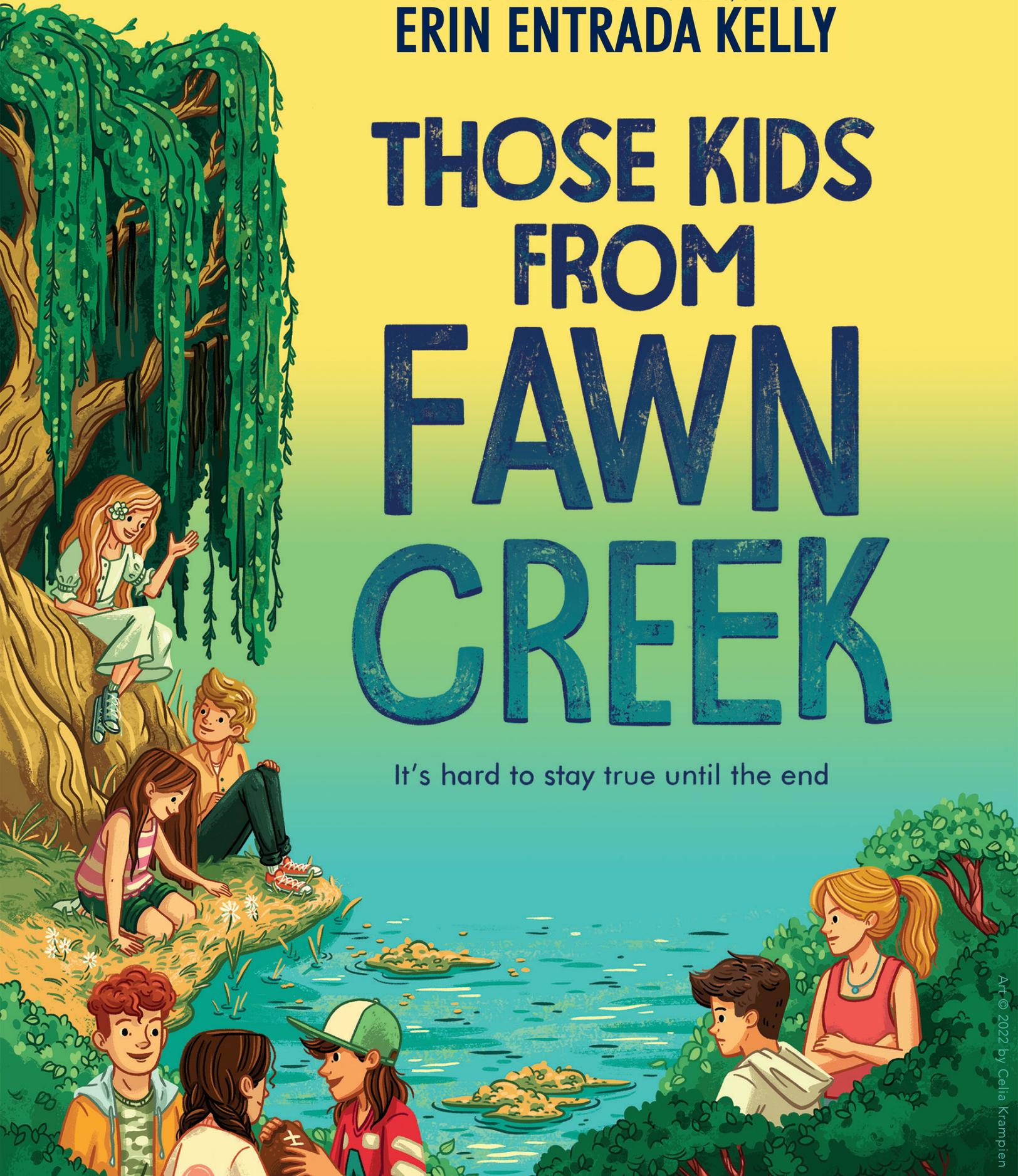


WINNER OF THE NEWBERY MEDAL FOR *HELLO, UNIVERSE*

**ERIN ENTRADA KELLY**

# THOSE KIDS FROM FAWN CREEK

It's hard to stay true until the end



Art © 2022 by Celia Krampien

**EDUCATORS' GUIDE**

★ **“Another gem in the crown of Erin Entrada Kelly—BRAVO!”**

—Booklist (starred review)

★ **“A raw, real exploration of belonging that’s also sweetly hopeful.”**

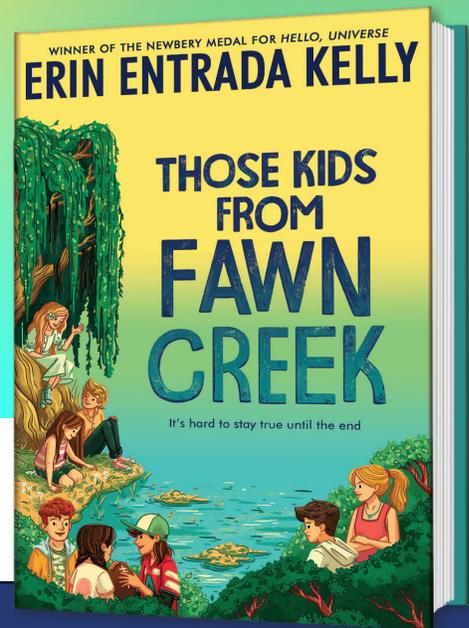
—Publishers Weekly (starred review)

★ **“An emotionally resonant story about authenticity and belonging.”**

—Kirkus Reviews (starred review)

★ **“Kelly does a brilliant job.”**

—The Horn Book (starred review)



## ABOUT THE BOOK

In the small Louisiana town of Fawn Creek, the twelve kids in seventh grade have always known each other. Then one day a new girl named Orchid Mason enters their classroom with a flower in her hair and stories about her Paris boyfriend. For Greyson and his best friend, Dorothy, the mysterious, kind Orchid has arrived just in time. She helps them expand their sense of who they are. Can Greyson change his clothing style to show his interest in fashion, despite his father’s scorn? Can Dorothy finally speak up and express herself, despite her parents’ disapproval? And what about the other kids, feeling stuck in their assigned roles whether they like them or not? Will they maintain the status quo? Newbery Medal and Newbery Honor winner Erin Entrada Kelly explores complex themes centered on family, friendships, and staying true to yourself. *Those Kids from Fawn Creek* will enchant fans of Thanh Hà Lai’s *Inside Out & Back Again* and Rebecca Stead’s *The List of Things That Will Not Change*.

## QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

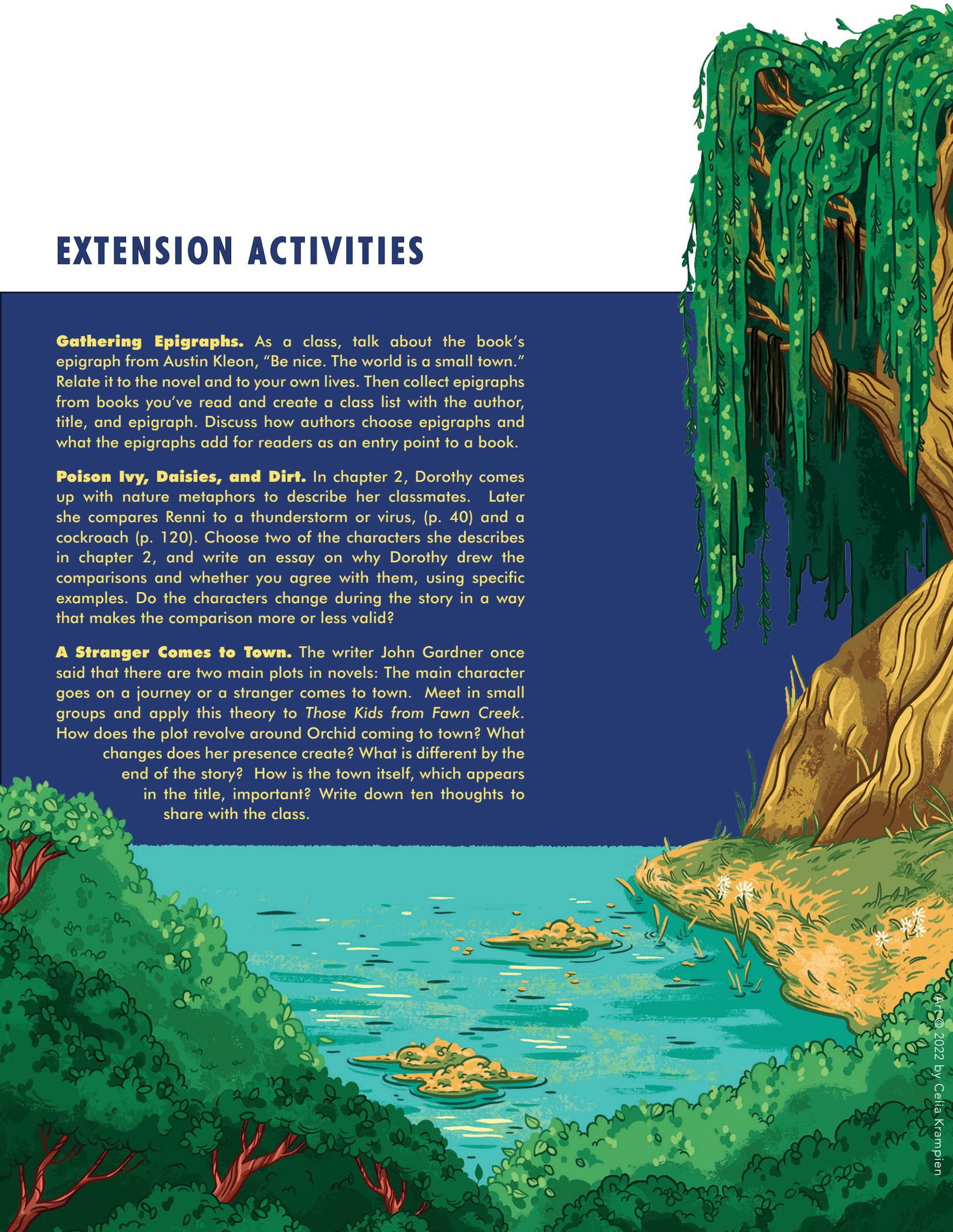
1. What do you learn in the first chapter about the relationship between Greyson and Trevor? How does Trevor act toward Greyson then and later? How does Greyson feel about it? Why don’t his parents stop Trevor?
2. Describe Greyson’s parents and how they treat him. What does his father wish Greyson were like? Discuss the scene on p. 299 and what it tells you about Greyson’s father. Why doesn’t Greyson’s mother defend him more? Give examples that show how she changes her attitude toward Greyson by the end of the novel.
3. Why is it an insult in Greyson’s family to compare him to a girl? Why does his father often say, “Last I checked, I have two sons, not a son and a daughter” (p. 2). Why does Trevor call Greyson “little sister” (p. 109)? Discuss the limits placed on boys in the family and town.
4. Describe Greyson’s relationship to fashion and why he hides it for a long time. How does learning to sew and changing his clothing style affect Greyson? When Greyson goes to school dressed in his new style, why does he feel “lighter than a feather” (p. 310) even when other students laugh?
5. What is Dorothy like? Why are she and Greyson friends? Why does she compare herself to “dirt” (p. 7)? What is her home life like? Why does she write a story about being a rocking chair? How does her home life compare to Greyson’s? How does she change? Discuss the effect that Orchid has on Dorothy, giving examples from the story.
6. Names are important in the novel. How did Orchid come up with her name, and why? What name does she suggest for Dorothy, and how does Dorothy feel about it? How do the other kids react? What happens with Lehigh’s name and what does it show you about him and other characters? Why do three of the girls call themselves the God Squad?
7. What rumors are spread around the school and small town about Greyson and Dorothy? Describe the rumors about Orchid, including where she lives, her mother, witness protection, and her hair. Why do you think the students believe and spread the rumors? Why does Orchid keep so much private? Discuss her “I Am” poem.
8. Orchid makes other students feel good about themselves. Give some examples of this and how she does it. Discuss the game of Mirror Mirror that she introduces, and the reactions of the other girls, including Janie. What does Orchid’s kindness tell you about her? How does it relate to the scene at the dance where her fellow students defend her?
9. Talk about Janie and her relationship to Renni. What does Janie value? How does she treat her fellow students? What is Renni like? What does the game Mirror Mirror reveal about Renni? Why does Renni plan to hurt Orchid at the dance, and why does Janie go along with it?
10. Discuss how the author uses changing points of view, revealing the thoughts of some characters. Which characters are most often the focus? Discuss the chapters where sections highlight students in pairs in science class. How does that add different viewpoints? Why aren’t Orchid’s thoughts revealed? Talk about the large divisions in the book, starting with “Week One” and ending with “I Am.”

## EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

**Gathering Epigraphs.** As a class, talk about the book's epigraph from Austin Kleon, "Be nice. The world is a small town." Relate it to the novel and to your own lives. Then collect epigraphs from books you've read and create a class list with the author, title, and epigraph. Discuss how authors choose epigraphs and what the epigraphs add for readers as an entry point to a book.

**Poison Ivy, Daisies, and Dirt.** In chapter 2, Dorothy comes up with nature metaphors to describe her classmates. Later she compares Renni to a thunderstorm or virus, (p. 40) and a cockroach (p. 120). Choose two of the characters she describes in chapter 2, and write an essay on why Dorothy drew the comparisons and whether you agree with them, using specific examples. Do the characters change during the story in a way that makes the comparison more or less valid?

**A Stranger Comes to Town.** The writer John Gardner once said that there are two main plots in novels: The main character goes on a journey or a stranger comes to town. Meet in small groups and apply this theory to *Those Kids from Fawn Creek*. How does the plot revolve around Orchid coming to town? What changes does her presence create? What is different by the end of the story? How is the town itself, which appears in the title, important? Write down ten thoughts to share with the class.



# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

New York Times–bestselling author **Erin Entrada Kelly** was awarded the Newbery Medal for *Hello, Universe* and a Newbery Honor for *We Dream of Space*. She grew up in Lake Charles, Louisiana, and now lives in Delaware. She is a professor of children’s literature in the graduate fiction and publishing programs at Rosemont College, where she earned her MFA, and is on the faculty at Hamline University. Her short fiction has been nominated for the Philippines Free Press Literary Award for Short Fiction and the Pushcart Prize. Before becoming a children’s author, Erin worked as a journalist and magazine editor and received numerous awards for community service journalism, feature writing, and editing from the Louisiana Press Association and the Associated Press.



Erin Entrada Kelly’s debut novel, *Blackbird Fly*, was a Kirkus Best Book, a School Library Journal Best Book, an ALSC Notable Book, and an Asian/Pacific American Literature Honor Book. She is also the author of *The Land of Forgotten Girls*, winner of the Asian/Pacific American Award for Literature; *You Go First*, a Spring 2018 Indie Next Pick; *Lalani of the Distant Sea*, an Indie Next Pick; and acclaimed titles for younger readers, which she also illustrated, about a (mostly) brave girl named Marisol Rainey. Visit her online at [www.erinentradakelly.com](http://www.erinentradakelly.com).

## ALSO BY ERIN ENTRADA KELLY



For Younger Readers