

Welcome to the Conversation Guide for “Her Story.” This is where we put into action the thoughts we experienced while reading the book. These questions are intended to break down beauty-culture stereotypes and expectations while helping girls express their thoughts and feelings about how they want to express their own beauty standards. Hopefully they will enrich your reading experience and help you and your girl change the conversation about beauty expectations.

Before Reading the Book:

- What do you already know about the history of the beauty industry?
- Do you feel you are beautiful?
- Do you feel pressured to be beautiful? Why or why not?
- Where did you learn about beauty?

Opening Questions:

- Does beauty matter to you? Why or why not?
- When do you feel happiest in your body? Is this when you feel the most beautiful?
- What do you wish the world understood about your definition of beauty?



Chapter 1

- Why do you think Queen Victoria ruled makeup to be vulgar and impolite?
- What beauty trend was most interesting to you? Why?
- What beauty trend was most surprising to you? Why?
- How do you feel about racism in the beauty industry?
- Discuss ways in which you feel the beauty industry could be more inclusive.
- How do you feel about other genders wearing makeup?
- How would you have advertised beauty products in the early 1900s to be more inclusive?



Chapter 2

- Before reading this book, had you ever heard of the Great Underarm Campaign?
- Why do you think European countries do not place as much emphasis on hair removal as the U.S.?
- After reading this chapter, are you more open to girls keeping their body hair? Why or why not?
- Has this chapter impacted your hair-removal practices? Why or why not? If yes, in what ways?



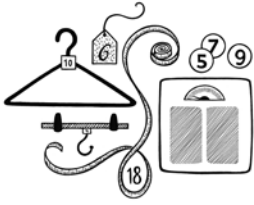
Chapter 3

- How do you feel about your hair?
- What is your preferred hairstyle?
- Do you struggle with styling your hair?
- If you could wear your hair any way, what would it be and why?
- Were you aware of the terms Good Hair and Bad Hair? What are your thoughts on the pressure for Black and Brown girls to adhere to European hair texture?
- Discuss how you feel when you see a woman with gray hair. What about a man or a non-gendered person? Do you feel different? Why or why not?
- How can hair trends be more inclusive?



Chapter 4

- How do you feel about bras? Why do you feel this way?
- Every generation has an extreme beauty trend, such as the corset of the 1800s. What do you feel is your generation's extreme beauty trend?
- Are you comfortable talking about bras? Why or why not?
- What expectations do you have around girls, breasts and bras?
- Discuss whether you feel bras are necessary.
- The author's college job was working at Victoria's Secret. Do you think her lack of knowledge regarding bras prompted this job choice? How have stores like VS impacted the bra and beauty industry?
- Knowing that it is essential to lift the stigma of bras, how could society change the conversation to help others talk more openly about these controversial topics?



Chapter 5

- The author doesn't address the fact that sizing systems for male and female clothing are different. Why do you think men's clothing traditionally is sized by actual measurements in inches, yet women's clothing is assigned a number? Discuss the advantages and/or disadvantages of both.
- Do you think the current sizing system is inclusive? Why or why not?
- If you do not feel it is inclusive, how would you make the fashion industry more inclusive?
- Do you think the world is ready to let go of the idea that small bodies are the ideal bodies? Why or why not?
- Do you feel the fashion industry is ready to make inclusive changes?
- Do you find that you wear different sizes at different stores? Is there a store that you feel is more accurate than others?
- Do you avoid certain items of clothing because of the way you feel in them? Are you willing to share which items you avoid?



Chapter 6

- What is something you learned in this chapter that you did not know before reading this book?
- What do you think is the most misunderstood thing about menstruation?
- What are your thoughts concerning the Catholic church telling women in the Middle Ages that they must endure period pain because of Eve's actions in the Garden of Eden?
- Are you comfortable talking about your period? Why or why not?
- What are your thoughts about how women were treated during their menstrual cycles and the theories about menstruation?
- Discuss your thoughts about the concept of the "wandering uterus."
- Do you think the term "hysteria" is an accurate term when describing the release of hormones in a person who menstruates?
- Knowing that it is essential to lift the stigma of period care, how could society change the conversation to help others talk more openly about these controversial topics?
- What do you think is an important topic missing from puberty lessons at school?



Chapter 7

- Discuss the best and worst parts of friendships.
- Discuss the impact friends play in your life.
- Discuss how your friends know you care about them.
- Discuss how you know your friends care about you.
- Discuss when you stopped being friends with someone and were unsure why.
- Discuss a time when you hurt a friend. Did you make amends? Why or why not, and how? Were you forgiven?
- Discuss the importance of making friends. Why are they vital to one's overall well-being?

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Wrap-Up

- Discuss the pressure you feel from beauty culture.
- Do you want to take part in an aspect of beauty culture but feel judged when you do (such as makeup, shaving, wearing trendy clothing)? When do you feel judged and by whom? If you could address those judging you, what would you say?
- What do you wish your parents/friends/others understood about you and how you feel about beauty culture?
- If you were a parent, how would you approach the topic of beauty culture with your child?
- What did you learn from this book?
- What impactful moments did you experience while reading this book?
- What questions do you have about beauty culture? Where do you think you can find the answers to them?
- What does it mean to “be enough?”
- Discuss other topics in beauty culture that you would have included in this book.
- Does beauty matter to you? Why or why not?
- Finish this sentence: My beauty is found in my _____.
- What type of people do you find beautiful? Why?
- Do you think others feel the same about beauty as you do? Why or why not?
- What is one thing you wish the adults in your life understood about you and your thoughts about beauty?
- How will you hold yourself accountable to your standards of beauty?
- Did this book change how you feel about yourself?

Activities to deepen the participants' understanding of beauty. Participants will need a camera, sketching/drawing/painting supplies, and paper.

- Take or draw pictures of things in nature you find beautiful. Write descriptive words about the objects you captured. Study your descriptive words and decide if they are your description of beauty.
- Find music that you think is beautiful. While listening to it, write descriptive words about the music. Why do you find it beautiful?
- Make a list of things you find beautiful to touch. Write descriptive words about the texture of the objects. Why do you find them beautiful?
- On a large piece of paper, take all of the words you used to describe the beautiful things you found in nature, heard, and felt, combining them on the poster board. Once you have created the poster, write "Beauty is_____." And fill in the blank, answering what beauty means to you.

You
Are
Enough