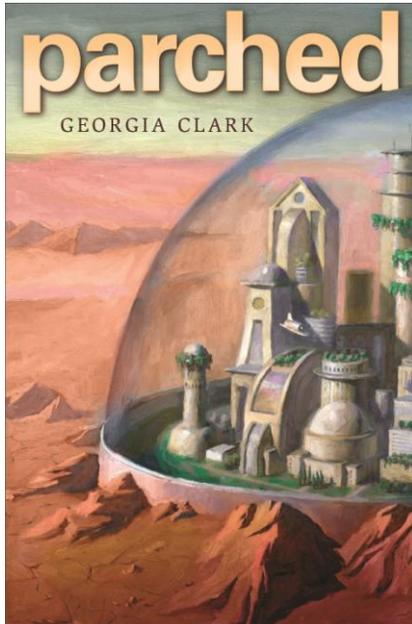


## DISCUSSION GUIDE



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### PARCHED

BY GEORGIA CLARK

GRADES  
7 UP

#### About the Book

In sixteen-year-old Tessendra Rockwood's world, natural resources are at an all-time low. Most remaining supplies are funneled into Eden, while citizens of the surrounding Badlands suffer.

Tess was born an Edenite, but after the death of her scientist mother she decides to combat this inequality by joining a rebel group called Kudzu. Together they uncover a shocking government plot to carry out genocide in the Badlands using artificial intelligence. Unfortunately, Tess has some complicated ties to the project that test her loyalty.

Robots, renewable resources and romance get tangled together as Tess risks her life to bring justice to Eden.

#### Questions for Discussion

1. Tess lies to Ling about going back to Eden, planning to cross back over and then betray her. Why does she do that? In her position, would you do the same?
2. Describe the Badlands. Is this a place in which you could survive? Thrive?
3. Describe Eden. What does this place remind you of? Do you think it looks especially different to Tess after being away for a year?
4. Is Izzy a bad person? Why did Tess feel she couldn't relate to her anymore?
5. Why does Tess decide to join Kudzu? Do you think this is a good choice?
6. What do you make of Kudzu? How effective is the organization? If you joined Kudzu, what sort of member would you be: a planner, a tech whiz, a cook, etc.?
7. Tess lies to her uncle about her life and intentions. Is that fair? Does he seem like a good person? Do you trust Abel?
8. What do you think of Hunter? Why do you think Tess and Hunter become friends?
9. Is the mission a good plan? How likely did you think they were to succeed going in?
10. What do you think of Project Aevum? Why would the Trust invent such a plan?
11. Was Hunter's reveal as an artifact a shock to you? In retrospect, does his personality and behavior make more or less sense? Do you think he had feelings for Tess? Why do you think he chooses not to go with her?
12. Why doesn't Tess tell Kudzu what she's learned about Hunter? Is Tess a bad person for not telling the truth?
13. Why can't Tess destroy the mirror matter on the roof?
14. Describe Gyan. Why do you think he likes exotic animals such as peacocks so much? What is at the root of his power over Eden?
15. Tess confesses the truth about Magnus in the meeting with Gyan, Kudzu, and Abel. Was this a shock to you? Why did Tess seduce Magnus? Was Tess's mom's death Tess's fault?
16. Ling and Naz want to open the borders, using Hunter. Is this a good plan?

17. Hunter tells Tess he is in love with her. Do you believe him? Why do you think he has such strong feelings for her? Why doesn't she return those feelings straight away?
18. Why does Izzy give Tess the blue scratch? Would you do the same?
19. Describe the dam exploding. Did you like this plan? Did you think they'd make it?
20. How do you think Tess has changed over the course of this story? What about Hunter?

## Artificial Intelligence

- ❖ Hunter is a cyborg: half boy, half machine. Do you think he's more human or robot?
- ❖ Tess's mom believes that something is "alive" if it has morality, empathy, and free will. Do you agree with this? What other things might have to be present for something to be alive?
- ❖ AI and robots are often portrayed in films and books as wanting to harm humans. Why do you think that is?
- ❖ If the US government created an artifact such as Hunter, what do you think it would be like?
- ❖ Hunter learns empathy by interacting with Tess. How important do you think empathy is when it comes to being a well-adjusted human?

## Sustainability

- ❖ Eden is a society that is environmentally friendly and sustainable. However, it is created at the expense of the Badlands. Does that seem fair to you?
- ❖ How important is sustainability (reducing carbon footprint/investing in renewable resources/recycling) to you? How are you or your family sustainable? How are you not?
- ❖ Where would you rather live: Eden or the Badlands? What might one place teach you about the other?

## First World/Third World Politics

- ❖ The Trust manipulates Edenites' understanding of the Badlands by censoring realistic/true images. Do you think that happens in our society? What are your impressions of very poor countries such as Africa or India? Why do you think they are poor?
- ❖ Do you think the Trust does a good job of running Eden? Why/why not?

## Utopias

- ❖ Eden is a society in which all resources are shared equally among citizens, available for purchase via credit, as opposed to money. Would you like to live in a place like that? Why/why not?
- ❖ What appeals to you about a place such as Eden? What doesn't appeal?
- ❖ What similarities can you see between our world right now and the world of *Parched*?
- ❖ What would your personal utopia be like? Think of social rights/what is celebrated/whether you'd have money, etc.

## Technology

- ❖ Scratch is a computer made from light, strong, flexible material you can cut up or scrunch into a ball. It works on a 2-D or 3-D setting, using holograms. Do you think computers might one day be like that?

## About the Author

**Georgia Clark** has worked as a teen and lifestyle journalist for more than ten years. Her articles have been featured in *Girls' Life*, *Cosmo*, and other publications. Georgia lives in Brooklyn, New York, and studied improv comedy at the Upright Citizens Brigade Theater. Her most recent book is the YA fantasy *Parched*. For more about Georgia, visit her [website](http://georgiack.com/) at <http://georgiack.com/> and follow her on [Facebook](#), [Tumblr](#), and [Goodreads](#).