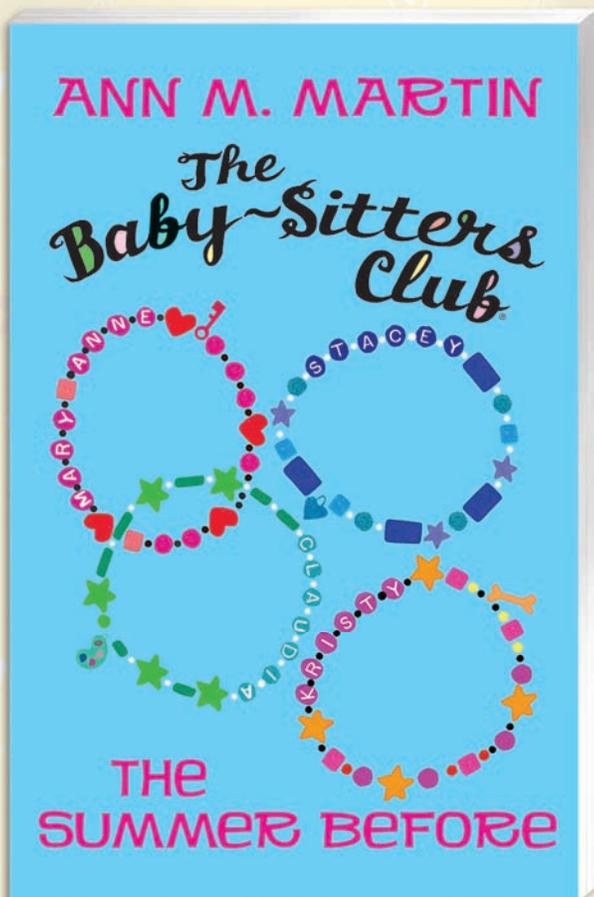


DISCUSSION GUIDE to

The Baby-Sitters Club



From New York Times bestselling author
ANN M. MARTIN



The Summer Before

Discussion Questions

1. Each of the girls, Kristy Thomas, Mary Anne Spier, Claudia Kishi, and Stacey McGill, go through big changes over the summer. Pick one of the girls and describe her character in the beginning of the book and how she changed by the end.
2. Mary Anne's father is very overprotective and is always checking in on her whereabouts. What are some of the reasons you think he is so strict with her?
3. Although dealing with their own separate issues, Kristy, Mary Anne, and Claudia are still able to support each other when one of them is in need. What are some examples of how they do this? Are you there for your friends when they need you and vice versa? Discuss a time when you gave support to a friend.
4. In chapter five, Stacey talks about her parents keeping her diabetes a secret and how this upsets her. Do you agree with Stacey's parents? How could telling people about her condition help Stacey?
5. Kristy gives her mom a hard time about dating Watson. Why do you think this is? Do you think Kristy treats him fairly?
6. Claudia is embarrassed and upset by Frankie's actions at the end of the book. Has a friend ever embarrassed you? How would/do you deal with it?

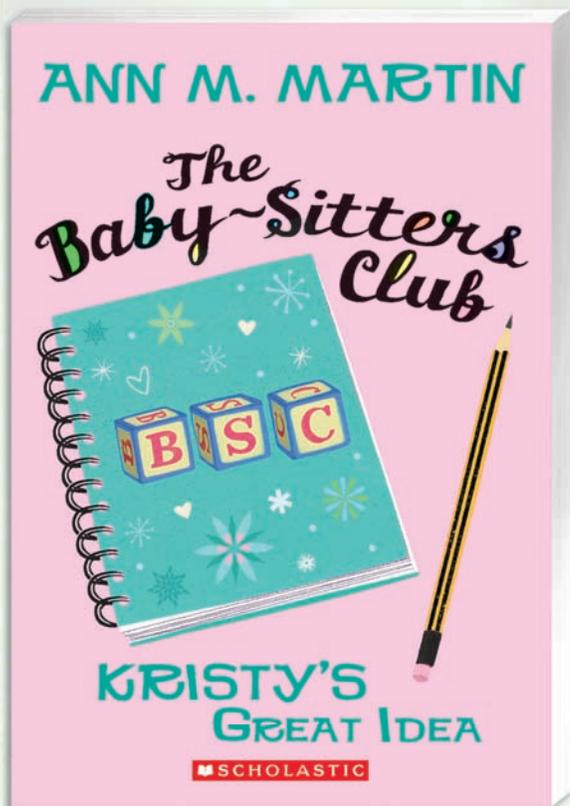
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#1: Kristy's Great Idea

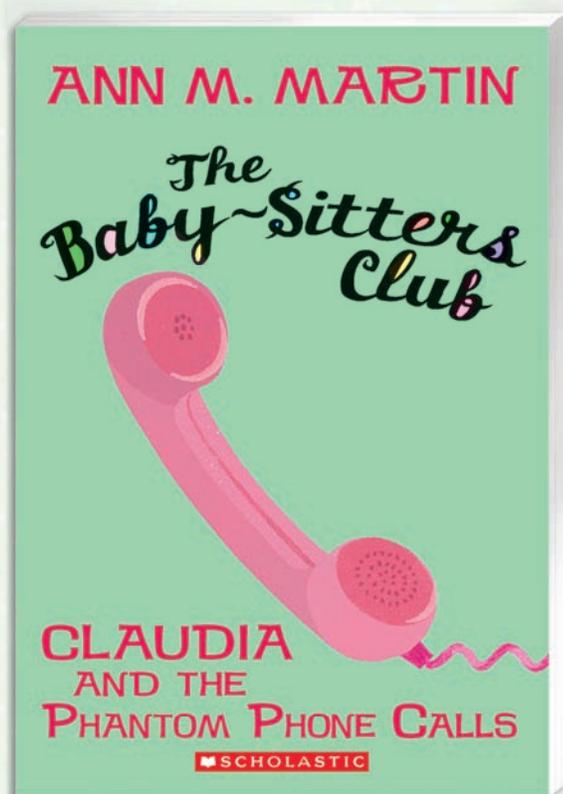
Discussion Questions

1. Have you and your friends ever started a club? If so, what kind of club did you start and how did you put it together? If not, what kind of club would you form and why?
2. Hobbies are important to all of the girls—Kristy likes sports, Claudia is into art, Stacey has fun shopping, and Mary Anne enjoys writing. What are some of your favorite hobbies? Is there a hobby you haven't explored yet but would like to try?
3. Write a Top Ten Tips list every baby-sitter should know. Examples: Be a good listener; Plan games and activities during your time.
4. Claudia's older sister Janine, and Kristy's older brother Sam often tease their younger siblings and friends. Have you ever been teased by an older sibling or a friend's older sibling? What do you do when this happens? Do you tease back, tell on him/her, or ignore it?
5. Each of the girls in the Baby-sitters Club has a unique personality. Sometimes, the closest friends can have the most differences, but there is always something that keeps them connected. What keeps these girls close? What makes you bond with your friends?
6. At first, Kristy is stubborn about not wanting to baby-sit Watson's children, but soon learns that his kids are very sweet and nice. Describe a situation when you didn't want to do something, but afterward realized it wasn't as bad as you expected.

#2: Claudia and the Phantom Phone Calls

Discussion Questions

1. If you could pick someone in the book you relate to most, who would it be and why? Now ask your friends to write down which girl they think you're most like and see if you come up with the same answer!
2. Claudia loves planning her Halloween costume. What are some favorite Halloween costumes you've worn? If you could pick costumes for Claudia, Kristy, Mary Anne, and Stacey, what would they be? What do you think Claudia's sister Janine would dress up as?
3. Claudia is a fan of Nancy Drew mysteries. Do you have a favorite kind of book (comedy, mystery, science fiction, etc.)? What is your favorite book? Who is your favorite author?
4. Throughout the book, the girls each become very scared at their baby-sitting jobs because they're afraid of the Phantom Caller. What are some of the things you're afraid of? Have you ever been afraid of something that later didn't seem so scary?
5. Mimi tells Claudia she should make time for the important people in her life. What do you think "making time" means? How do you make time for friends and family?
6. Alan Gray has been giving Kristy a hard time because he likes her. Has anyone ever pretended not to be nice to you only because they were too shy to tell you they liked you? What do you think would have happened if Alan had told Kristy right away that he liked her?



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