

ESL Book Club 2026 – Discussion Questions for:

[When You Reach Me](#) by Rebecca Stead

Discussion Date: Friday, March 6, 2026, 10:30 am – 12 pm in Central Park Library – Sycamore Room

1. The kids in this book have very different types of families – What kind of a family do Miranda and Sal have?
2. How did the 20,000 Pyramid play a role in the story?
3. There are lots of friendships won and lost in the story. After Sal is punched by Marcus why does he drop Miranda as a friend?
4. When did you realize that is Miranda, as she narrates this story, isn't talking to us, the readers? Were you able to figure out whom she was addressing before the end?
5. Were you confused by the way the book skips back and forth between past tense and present tense? Do the different time frames ultimately make sense?
6. At what point did you realize the laughing man was Malcolm?
7. Throughout our reading, safety emerges as an important concept - Mother's rules (p.25). Miranda has the freedom to walk to school and to work at Jimmy's at lunch. Why does her mother have such a strong reaction when Miranda gives the Laughing Man the sandwich?
8. How does Miranda change in this book? In what ways do her relationships with her mother and friends mature?
9. Were you satisfied with the way all the mysteries came together in the end?
10. *A Wrinkle in Time* by Madeline L'Engle has a big impact on Miranda, but also on Rebecca Stead and the idea for this book. Did reading *When You Reach Me* make you want to read *A Wrinkle in Time*?
11. Is there any book that took hold of you the way *A Wrinkle in Time* took hold of Miranda—that you read and reread either as a child or an adult?
12. Who was your favorite character?
13. What surprised you most about the book? Why?
14. On a scale of 1(bad) to 10 (good), how would you rate this book?