



## Bronte's Book Club

Kristiana Gregory

### About the Book

Twelve-year-old Bronte Bella has just moved to sunny California from New Mexico. Living by a beach is wonderful; but quirky, word-loving Bronte is worried that she won't fit in. She starts a book club to make new friends, and is thrilled when four other girls show up: Nan, who lives on a boat with her parents; Lupe, just dying to be an actress; Jessie, secretive and quiet; and Willow, beautiful, blonde, and with secrets of her own. As the club gets going, Bronte can't wait to talk about books. But sometimes it seems as if the club fights and gossips more than it reads! Can the girls trust one another enough to become true friends—or will Bronte's book club be an epic disaster?

### How to Start a Book Club

1. Gather a few friends or acquaintances who like to read. Small groups of four to eight are easier to manage because you don't have to shout to be heard.
2. Pick a leader. This helps when there's a runaway talker or when people soar off the subject. The leader needs to know how to clear the throat ("Ahem!") and tap a pencil on the table to get people's attention.
3. Pick a meeting place, preferably where food is allowed. Refreshments are a must for a convivial gathering! Try the recipe for *Bronte's Brownies* on the other side of this page.
4. Decide how often you want to meet. Bronte's club met every week because it was during the summer, but once a month is standard. This gives everyone time to read.
5. Start on time and end on time. An hour is good; two can get draggy. Ninety minutes allows for wild, off-topic maneuvers.
6. Choose a book together. Public libraries are great for providing lists of their multiple titles. This way everyone in your group can check out a copy without having to buy one.
7. Some readers might like to prepare a list of questions to discuss; others might prefer to wing it and see what happens.
8. Be polite and enjoy one another's company.
9. In the author's experience, dogs are a welcome addition to book clubs. They're good listeners, they clean up spilled snacks, and they don't use cell phones.
10. Have fun!

**Turn over for the recipe  
for Bronte's Brownies!**

## Bronte's Brownies

### Ingredients:

1 box brownie mix (19 to 21 oz. size)

2 eggs

2 tablespoons vegetable oil

$\frac{3}{4}$  cup applesauce

1 cup miniature marshmallows

6 oz. (one small package) semi-sweet chocolate chips or butterscotch chips or white chocolate chips or a combination of the three

*Optional:*  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup chopped pecans or almonds

### Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease a 9x13-inch pan.
2. In a large bowl, combine the brownie mix, eggs, oil, and applesauce. Stir with a large spoon about 50 strokes until blended so that no dry powder is sticking to the bowl.
3. Now add the marshmallows, chocolate chips, nuts, or whatever combination you have in the kitchen. Don't smash it around; just stir until blended evenly.
4. Pour into pan, spreading the batter to the edges with a spoon or spatula.
5. Bake for 30 to 35 minutes. Watch for the brownies to start pulling away from the side of the pan. Poke a toothpick into the center, and if it comes out dry, your brownies are done.

### Suggestions:

1. Let the brownies cool for one hour before cutting.
2. While you're waiting, wipe down the kitchen counter and clean up any mess.
3. These brownies are an excellent book club snack and can be served on a napkin (to save washing dishes). They taste best when shared with friends.

**Kristiana Gregory** is the author of more than twenty books for young readers. *Jenny and the Tetons*, which *Publishers Weekly* called "heartfelt" and said "readers will relish each page," won a Golden Kite Award. In addition to *Bronte's Book Club*, Holiday House has published *My Darlin' Clementine* for older readers. To learn more about Kristiana, visit her website, [www.kgregorybooks.com](http://www.kgregorybooks.com).

## BRONTE'S BOOK CLUB

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