

***Gender Queer: A Memoir* by Maia Kobabe (2019)**

Discussion Questions

Maia Kobabe uses Spivak Pronouns (e, em, eir) and repeatedly writes about the quiet hurt when people get those pronouns wrong. Nonetheless, e continues to see Spivak as eir pronouns. How does this dedication to self in the face of adversity mirror other queer struggles throughout history?

Gender Queer is written as a memoir, relating real experiences from the authors life. How do you think the works benefits from existing within this genre? Why would someone want to relate personal experiences directly, rather than through a lens of fiction?

While *Gender Queer* is predominantly about Maia Kobabe's experience with gender, it also features many stories not about gender, such as the snake story. Why do you think e might have decided to include these? Pick one of Maia's stories and relate it to a broader understanding of what it means to exist in a gender.

Maia talks a lot about eir bisexuality and its complicated reception. How does eir experience with sexuality compare to eir experience with gender?

A big part of *Gender Queer* is about Maia's struggle to find a way to perform eir gender. Eventually e describes it as a scale that has to be balanced based on societal expectations and personal identification. How do you understand your gender? What makes you feel like it fits your specific self?

When Maia was growing up, e faced many challenges due to not knowing enough about gender and sexuality generally. Find one instance where Maia faced confusion due to just not knowing any better, and write how you would explain it to em in the past using what you know today.

Throughout *Gender Queer*, Maia Kobabe is very frank with eir discussions of sex and sexuality. As a result, many people have been calling to ban it from schools altogether. Why do you think Maia chose to include this content? Do you think the book would have come across the same way without it?

What does "cis" mean? Why is it important to have that word available as a label?

In *Gender Queer* Maia talks about a conversation e had with eir aunt about why eir transition was not based in the hatred of women but rather the love of self. Write a comic/story/other creative expression about what you think Maia might have said to eir aunt using what you've learned about gender.

When was the first time you saw a character that you could see yourself in in media? How did it make you feel?