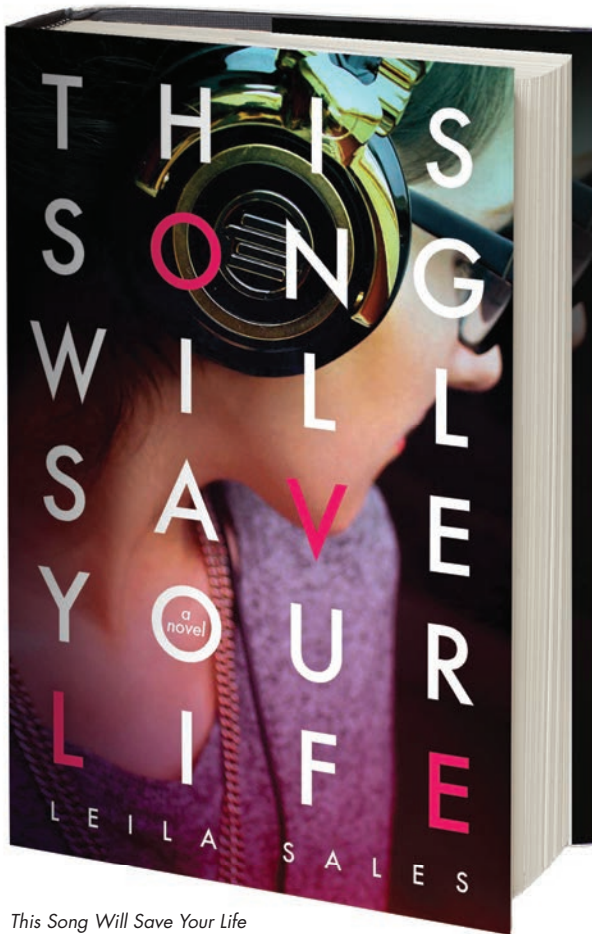


DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

for *This Song Will Save Your Life*



This Song Will Save Your Life

By Leila Sales • For ages 12 and up

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PLOT SUMMARY:

Making friends has never been Elise Dembowski's strong suit. All throughout her life, she's been the butt of every joke and the outsider in every conversation. When a final attempt at popularity fails, Elise nearly gives up. Then she stumbles upon a warehouse party where she meets Vicky, a girl in a band who accepts her; Char, a cute, yet mysterious disc jockey; and Pippa, a carefree spirit from England. But, most importantly, she finds a love for DJing.

Told in a refreshingly genuine and laugh-out-loud funny voice, *This Song Will Save Your Life* is an exuberant novel about identity, friendship, and the power of music to bring people together.



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ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Leila Sales grew up outside of Boston, Massachusetts, and went to college at the University of Chicago, where she majored in psychology. She also performed in improv and sketch comedy troupes, competed in debate tournaments all over the world, helped judge the world's largest scavenger hunt, and wrote a humor column for the school paper. Currently she lives in Brooklyn, New York, and works in children's publishing in New York City.

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. The opening line of the book is "You think it's so easy to change yourself." Do you think it's easy—or even possible—to change yourself? Why or why not?
2. Do you understand why Elise didn't tell her parents about the fake blog? Do you think they could have helped if they had known?
3. Char teaches Elise to "read the crowd" when she's picking songs. Do you think this lesson extends beyond DJing? In what ways is it possible to give people what they want and what they don't yet know they want?
4. Why do you think Elise called Amelia after she cut herself? What do you think she wanted Amelia to do, and why do you think she was so upset when Amelia called 911? What would you have done if you were Amelia?
5. Why do you think Elise fit in at Start when she had never really fit in anywhere else before?
6. How do you think Elise's feelings about Chava and Sally change over the course of the book, if at all?
7. Do you think Elise should have told her father about Start? Might he have understood, because he's a musician? Why or why not?
8. Even though Elise is hurt by Char in the end, do you think he did more good for her than bad? Why or why not?
9. Do you think Elise did anything wrong by getting together with Char while her friend Pippa had feelings for him? Is a boy or girl "off-limits" when your friend likes him or her?
10. Why do you think Elise destroyed Alex's poetry castle? Elise said she did it "to protect her. Like a big sister should." What was Elise trying to protect Alex from?
11. In the end, Elise makes friends and gains acceptance, just like she always wanted. But does she do this by changing herself, or becoming a truer version of herself?