

CITY SPIES

BOOK CLUB GUIDE

“Beware, *City Spies* may keep you up all night—READING!”

—Chris Grabenstein, #1 *New York Times* bestselling coauthor of *Max Einstein*

Gather your fellow spies in training and mystery lovers for an epic adventure around the world—all while staying right there in your living room! Use this book club guide to create a fun and interactive space where you and your friends can discuss and—more importantly—have fun with the *City Spies* series.

These books will take you all across the globe on top secret missions that could mean life or death—and everything depends on the actions of a handful of kid spies. Our main character Sara Martinez, better known by her code name “Brooklyn,” gets pulled into a secret organization due to her superior hacking skills. And by superior, we mean she literally hacked into the New York City foster care system to expose her far-from-upstanding foster parents. Before she can truly grasp what’s happening, she is greenlit as a member of the *City Spies*, a secret division of MI6 that is made up entirely of spies ranging from twelve to fifteen! And almost immediately, Brooklyn and her four fellow *City Spies* are roped into a dangerous mission to save the world...and finish their homework.

The *City Spies* series is jammed-packed with action and intrigue, humor and heart, and all set against a backdrop of exotic locations and iconic landmarks. So, what are you waiting for? Let’s get started!

Use this guide to set up your book club to be an immersive *City Spies* experience!

INSIDE YOU’LL FIND:

Hosting Pro-Tips
Discussion Questions
Activities

This mission is hot!
The
CITY SPIES
are a go!



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Spy-Hosting Pro-Tips

Spies are trained to respond and adapt to any situation—but try to make your gathering as easy and nonlethal as possible. Consider the following suggestions as you prepare your top-secret meeting place and call your meeting to order.

1. Prepare

All good spies do reconnaissance before a mission—this means they do their research about their location and target. Do the same for your book club meeting!

- **READ!** Before the meeting, make sure all attendees have read the chapters assigned—you don't want to spoil anything!
- **MARK YOUR PLACE!** Download, print, and cut out City Spies character bookmarks from [SimonandSchuster.com/books/City-Spies/James-Ponti/City-Spies/9781534414921](https://www.SimonandSchuster.com/books/City-Spies/James-Ponti/City-Spies/9781534414921). Share and swap your favorites with fellow book club members!
- **PREPARE SOME SNACKS!** In the books, the kids love cooking favorites from their home countries. Ask everyone in the group to bring a snack that personifies a place they identify with and share the deliciousness with everyone!
- **SET THE MOOD!** Choose a spy-themed playlist on whatever platform you use to listen to music.
- **VISIT JAMESPONTI.COM!** James Ponti is the mother of the City Spies series and he has a ton of assets you can use with your book club! Head over to [JamesPonti.com/City-Spies](https://www.JamesPonti.com/City-Spies) for videos, character dossiers, and a list of important places and people referenced in the series!

2. Ask Questions

Spies never take anything at face value. And the City Spies in particular work as a team, discussing and working out complicated problems. Use the discussion questions on the next page when you meet with your group to discuss what you've read!

3. Become a City Spy!

After reading the City Spies books, you may just be inspired to become a City Spy too! Join the group and make your own top-secret dossier following the instructions on the last page of this guide.



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Questions to Discuss with Your Team*

1. In book one, before she's renamed "Brooklyn," Sara explains that it would be challenging to trust someone whose name you don't really know. Gerald Anderson responds by saying, "It all depends on the situation ... but my friends and colleagues, and I do hope that's a group you'll soon consider yourself to be a part of, they all call me Mother." Are you surprised to find out that this is his nickname? Why might Mother be inclined to have his friends and colleagues call him this? What are some of the traits often associated with mothers that Mother consistently demonstrates?
2. Consider how each City Spies member contributes to MI6. Why do you think they're so eager to work there? What about their past experiences make them well suited for the job? Would you want to be a City Spies member? If so, what would your job be?
3. Though a part of her will always be Sara, how does transitioning to her new identity as "Brooklyn" allow Sara to reinvent herself? What would your code name be?
4. Consider the individual City Spies: Which character did you like the most or the least? Whom did you feel was most similar to you?
5. Think about the "Motherisms," little sayings that Mother invents to help his team remember key spycraft principles, that are scattered across the books. Can you think of any other useful tips that might assist the City Spies and create your own Motherisms?
6. Being a City Spy is special, but it can be hard to see a new member do so well after first arriving. How do you think that might make the other spies feel? How would you feel in Brooklyn's shoes? Or in the shoes of a veteran City Spy?
7. How do Mother's interventions profoundly impact and change the lives of each of his charges? Do you think being part of a team influences their behavior? What makes someone a good teammate?
8. At its heart, City Spies is a story about family. How does this found family remind you of your own? What are some ways in which they are unique or complicated?

*Adapted from the *City Spies and Golden Gate* reading group guides created by Dr. Rose Brock in collaboration with James Ponti. Rose is an assistant professor in Library Science Department in the College of Education at Sam Houston State University and holds a PhD. in Library Science, specializing in children's and young adult literature.

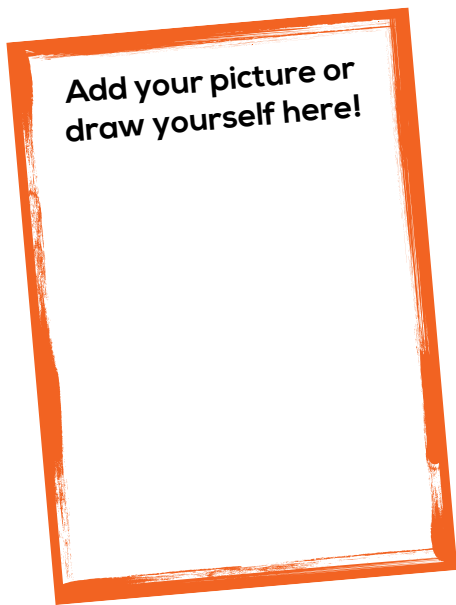


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JOIN THE CITY SPIES!

Directions: To become a spy, you have to fill out the paperwork. Below fill out the boxes with your code name, special skill, languages, and more. After that is done, you are part of the City Spies!



CODE NAME

AGE

LANGUAGES

SPECIAL SKILL

LIKES

DISLIKES

HAPPY PLACE