

BANNED BOOKS FOR ALL

TEEN BANNED BOOK CLUB

DISCUSSION GUIDE



Download Your Free E-Book Now!

Each of Us a Desert will be available to read immediately on the free e-reader app **SimplyE** through November 30: nypl.org/booksforall



Each of Us a Desert by Mark Oshiro

The first book in The New York Public Library's Teen Banned Book Club is Mark Oshiro's *Each of Us a Desert*, a fantasy novel about two girls on a magical journey across the desert. Look out for more featured Banned Book Club titles through June 2024!

Discussion Questions

1. What does the book's title mean to you?
2. As a "cuentista," Xochitl has the magical ability to draw the villagers' stories out of them and take them into herself, cleansing the villagers of their pain and guilt. How would you feel if you had this ability? What might be the benefits and the downsides?
3. Getting to tell your own story is an important part of the book. What story would you like to share with the world about yourself?
4. Wherever possible, the Spanish in the book is written without gender. Why do you think the author chose to write this way?
5. Xochitl must weigh her needs with those of her community. What do you think about the decision she ends up making? Have you ever had to balance your needs with those of others? If so, what did you do?

Tues, Nov 28
4:30 PM ET
3:30 PM CT | 1:30 PM PT

**Author Talk with
Mark Oshiro**

Free digital access to Each of Us a Desert is made possible through the generosity of Macmillan Publishers.



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Activities & Digital Resources

1. Solís is Xochitl's god and the book is told as a prayer to them. Write a story retelling part of the book from Solís's perspective.
2. In some ways, the story of *Each of Us a Desert* ends where it began. Write a short story where the ending is also the start.
3. Draw your own pictures or use images you find to create a mood board or collage to visualize elements of the book. What does the landscape look like? How would you depict a pesadilla?
4. Explore the different landscapes—including deserts—and forces of nature that feature in the book. Start by visiting the National Park Service website, navigate to "Explore America's Story," and search by topic: [nps.gov](https://www.nps.gov)
5. Learn more about bestselling author Mark Oshiro (they/them) and their other books: [markoshiro.com](https://www.markoshiro.com)
6. Organize your own Banned Book Club! Use these questions to get you started: What are the main themes explored in the book? What do you think the author has to say about them? What did you get out of the book and what do you think others might get out of it? Learn more: [nypl.org/booksforall](https://www.nypl.org/booksforall)

TEACHING INFO

Grade Level: 8–12

Lexile: 700L

Guided Reading Level: Y

Page Count: 432

Genre: Fantasy

Themes: Storytelling, Tradition, Quests, Legacy, Love, Sacrifice

FURTHER READING

A Thousand Steps into Night

Traci Chee

Pet

Akwaeke Emezi

A Snake Falls to Earth

Darcie Little Badger

Lakelore

Anna-Marie McLemore

Lucha of the Night Forest

Tehlror Kay Mejia

More Ways to Get Involved!

As book bans and challenges rise, The New York Public Library and the American Library Association are partnering to bring readers across the country together to stand for the right to read freely.

Get free access to Banned Book Club titles, enter our National Teen Writing Contest for a chance to win a grand prize of \$500, learn more about book bans, and find out how you can get more involved: [nypl.org/booksforall](https://www.nypl.org/booksforall)



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