magazine while still in college. Immediately after graduation, she landed a variety of jobs, ranging from editing textbooks to teaching eighth-grade English.

Author Website: <https://www.jodipicoult.com/>

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