

## Beast Keeper Discussion Guide

### Characters

- Pandemonius, aka Demon - an 11 year old half-god boy, can talk to animals
- Zeus- King of the gods
- Hephaestus - the smith god, helps Demon, makes awesome things
- Offy & Yukus - the snakes on Demon's special collar that protect and heal him
- Althea- head nymph, friend and helper to Demon (milks unicorns, guides him to Hestia's)
- Hera- Queen of the Gods, and Zeus's scary wife, drives a chariot pulled by peacocks
- Heracles - a half-god "hero" who is tasked by the gods with slaying magical beasts on Earth
- Hestia- Goddess of the hearth (fire) and home, bakes tasty treats
- Melia- a dryad (tree nymph) who helps Demon grow a tree with the apple of eternal life

### Discussion Questions

- How did Demon feel when meeting his father for the first time, and learning that he would be going away from his home?
- What could Pan have done differently to make Demon less sad and nervous?
- Do you think that Pan and Hephaestus believe that Demon will make a good stable boy? Why?
- How would you feel if you could only have Ambrosia, the food of the gods? What regular food would you miss the most?
- Why do the beasts hate humans? Do you think Demon will help to change their minds?
- Why does Demon take care of the beasts even though he gets "bitten and bruised and clawed and stung at least twenty times a day"?
- What are some of the ways that Demon receives help in caring for the beasts? Who helps him the most?
- How might things be different if Demon didn't have help? What do you think would happen?
- Do you think that Demon's father cares about him and worries about his safety? Why do you think he left him and hasn't visited?
- Do you think that Hera is testing Demon by making him cure the Hydra? Why?
- Why doesn't Demon eat the apple, even though he wants to?
- Who was your favorite character in this book? Why?
- Which character did you like the least? Why?
- Which of the beasts do you think is the most frightening?

## Dragons in a Bag Discussion Guide

### Characters

- Jaxon – a 9 year old boy, loves geography
- Alicia aka Mama – Jax's mother
- Ma – an old woman who helped raise Jax's mom, a witch
- Ambrose – the keyholder to the guardhouse transporter, wears layers and pushes a shopping cart
- Vik- Jax's best friend, knows a lot about dinosaurs
- Kavita- Vik's younger sister
- Trouble – Jax's grandfather
- Nate – a talking rat, friend of Trub's
- L. Roy Jenkins – Ma's friend, magician and author of The Wondrous Lizards of Madagascar
- Sis – guardian of the magic realm

### Discussion Questions

- Why do you think Jax's mom never told him who Ma is? Ch. 1, p. 2
- How would you feel if you were left with a babysitter or family member you had never met before? Ch. 1, p.5
- Why did Jax think Ma was his grandmother? How do you think he felt when he found out she isn't? Ch. 2, p. 14
- Why does Jax let the squirrel into the kitchen? Ch. 3, p.16
- What was the squirrel trying to do? Why? Ch. 3, p.20
- Why do you think Ma is so mean to Jax before he decides to leave her apartment? Ch. 4, p.30
- Would you stay and try to mind your manners, or would you leave like Jax did? Ch. 4, p.31
- How does Jax react when Ma tells him she's a witch? How would you feel? Ch. 5, p.42
- Why is Ambrose wearing so many layers of clothing? Ch. 6, p.48
- Would you go with Ma to a faraway world or would you stay behind? Ch. 7
- Why do you think Jax decides to go with Ma? Ch. 7, p.54
- If you could use a transporter to visit any time and place, where would you go? Ch. 7, p.59
- Why do you think Ma wants the quartz that is in the cliff? Ch. 7, p.63-64
- Do you think that Jax would make a good apprentice? Why? Ch. 7, p.68
- Who would you call to help if you had a problem like Jax? Why? Ch. 8, p.77
- Do you think Ma meant to send Jax back alone? Why? Ch. 8, p.80

- Do you think it was okay for Kavita to let the dragons out and feed them? Did she feel bad? Ch. 8, p.87
- Why do you think Jax's mom just wanted to be normal? Would you feel the same, or would you be excited to see the magic realm? Ch. 9, p. 106
- If you knew magic was real- do you think it should stay separated from the normal world, or should it be revealed and shared? Ch. 10, p. 116
- Why do you think that Ma is nicer to Jax towards the end of the book? Ch. 12, p.130