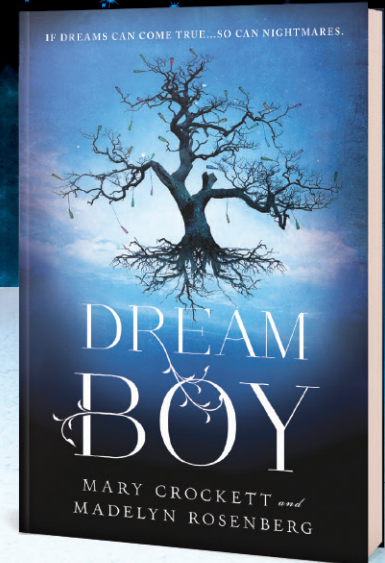


# DREAM BOY

by MARY CROCKETT and MADELYN ROSENBERG

## DISCUSSION GUIDE



### QUESTIONS:

1. For thousands of years, people have wondered where dreams come from and what they mean. What do you think dreams really are? Are they random sensations? A portent of the future? A way for our subconscious to deal with things that are actually happening in our lives? Something else?
2. Annabelle can't wait to get out of her small town in Virginia, but she later comes to appreciate it when she feels it's endangered. What sorts of feelings do you have about the place where you live? Why?
3. Annabelle has found a best friend in Will. Are you friends with a member of the opposite sex? Are there differences in your friendships with boys versus your friendships with girls?
4. Were you rooting for Annabelle to end up with Will or Martin? Why?
5. Have you ever had a dream come true before? What were the circumstances?
6. How do Annabelle's feelings toward Stephanie Gonzales change over the course of the book?
7. What do you think about Daniel? Do Annabelle's feelings toward Daniel change over the course of the book? Do yours?
8. If dreams came true, what would be the benefits? Would there be any problems?
9. If you could hang out with one character from the book, who would it be?
10. One of Annabelle's problems in *Dream Boy* is that she feels like she doesn't have control over her own life. It's a message that repeats several times, as shown in the following examples:

"But what actually occurs when I sit down to draw or I drift off to sleep has always seemed to me to be entirely out of my control. Like my art teacher says, sometimes the sketch has a mind of its own."

“I keep waiting for eternity to be over, to wake up one day and suddenly I’m in control of my own life and everything is different.”

“Maybe, I thought, I should try to dream something amazing. World peace or endless cupcakes or Gandhi. As if I had that sort of control. As if anyone did.”

How much control do you feel you have over your own life? What sorts of things can you do to feel like you’re more in control?

11. How does the setting of *Dream Boy* figure into the story? Do you think it plays a more important part or a less important part than in other stories you’ve read recently? Why?
12. This book was written by two authors who have been friends for a long time. What do you think some of the benefits would be of writing with another person? What would some of the problems be? Do you have a friend you’d consider writing with?

### ACTIVITIES:

1. Keep a dream journal for two weeks, similar to Talon’s. Do your dreams seem to reflect things that are going on in your life? Do you notice any patterns? Any desires? Any fears?
2. Will takes photographs that seem to be of nothing, but when he studies the composition later, they really seem to have captured something. Have you ever done that with a photograph? Take a camera and try a panoramic of your lunchroom or another big place where there are a lot of people. What sorts of things will you capture?
3. Pedicure with friends: paint your toenails, either periwinkle blue for Annabelle, or black with a skull and crossbones for Talon.
4. Write a short story, poem, or even a sentence with some friends, alternating as you go. Allow the person going after you to see just enough to get started, but not enough to know what you’ve written. Then pass it on to the next person, and so on. The same sort of activity can be done with drawing. It’s known as an Exquisite Corpse or Rotating Corpse.
5. Bottle trees play a crucial role in *Dream Boy*. They are also popular in the South where the authors grew up. You can make your own bottle tree by doing something as simple as adding nails to a piece of wood and slipping a bottle on top, but there are better instructions on the Internet. Make your own bottle tree and put it in your yard.