

**Book Club Questions for
Starling House by Alix E. Harrow**

1. Opal, a high school dropout, exhibits unwavering determination to improve her and her brother Jasper's lives. How does her lack of formal education affect her decisions and actions throughout the story? In what ways does her determination shine through despite societal limitations?
2. Arthur is portrayed as reclusive, never seen leaving Starling House. How does his seclusion shape his character? What impact does his isolation have on the town's perception of him, and how does it contribute to the story's mystery and intrigue?
3. Starling House is described as odd, ugly, and filled with secrets. How does the house become a character in its own right? What specific details or events in the house contribute to its eerie and enigmatic atmosphere?
4. Opal and Arthur's relationship undergoes significant development. How does their dynamic evolve from strangers to allies? What pivotal moments or interactions lead to this transformation?
5. The theme of family is central to the novel, particularly Opal's relationship with her brother Jasper. How does their bond influence their decisions and actions? How does family, both biological and chosen, impact the characters' choices?
6. Dreams and nightmares are recurring motifs in the story. How do dreams shape the characters' perceptions of reality? How does the theme of dreams tie into the overall narrative?
7. Eden, Kentucky, is depicted as a town with its share of societal issues. How do these challenges affect the characters' lives and decisions? Discuss the themes of poverty, discrimination, and social isolation as portrayed in the narrative.
8. Opal's relationship with her brother Jasper is a central focus. How does Opal's role as a caregiver and protector shape her decisions? How does Jasper's character contribute to the story's emotional depth?
9. The concept of found family is explored through various characters in the book. Identify instances where characters form bonds outside of biological relationships. How do these found family dynamics impact the characters' sense of belonging and security?
10. Opal challenges traditional gender roles and societal expectations. How does her character challenge gender norms? In what ways does the story empower female characters, and how do they navigate the constraints of their time and society?

11. Harrow's descriptive writing sets the tone for the story. Discuss specific passages or scenes where the atmosphere is particularly vivid or evocative. How does the author's writing style enhance the overall reading experience?
12. Were there any instances of foreshadowing or subtle hints that you noticed throughout the book? Discuss any plot twists or revelations that surprised you. How did these elements contribute to the story's suspense?
13. Analyze the growth and development of Opal and Arthur as characters. What challenges do they overcome, and how do these challenges contribute to their personal growth arcs? How do their individual journeys intersect and influence each other?
14. The book explores themes of love, sacrifice, and the blurred line between good and evil. How are these themes represented in the relationships between the characters, especially Opal and Arthur?
15. What did you think about the Gothic and spooky atmosphere of the book. How did the author create a sense of eeriness and tension throughout the story? What specific scenes or details added to the book's spooky ambiance?
16. The author incorporates elements of fantasy and romance into the narrative. How do these genres intersect, and how do they enhance the overall story?
17. The book addresses social issues and prejudices, especially in the town of Eden. How do these issues impact the characters' lives and choices? How does the story handle these themes, and what messages or lessons can readers take away from these portrayals?
18. The ending of the book provides resolution but also leaves some questions unanswered. How did you feel about the conclusion? Were there any surprises or twists that caught you off guard?