Coo has grown up with her flock. She knows that even though she is a human and they are pigeons, they are her family and she belongs. But everything changes the day Burr, the pigeon who means the most to Coo, is injured. Coo ventures off the roof, her safe world, into the unknown to get Burr help. That’s how she meets Tully, a healer who cares about the pigeons and comes to care for Coo. When Tully brings Coo to live with her after a storm, Coo must navigate for the first time away from her flock and on the ground. As Coo learns to spread her wings in this new world and discover who she is without leaving her past behind, she also learns to face her fears as she finds new friends and more family to help her soar.

Questions for Group Discussion

**Family.** At the beginning, Coo’s only family is her flock. How is she like her flock? How is she different from them? What do you imagine growing up with the flock was like for Coo? Eventually, Tully takes in Coo and becomes like family to her too. What do Tully and the flock have in common? How does Coo act like a family with Tully in ways that are different than how she acts with the flock? What about ways that are the same? Neither Tully nor the flock are related to Coo by blood. They are both “found families” for her. What are the things that make Coo and the flock a family? What are some ways Coo and Tully are like a family? How would you define what a family is?

**Freedom.** Coo can’t fly, so until she can climb down, she is stuck on the roof. But are there ways she is more free than her flock? In what ways is Coo dependent on the flock? Does this make her more or less free? What does freedom mean to Coo? Does that change over the course of the story? What does freedom mean to the pigeons? Is it different than what humans think of as freedom? What does freedom mean to you?

**Belonging.** Coo isn’t sure she belongs on the ground, but she’s also not sure she’s like her flock. What are some things that make Coo feel like she belongs? Does her friendship with Aggie change how she feels? How does Coo find out where she belongs? Do you think it’s possible to feel like you belong in more than one place? Where do you feel like you belong the most? How does seeing and being with the people we love make us feel like we belong somewhere?

**Nature.** The mayor seems to think that the pigeons make the city a more unpleasant place. What do you think of the mayor’s plan to “clean up” the city? If it’s the right thing to do, why is he being secretive about it? What are some natural spaces around where you live? Do you know about the kinds of animals that live there? In cities, pigeons are a common sight and they do eat the trash that humans produce. Some people think of pigeons as pests or nuisances. But others are like Tully and Nicolas and care about pigeons. Have you seen pigeons before? Did you have some ideas about what pigeons were like before you read this book? Did they change after you read the book?

**Helping Others.** At first, Tully refuses Lucia’s help because she is afraid of what might happen if Lucia finds out the truth about Coo. What does she do to try to avoid help from Lucia? When Lucia does find out the whole story, does she react the way Tully thinks she will? Do you think Tully should have asked for help sooner? What advice would you have given Tully if she had told you Coo’s story? Just like Tully is afraid to tell Lucia the truth, Coo is afraid to tell Aggie the truth. Why? When Coo does tell Aggie the truth, how does Aggie help her? What are some ways you help friends when they come to you with their problems? What are some of the best ways your friends have helped you?

Guide created by Angie Manfredi. Angie is a writer and librarian who worked with children and teens directly for 11 years. She now works in library consulting on all things youth services. She’s fat and not sorry about it and is passionately committed to giving kids reading choice and decolonizing the discourse around children’s literature.