

## **WICKED FOX CLASSROOM GUIDE**

### **Cultural Aspects/Themes**

- Filial Piety/Confucianism
- Family hierarchy
- Korean language/culture

### **Other Themes in the Book**

- Friendship
- Finding your identity outside of your family/parental expectations
- Being true to yourself and standing up for yourself

### **ABOUT THIS BOOK**

*A fresh and addictive fantasy-romance set in modern-day Seoul.*

Eighteen-year-old Gu Miyoung has a secret—she’s a gumiho, a nine-tailed fox who must devour the energy of men in order to survive. Because so few believe in the old tales anymore, and with so many evil men no one will miss, the modern city of Seoul is the perfect place to hide and hunt.

But after feeding one full moon, Miyoung crosses paths with Jihoon, a human boy, being attacked by a goblin deep in the forest. Against her better judgment, she violates the rules of survival to rescue the boy, losing her fox bead—her gumiho soul—in the process.

Jihoon knows Miyoung is more than just a beautiful girl—he saw her nine tails the night she saved his life. His grandmother used to tell him stories of the gumiho, of their power and the danger they pose to men. He’s drawn to her anyway.

With murderous forces lurking in the background, Miyoung and Jihoon develop a tenuous friendship that blossoms into something more. But when a young shaman tries to reunite Miyoung with her bead, the consequences are disastrous and reignite a generations-old feud...forcing Miyoung to choose between her immortal life and Jihoon’s.

### **Pre-Reading Activity**

Have students list what they know about Korean culture and Korean society. How family structure is, how school works there, food, mythology and religion. (Then review this list compared with one made after reading the book).

### **DISCUSSION AND WRITING**

## **I. Comprehension**

1. What grade is Jihoon, Somin and Changwan in? What is the US equivalent of their grade?
2. Name 3 Seoul landmarks.
3. How do you say “grandmother” in Korean?
4. How do you say “teacher” in Korean?
5. What are the three rules Miyoung’s mother has about hunting?
6. Name three religions that have existed in Korea throughout history.
7. What is different about Jihoon’s neighborhood than other Seoul neighborhoods (according to Jihoon)?
8. Why is the number 9 significant in Korean culture/mythology?
9. Why did Miyoung have to move from her old town?
10. What happens to Miyoung when she tries to use the Taoist talisman?
11. What do they say a fox bead holds in the old myths?

### **Additional questions/Book Club Questions:**

- What are the three rules Miyoung’s mother has about hunting? What does this tell you about Yena as a character before you’ve met her? What kind of mother does she turn out to be?
- Name two religions that have existed in Korea throughout history and how they’ve affected the gumiho.
- Did you have a favorite folktale in the book? Why?
- Do you agree with how Jihoon handled his friendship and eventual relationship with Miyoung?
- What is different about Jihoon that eventually captures Miyoung's attention? How is he different from people she's interacted with before? How does that affect how she sees humans and the world?
- What does Jihoon say Miyoung does that causes the kids in school to think she's "stuck up"? How does that change how Miyoung sees herself and her place in the world? How does that open her up to accepting new relationships and experiences?
- What drives Miyoung to return to Seoul? What does this say about how she's changed from the beginning of the book?

- Do you think Yena was justified in the choices she made now that you know about her past? Why do you think Yena is the way she is?
- Who do you believe the “villain” or “antagonist” was of the story? Why?

## **BEYOND THE BOOK**

1. Write about a meal that comforts you and how this food makes you feel. Does this food have any cultural or traditional importance to you? If so, what?

2. The power of words. Calling someone aggressive versus confident. Calling someone angry instead of firm. Calling someone stubborn instead of close-minded. The words you choose to describe someone can change how others see them and how they see themselves. How do you think it would affect someone if they're only seen in a negative light despite how hard they work to fit in? How do you think that would affect their relationships and how they see themselves?

3. Expectations versus Reality. There are a lot of expectations the characters' have in this book. Whether it is Yena's expectations of Miyoung. Jihoon's expectations for what a gumihho is like based on his halmeoni's stories. Or Miyoung's expectations about how people would treat her if they knew the truth. All of these expectations have some validity, but they are also very different from reality in many ways as well. One of the issues with expectations is that they can be harmful when people let their preconceived expectations get in the way of realizing what's happening in real life. Think about a time when something wasn't as you expected and taught you to break free of your preconceived expectations or biases. How did that changed how you saw the situation/relationship? What helped you break free of your expectations/biases?