

Darts and Flowers

Dean Backus

Discussion Questions

1. There are more than a few characters in *Darts and Flowers* who are more than what they seem, or not as they present themselves. Which characters do you see as examples of this?
2. In some ways *Darts and Flowers* is a cautionary tale about expectations and plans that go awry. Where do you see this?
3. *Darts and Flowers* has a strong theme running through it that who we are as children is still who we are as young adults. Do you agree or disagree?
4. *Darts and Flowers* has three twist endings (at least). How does the book set them up in retrospect, once you know what they are?
5. Would you say Jamie or Zack is the antagonist of the story, or are they anti-heroes? Is Hank the only true “villain?”
6. There are more than a few pop culture tropes and references sprinkled throughout the novel, including several involving fairy tales and superheroes. How does the novel “riff” on these archetypes?
7. What do you think happens to Alex later in life, as he grows up watching all these characters interact?
8. In some key ways, the platonic love story between Zack and Josh is as essential to the story as its romantic

DARTS AND FLOWERS



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Discussion Questions for *Darts and Flowers*

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couplings. How do we see this?

9. What do you think happens during one of Zack and Jamie's multiple future breakups? Would the other characters conspire to reunite them?
10. The story is structured like an hourglass, or two triangles joined at the bottom and top points: it starts off seemingly as Zack, Josh, and Jamie's story/master plot, and then slowly shifts midway through to become Brian, Missy, and Chantel's story. Where do you think this key shifting point is?

Did you enjoy *Darts and Flowers*?

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Dean is available for readings, signings, and speaking engagements. He is also happy to connect with book clubs, conferences and educators, either in person or via video call.

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