

- 1.) What do you think the title *Uses for Boys* signifies? In what ways does it describe the events and relationships portrayed in the novel?
- 2.) Compare and contrast the parent/child relationships in the story, including Anna and her mom; Toy and her mom; Sam and his mom. What effect do these relationships have on each character's actions?
- 3.) What is the significance of storytelling in this book? Consider the stories Anna's mom tells her as a child and Toy's stories about boys. What do you think Anna means when she says, "the stories we tell ourselves are not the only stories"? Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not?
- 4.) How do you think the novel might be different (or similar) if it was narrated by Toy? By Sam? What might each of their novels be called?
- 5.) *Uses for Boys* touches on some troubling or weighty themes; what are they? Do you think they're handled in an appropriate and/or impactful way? How so?
- 6.) Why doesn't Anna tell anyone what happened with Todd? And why does she tell this story differently even to herself? Have you ever had an experience like this, one that you decided to keep to yourself? How did not telling affect you?
- 7.) What do you think Anna meant when she said that the abortion made them a family?
- 8.) What do you think Anna is looking for from the people around her? From her mom, Toy, Sam and his family? Have you ever had experiences or feelings like hers? How did the people around you support you?
- 9.) Consider the structure of the novel: the short, titled chapters and use of repeated phrases. How do you think this structure contributes to your understanding of Anna's character?
- 10.) Do you identify with Anna's character? Why or why not? What do you see as her strengths? Her weaknesses?
- 11.) What do you think you're meant to take away from this novel? And what one thing (if you had to choose) did you take away from it?
- 12.) In the end of the novel, what do you think has changed for Anna? What do you think she's going to do next?