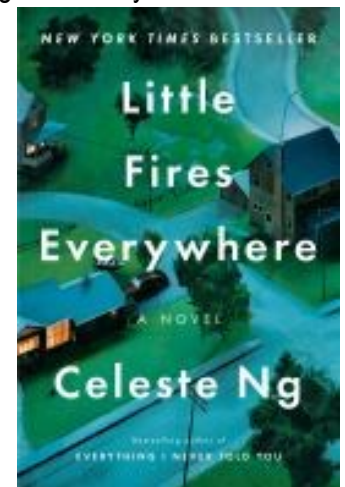# BOOK CLUB in a bag

Little Fires Everywhere

Celeste Ng

Discussion Questions

1. Shaker Heights is almost another character in the novel. Do you believe that "the best communities are planned"? Why or why not?

2. There are many different kinds of mother-daughter relationships in the novel. Which ones did you find most compelling? Do mothers have a unique ability to spark fires, for good and ill, in us?

3. Which of the Richardson children is most changed by the events of the novel? How do you think this time ultimately changes Lexie's life? Trip's? Moody's? Izzy's?

4. The debate over the fate of May Ling/Mirabel is multilayered and heartbreaking. Who do you think should raise her?

5. How is motherhood defined throughout the book? How do choice, opportunity, and circumstances impact different characters' approach to motherhood?

6. Mia's journey to becoming an artist is almost a beautiful novella of its own. Mia's art clearly has the power to change lives. What piece of art has shaped your life in an important way?

7. Pearl has led a singular life before arriving in Shaker, but once she meets the Richardsons, she has the chance to be-come a "normal" teenager. Is that a good thing?

8. What ultimately bothers Elena most about Mia?

9. The novel begins with a great conflagration, but its conclusion is even more devastating. What do you think happens to Elena after the novel ends? To Mia and Pearl? To Izzy? Do you think Izzy ever returns to Shaker and her family? Why or why not?
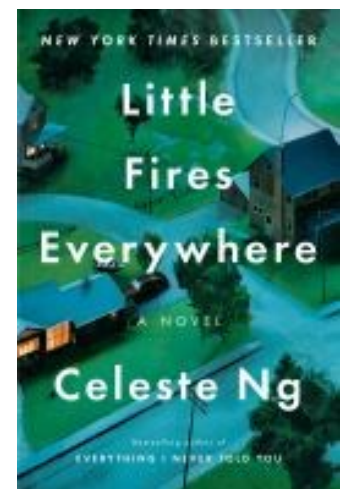
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About the Author

Celeste Ng is the author of two novels, *Everything I Never Told You* and *Little Fires Everywhere*. Her first novel, *Everything I Never Told You* (2014), was a New York Times bestseller, a New York Times Notable Book of 2014, Amazon's #1 Best Book of 2014, and named a best book of the year by over a dozen publications. *Everything I Never Told You* was also the winner of the Massachusetts Book Award, the Asian/Pacific American Award for Literature, the ALA's Alex Award, and the Medici Book Club Prize, and was a finalist for numerous awards, including the Ohioana Award, the John Creasey (New Blood) Dagger Award, and the VCU Cabell First Novelist Award. It has been translated into over two dozen languages. Celeste's second novel, *Little Fires Everywhere*, was published by Penguin Press in September 2017, and is a New York Times bestseller, Amazon's #2 best book and best fiction book of 2017, and was named a best book of the year by over 25 publications. It was also the winner of the Goodreads Readers Choice Award 2017 in Fiction, and will soon be published abroad in more than 20 countries. Celeste grew up in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and Shaker Heights, Ohio. She graduated from Harvard University and earned an MFA from the University of Michigan (now the Helen Zell Writers' Program at the University of Michigan), where she won the Hopwood Award. Her fiction and essays have appeared in the *New York Times, One Story, The Guardian, TriQuarterly*, and elsewhere, and she is a recipient of the Pushcart Prize and a fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts.

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