

The Names: participant questions

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Whole-book spoilers. Optional prompts for adult discussion. Pass on any item without explaining why.

Book: The Names by Florence Knapp. Reference ISBN 9780593833926. Your edition / chapter notes:

Before full-book spoilers

What expectation did the first naming decision create about the scale of a small choice? | Which early pressure made the decision feel less free than it might sound in a synopsis?

Q01. What does Cora have the power to choose, and what remains outside her control? Keep the distinction visible before comparing outcomes.

Chapter or letter cue in my edition: _____ Notes: _____

Q02. How do the names Bear, Julian and Gordon organize expectation for a reader? Does the text confirm or unsettle those expectations?

Chapter or letter cue in my edition: _____ Notes: _____

Q03. Which pressure persists across branches even when circumstances differ? What does that persistence say about a single-choice explanation?

Chapter or letter cue in my edition: _____ Notes: _____

Q04. How does a relationship with a sibling or parent take a different shape across two versions? Avoid declaring one whole life the winner.

Chapter or letter cue in my edition: _____ Notes: _____

Q05. Where does an apparent chance event meet an established pattern of power? What would be lost by describing the outcome as luck alone?

Chapter or letter cue in my edition: _____ Notes: _____

Q06. How does the novel portray the cost of abuse beyond a single incident? Keep the discussion in the text rather than asking for personal examples.

Chapter or letter cue in my edition: _____ Notes: _____

Q07. What does the branch structure let a reader know that any one character cannot? Is that knowledge a form of control or a new source of

doubt?

Chapter or letter cue in my edition: _____ Notes: _____

Q08. Which repeated detail changes meaning most between versions? Explain the surrounding circumstances that produce the change.

Chapter or letter cue in my edition: _____ Notes: _____

Q09. How do adult choices alter the meaning of an early imposed name? Consider agency without pretending the early constraints disappear.

Chapter or letter cue in my edition: _____ Notes: _____

Q10. Does the ending permit a best life to be identified? Compare what counts as well-being for more than one person.

Chapter or letter cue in my edition: _____ Notes: _____

Q11. What remains recognizable across the closing branches? Does that continuity feel like identity, habit or the persistence of a social force?

Chapter or letter cue in my edition: _____ Notes: _____

Q12. If the book followed one branch only, which judgment would you make too confidently? Use the other branches to test it.

Chapter or letter cue in my edition: _____ Notes: _____

Source record:

<https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/768706/the-names-by-florence-knapp/readers-guide/>. Original prompts; no affiliate links. Version 1.0, 15 October 2026.