



RESTLESS
BOOKS

READING GROUP GUIDE



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. On her way to Misty Valley, Lina is frightened by the sudden mist in the forest. To feel more brave, she marches in place. What are some techniques you use to calm or ground yourself when you are nervous or anxious?
2. When she first arrives at Picotto Hall, Lina does not feel at home. But after meeting John and Icchan, she starts to feel better. Are there people in your life who make you feel at home?
3. For lunch, Nata eats daikon radish, hijiki seaweed, and sour pickled plum, all foods that would be familiar to Japanese readers. Are there some foods your family eats that other people may not have tried before?
4. Nata says that “people who really need to can come” to Misty Valley. However, she reveals that Lina came by invitation, rather than necessity. Who do you think invited Lina to Misty Valley? Why do you think this person might have invited her?
5. At first, Dummy is annoyed by Lina cleaning Thomas’s shop. He shouts at her to stop being loud, but eventually becomes friendly and lets her take the missing book from his cage. Why do you think Dummy changes his mind about Lina? Is there another character you suspect might also have changed their mind about her?
6. Lina surprises herself when she quotes Ms. Picotto to the prince. She tells him, “He who does not work, shall not eat.” What do you think this says about how Lina has changed as a character?
7. Throughout the story, Ms. Picotto often asks Lina “What exactly did I say?” What do you think is the purpose of her question? How does it influence Lina as a character?
8. When Lina mends the Bride doll, she breaks the Witch’s spell on Kinu-san without realizing. This shows how important it is to do good deeds. Can you think of any good deeds, big or small, that you can do today to help the people in your life?
9. During her time in Misty Valley, Lina works at a book shop, a pottery store, and a toy store. Which of these shops seems most interesting to you, and where would you have chosen to work?
10. When Lina first arrives in Misty Valley, she thinks she has no work skills to offer the townspeople. After reading the book, what do you think Lina’s special skills are? What special skills do you think you have?

ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

About the Author:

SACHIKO KASHIWABA is a prolific writer of children's and young adult fantasy whose career spans more than four decades. Her works have garnered the prestigious Sankei, Shogakukan, and Noma children's literature awards, and her novel *The Village Beyond the Mist* inspired Hayao Miyazaki's film *Spirited Away*. Her works have recently been animated as the films *The Wonderland* and *The House of the Lost on the Cape*, and her novel *Temple Alley Summer*, illustrated by Miho Satake and translated by Avery Fischer Udagawa, won the American Library Association's 2022 Mildred L. Batchelder Award. She lives in Morioka, Iwate.

About the Translator:

AVERY FISCHER UDAGAWA grew up in Kansas and studied English and Asian Studies at St. Olaf College in Minnesota. She holds an MA in advanced Japanese studies from the University of Sheffield. She has studied at Nanzan University, Nagoya, on a Fulbright fellowship, and at the Inter-University Center for Japanese Language Studies, Yokohama. She writes, translates, and works in international education near Bangkok, where she lives with her bicultural family.

About the Illustrator:

MIHO SATAKE is a Japanese artist and illustrator. She is best known for illustrating the Japanese editions of several classic children's books including *Howl's Moving Castle* by Diana Wynne Jones, three books in the *Kiki's Delivery Service* series by Eiko Kadono, and the twentieth-anniversary edition of the *Harry Potter* series.