

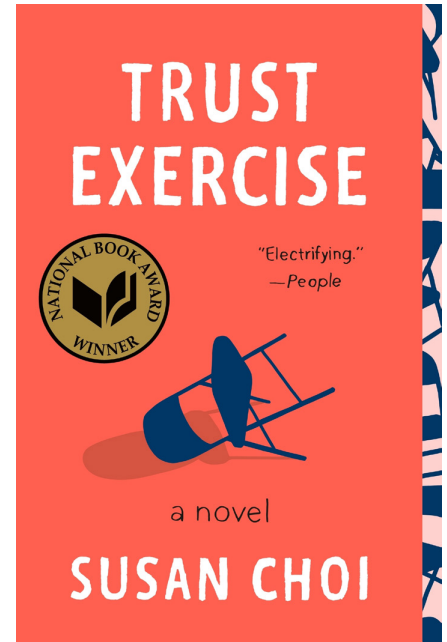


Reading Group Gold

Trust Exercise

A Novel

by Susan Choi



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Questions and Topics for Discussion

1. Driving is a central theme throughout the first section of the book. What would a car and more freedom mean for Sarah and David? Does the ability to drive signify something beyond the ability to drive away from uncomfortable situations, and how would the story change if the characters could drive?
2. Ms. Rozot is new to the school and comforts Sarah after she breaks down. She tells Sarah that young people experience emotional pain more intensely than adults do. Has this been true in your own experience?
3. Sarah writes about her high school experiences, though her version seems to differ from the actual events. What are some clues early on that Sarah's story is not completely true?
4. The story breaks suddenly in the middle of the book. Were you able to stay grounded in the new sections?
5. Sarah chooses to make Mr. Kingsley gay in her version of the story, but in reality he is straight. How does this change the interactions he has with his female students?
6. How reliable of a narrator do we find Karen versus Sarah? Do you think that either of their stories is accurate?
7. Though the novel is set far before the #MeToo movement, its exploration of consent and what it means to be a young person influenced by people in power is relevant to our conversations about consent today. How does this book illuminate those conversations, and what does it mean for a teenager to consent to adult situations in any era?



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8. The characters in *Trust Exercise* often seem much older than fifteen in terms of sexuality and romantic relationships. Do you think older Sarah is embellishing her past sexuality to shock readers of her novel, or do we discount teenage sexuality as we get older?
9. How does *Trust Exercise* differ in its portrayal of a performing arts high school from previous portrayals, such as those in *Fame* or *Glee*?
10. Could the book be arranged differently? How might that change the way we read the story and the extent to which we trust each narrator?