



# Book Club in a Bag

## Discussion Questions

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### *AfterLife* by Julia Alvarez

1. Antonia and her sisters are close and clearly love one another; at the same time, like many siblings, they argue, put each other in boxes, and are not always supportive. How are the sisters similar, and how are they different?
2. Discuss the sisters' plan to get help for Izzy and the ways that it backfired. What do you think about how they handled the situation?
3. The sisters all have distinct roles in the sisterhood, and Antonia also had a defined role in her relationship with Sam (bad cop to his good cop). How did Sam's death change the way Antonia viewed herself? How do you think Izzy's death will alter the roles of the sisterhood?
4. Antonia is often viewed as the selfish sister. Despite this, she struggles with recognizing and asking for what she needs. In "Afterlife", she is frequently called on to assist others. How do you think this helps her better understand her own needs?
5. Antonia frequently recites lines from her favorite authors and poets, and their words provide comfort and wisdom. Do you think these literary references are always helpful? Do you have poems, songs, books, or other stories that you return to when you need comfort? How have the arts helped you in a dark time?
6. Why do you think this book is set in Vermont, a state with a relatively small Latino population? How might the demographics of her home influence Antonia's choices?
7. Does the Japanese repair technique described in the epilogue feel relevant to your own life?
8. Who in this book has an afterlife?

The above questions were taken from  
<https://www.readinggroupguides.com/reviews/afterlife-by-julia-alvarez>  
to enhance your discussion of the book.

# Author Biography

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Julia Alvarez was born in New York City on March 27, 1950 and was raised in the Dominican Republic. Before becoming a full-time writer, she traveled across the country with poetry-in-the-schools programs and then taught at the high school level and the college level. In 1991, she earned tenure at Middlebury College and published her first book *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accent*, which won the PEN Oakland/Jefferson Miles Award for excellence in 1991. Her other works include *In the Time of the Butterflies*, *The Other Side of El Otro Lado*, and *Once upon a Quinceañera: Coming of Age in the USA*. (Bowker Author Biography)

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