

Discussion Guide for Family Family by Laurie Frankel

1. How does India's journey from an awkward sixteen-year-old to a Broadway ingenue and a TV superhero contribute to her character development? What key moments or decisions shape her identity?
2. Explore the consequences of India's decision to speak out against the movie. How does the media portrayal of adoption impact both India's personal life and her public image? Discuss specific scenes that highlight the challenges she faces.
3. Compare and contrast India's family dynamics during her teenage years with her family life in the present. How do her experiences as a teenager influence her decisions and perspectives as an adoptive mother?
4. When thinking about adoption, what books, movies, or TV shows come to mind for you? How have these media representations shaped your perceptions of adoption, and how does "Family Family" align with or challenge those messages?
5. Fig and Jack use creative language to rename scary things as a way to cope with trauma. How does their approach to language reflect the power it holds in processing difficult experiences? Do you have unique words or terms within your own family or close relationships?
6. Robbie and India share a supportive relationship despite their young age. How do you think their connection influences India and Robbie individually, both immediately and in the long run?
7. The novel unfolds across two timelines, revealing India's past. How does understanding India's childhood and adolescence contribute to your comprehension of her decisions as an adult? How does her upbringing compare to that of her children?
8. The role of index cards in India's life is significant. How much of her success is attributed to talent, and how much to grit, determination, or compromise? Discuss how these elements shape her journey.
9. Compare India's relationships with Davis and Robbie, especially in response to unexpected pregnancies. How do their reactions differ initially and evolve over the years?
10. India reflects on the idea that a dream job is still a job. How are her lifelong dreams realized, and in what ways do they differ from her expectations? Discuss the sacrifices she makes along the way. What are your own dream jobs, and how do you envision them realistically?

11. Explore the double standards and biases India faces as a woman in the art world. How do these challenges evolve throughout her life?
12. India faces criticism from various groups over the course of the story. Whose reactions seem reasonable, and whose do not? How do these voices impact her life, family, and career? Consider how external opinions affect your own life.
13. Fig and Jack respond differently to their trauma. Discuss their coping mechanisms and how their characters change as their family expands.
14. Were you surprised by the existence of Lewis? Why or why not?
15. The book incorporates humor as a significant element. Identify instances where humor is used as a coping mechanism for characters facing challenging situations. How does humor contribute to the overall tone of the narrative?
16. Discuss the symbolism behind India's habit of carrying confetti. How does this recurring element reflect her personality, and in what ways does it tie into the broader themes of the story?
17. Explore how the novel addresses the intersectionality of women's rights, particularly through India's experiences. How does her journey in the entertainment industry intersect with broader conversations about gender equality and representation?
18. Analyze how India's actions and the media storm affect Fig and Jack, her twin ten-year-olds. How do they navigate the complexities of their family situation, and what role do they play in shaping the narrative?
19. The adopted children in the story have diverse experiences and perspectives. Compare and contrast their views on adoption and identity. How do issues like race, sexuality, and trauma contribute to their unique experiences?
20. Were you surprised by India's decision to become an adoptive parent? How does the adoption process differ for her in various stages of her life? Compare her experiences with Jack and Fig's birth mother.
21. India's mother provides insight into the challenges of parenting. How does India's experience of motherhood compare to her mother's and Camille's? How do her experiences with adoption influence her approach to motherhood?

22. Despite their differences, in what ways do the adopted children behave like siblings? How do the adults in the story also exhibit familial behavior?
23. Bex has shaped India's and Robbie's lives, even though they haven't seen her in years. Discuss how children shape their parents' lives, and vice versa.
24. How does the novel challenge the traditional portrayal of adoption in literature and media? Identify specific scenes or dialogues that contribute to this reimagining.
25. Share and discuss quotes or passages that stood out to you. Are there specific lines that encapsulate the essence of the book or offer profound insights into the characters' experiences?
26. Examine the roles of Camille and Drew in the narrative. How do their perspectives add depth to the story, and in what ways do they contribute to the exploration of unconventional family structures?
27. Consider the impact of the multiple timelines on your engagement with the story. How does the non-linear narrative enhance the understanding of characters and their motivations?
28. The novel challenges the notion that love alone makes a family. What, in your opinion, defines a family if it isn't solely biology or love? How might we expand the definition of family to be more inclusive and accurate?
29. At the end of the novel, are you rooting for India to end up with Davis, Robbie, or neither?
30. What are your hopes for the future of the family and characters in the story? How do you think their coming together will impact their lives moving forward?
31. Revisit the epigraph at the beginning of the book. What does it mean, and why does the novel begin this way? How do characters learn and grow throughout the story?|
32. Share personal reflections on how the book may have influenced your perspectives on family, adoption, or women's rights. Did any particular aspect of the story resonate with your own experiences or beliefs?