

Discussion Guide for Premature Pleasures

1. (Introduce self/ice-breaker question) What is your name and tell us which character in Premature Pleasures would your family and friends say you're most like?
2. What happened to Trek's family that led them to move to South Park?
3. What kind of effect does domestic violence have on children?
4. How did the kids in Foxwood treat Trek when she first moved there?
5. What event caused Trek to finally get in with the "in-crowd"?
6. What kind of girls were Keisha and Erika? How did they compare to Nae, Mimi and Chanel?
7. What is the acceptable age to start dating? What if the girl looks a lot older than her age? Is it okay for her to date earlier than others?
8. How old was Keisha? How old was Shed? Should they have been dating? What if Keisha was really mature for her age?
9. Do you think Keisha was raped? Whose account of what happened do you believe Ð Trek or RJ/Milton? Why?
10. Does a woman ever deserve to be raped? Can a woman's actions cause her to get raped?
11. What kind of girls were Nae, Mimi, and Chanel?
12. Why would Trek want to be friends with them?
13. There is a saying that goes, "A tree is known by its fruit." What was the first thing Nae and Mimi did to signal they were bad news?
14. What was Trek's relationship like with her mother?
15. What should the mother have done to protect Trek from bad people like Nae, Mimi, Chanel, RJ and T-Bone?
16. Why didn't Trek make friends with the other girls in the complex?
17. How did adults treat Trek?
18. Who was the one adult who really loved Trek?
19. How did she force Trek to change in order for her to love her? Answer: Ms. Denise didn't make her change. She loved Trek and accepted her for who she was.

20. What do you think about the "slumber party"? Why did it get out of control?
21. If you were Trek, would you have done the prank? What would you have said to get out of doing it?
22. After going through with the prank, did Trek become a bad girl, or was she still a good girl who simply made a bad choice? What's the difference between a bad girl and a good girl who does bad things?
23. When did Trek's life start to change for the better?
24. Why did the mom's life start to change for the worst?
25. Who was to blame for Trek and her mom's bad decisions? Was it the men in their lives or their own bad choices?
26. What were the church kids like? How did they treat Trek at first?
27. After reading *Premature Pleasures*, which parts stick out in your mind?
28. Do you believe Trek was on her way to seeing "brighter days"? Why or why not?
29. What was the overall message you believe Alexis was trying to convey in *Premature Pleasures*?

Discussion Guide for *Secret Shame*

1. What happened to Trek's family that led them to move to the suburbs/Missouri City?
2. Was Trek happy about the move? Why or why not?
3. When you first meet Rhodee, what do you think about her?
4. *Secret Shame* opens up with Trek reading a flier. What kind of school do you think it is?
5. When Jay smiles at Trek, do you think he really likes Trek or is he running game?
6. How does Jay really feel about Lena? What were his actions towards her?
7. Is it smart for Trek to trust Jay?
8. Is it possible to have friends who skip class and smoke weed and not do those things yourself?
9. How did you feel about Rambay?
10. Why did Trek repeatedly refer to her father as "the dad"?

11. Do you think he was running game on Trek's mom?
12. What did he do to make you believe he was sincere?
13. How was Mr. Marcus able to molest Rhodee?
14. Rhodee's boyfriend Big Mike was 24 years old (Rhodee was 14). Since she was used to having sex with older guys, do you think her sexual relationship with Mr. Marcus was consensual or was it rape?
15. Why didn't Rhodee tell her father or another adult about what Marcus was doing?
16. Does silence help a situation like Rhodee's? What would you do?
17. What was the clue that let readers know whenever Rhodee had sex with Marcus?
Answer: She would go to school in drab clothes with her hair uncombed.
18. Did "the dad" really want to be with Trudy and Reesha? Why or why not?
19. Why did "the dad" stay with them?
20. Could you relate to why Trek hated the dad? Why or why not?
21. When the dad got put out of Trudy's house, do you think Trek's mom should have let him stay with them?
22. Why was Ms. Ritchie so mean to Rhodee and Rambay?
23. Who has been your favorite teacher so far? Why?
24. Have you ever had a teacher write a nice letter to you? How did it make you feel?
25. Have you ever had a teacher or principal cuss at you? How did it make you feel?
26. Do you think Rhodee should have trusted Mrs. Smithers to help her with the Marcus situation? Why didn't she?
27. Have you ever had a teacher you didn't trust?
28. What was up with Tra, Hil and Am?
29. What kind of girls were they? Did good girls who did a bad thing or straight up bad girls?
30. When Ms. Ritchie happened upon "The Operation", why did she only call out Rhodee's name?
31. After it was found out about Rhodee and Marcus, did Rhodee get what she deserved? (Hint: She was removed from her home where her father didn't know she was being molested and placed in DePelchin Children's Center where she received counseling and regular attention.) Did Marcus get what he deserved?
32. Rhodee asked Trek to skip school with her. Is there ever a good reason to skip

school with your friend?

33. Because Trek felt so bad about what was happening to Rhodee, do you think she made the right decision to skip school? If it were your best friend, would you skip school to be with her and comfort her? If not, how would you help?

34. Why did Ms. Ritchie hate Trek? Is it right for you to be judged by the company you keep?

35. Who had the greatest influence over whom ð Trek over Rhodee, or Rhodee over Trek?

36. In the last chapter of Secret Shame, Trek no longer calls her father "the dad". Instead, she refers to him as "my dad." Why? What happened that she had a change of heart?

Author's note: If you know of anyone who is being sexually violated, please tell someone. The only shame in that situation is keeping it a secret.