

Flight to Freedom

1. In the beginning of the book, Yara writes about her time in Escuela al Campo. How would you feel about being sent far from home to work and study in a country school? How do you think that experience changed Yara? What would you miss most being far from home?
2. Under the new communist government, the political and personal freedoms are taken away from Cubans. What are some of them? Which civil rights do you think are most important? Why?
3. Yara writes that the revolution “is more like a guava fruit — green on the outside and red on the inside.” What does she mean? Have you lived through any situations in which you felt one way but had to act in another way?
4. Yara is both excited and scared when she leaves her homeland and lands in Miami. Why? What would you miss most if you had to leave where you now live? What would you be happy to leave behind?
5. Yara’s parents have very different reactions to exile in the United States. Which parent handled the change better? Do you think the move was better for Yara’s mother? Why or why not?
6. The first Cuban children met with discrimination when they arrived. Does this still happen to refugees and immigrants coming over? What examples can you provide from the news?
7. Find a student in your school who has recently arrived or is visiting from a different country. Ask what’s different and what’s the same in his or her school experience.
8. Family plays an important part in the Garcias’ lives. Can you point to examples in which your family came together to help each other out?
9. Yara and her family deal with many losses in the book: loss of country, loss of property, loss of a loved one. How does each character handle these losses? Is there a right and a wrong way? Does it depend on the loss and the person suffering the loss?
10. Yara and Jane become friends at school. How does this help Yara in her transition into her new environment? What do the friends learn from each other?

11. Have you ever been the new kid in school or in another activity? Have you ever befriended a new person at your school?

12. Ileana, Yara's oldest sister, rebels openly against her family's strict rules. Why does she do that? Could she have handled conflict in a different way? Have you rebelled against the rules imposed by your family?