

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Where the Crawdads Sing

by Delia Owens

BOOK GROUP

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AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

(Reprinted from publisher)

Delia Owens is the co-author of three internationally bestselling nonfiction books about her life as a wildlife scientist in Africa including *Cry of the Kalahari*. She has won the John Burroughs Award for Nature Writing and has been published in *Nature*, *The African Journal of Ecology*, and many others. She currently lives in Idaho. *Where the Crawdads Sing* is her first novel.

BOOK SUMMARY

For years, rumors of the “Marsh Girl” have haunted Barkley Cove, a quiet town on the North Carolina coast. So in late 1969, when handsome Chase Andrews is found dead, the locals immediately suspect Kya Clark, the so-called Marsh Girl. But Kya is not what they say. Sensitive and intelligent, she has survived for years alone in the marsh that she calls home, finding friends in the gulls and lessons in the sand. Then the time comes when she yearns to be touched and loved. When two young men from town become intrigued by her wild beauty, Kya opens herself to a new life --- until the unthinkable happens.

Perfect for fans of Barbara Kingsolver and Karen Russell, *Where The Crawdads Sing* is at once an exquisite ode to the natural world, a heartbreaking coming-of-age story, and a surprising tale of possible murder. Owens reminds us that we are forever shaped by the children we once were, and that we are all subject to the beautiful and violent secrets that nature keeps.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. The story starts with Kya’s Ma leaving and Kya waiting for her to come back. Later Jodie, then her Pa also left. How do you think abandonment shaped Kaya’s outlook in life. What repercussions did it have? Why did she leave?
2. Kya’s dad started taking her out on the boat. Did you think that it was a turning point in their relationship? Why did he leave?
3. A letter came from Kya’s mother but Kya could not read it. What impact do you think it would have made on her life if she was able to read it? Do you think Kya’s future would have been different?
4. The story is set in the North Carolina’s marshes. Did you enjoy the setting? Was it accurately depicted? Did it impact your reading enjoyment?
5. Kya went to school for one day. She decided to not go back. Why did she do that? Was it the right decision? How different would her life be if she went to school?
6. Jumpin’ and Mabel helped Kya survive in the marshes. Do you think it was the right decision to encourage her to live alone?
7. Could you survive alone all those years in the marsh? Do you think it’s plausible for Kya to raise herself at such a young age?

8. Which character did you admire or liked the most?
9. How did you feel about Kya's and Chase relationship? Did you think that they were suitable for each other? Why did Kya stay with Chase for so long?
10. What did you think about Kya and Tate's relationship? Did you think that they would end up together? Do you think they were compatible? How did their relationship change over the years? How does Tate's view of Kya change over time?
11. Why did Tate not come back to see Kya after he left for college?
12. Where you surprise by any of the events in the book?
13. Who did you think killed Chase? Did your thoughts changed as you read the book?
14. Why do you think Kya's brother Jodie came back in the end?
15. Did you enjoy the ending? Why?
16. After reading the book, would you recommend it?

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