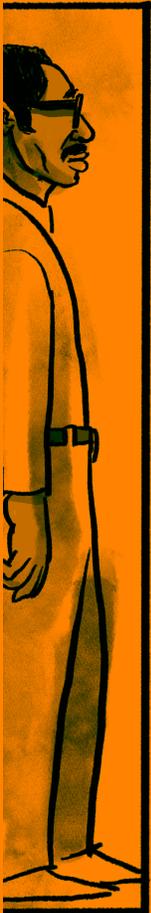


# THE TALK

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## DARRIN BELL

Winner of the Pulitzer Prize



## Welcome to the Book Club Kit for

# THE TALK

Please note: In order to provide book clubs with the most informed and thought-provoking questions possible, it is necessary to reveal aspects of the story, as well as the ending. If you have not finished reading *The Talk*, you may want to wait before reviewing this guide.



1. Darrin Bell has described his mother as “the hero of the book.” What do you think he means by this? Who are the book’s other heroes?
2. At the end of chapter 8, after receiving a call from the Governor and praise from teachers for an essay he wrote Bell detects a shift in the way he’s regarded. “They’re treating me as if I’m white. In other words... They’re treating me as if I were human.” What impact do you think being treated otherwise has on someone from childhood and into adulthood?
3. How do art and later political cartooning become an essential part of Bell’s ability to make sense of the world and his place in it?
4. Were there any textless segments of this book that stood out to you as particularly moving or effective at communicating Bell’s points?
5. Throughout the book, Bell reflects on moments from his past in which he evaluates the way his father handled (or rather, didn’t handle) difficult topics. What do these moments reveal to you about the challenges of giving The Talk to a child?

6. How does Darrin Bell employ humor in his storytelling? How and why is it an important component?
7. In chapters 12 and 18, the idea of minimizing sins of the past, in this case white people enforcing slavery, by saying “they didn’t know better” comes up. In the latter chapter, Bell is telling this to his infant son in response to Zazu’s questioning. At what age do you think it is important to initiate these kinds of conversations? Is that age different if the child is the one to bring up these topics?
8. Throughout the book, through direct text and illustrative scenes, truth is presented as a powerful, radical even, force for positive change. What kinds of truths you brush up against in every day life do you think would effect change if faced directly?
9. Which scene did you find the most challenging? What is your favorite scene and why?

