

SKIP!

Praise for SKIP!

“Sequences snake across the page, mimicking the billowing of a jump rope, while sparingly employed structured panels zoom in on emotions or change perspective, complementing the fluid, motion-filled ambiance of Burgess’s endearing debut.”
—Publishers Weekly



“A journey of self-discovery, creativity, and belonging centers a sweet, uplifting story of friendship and ambition.”
—Kirkus Reviews

“This is, appropriately, not one to be skipped.”
—The Bulletin of the Center for Children’s Books



About the Book

Jay often feels like they are a nobody. Beah, on the other hand, is fierce, charming, athletic—and OBSESSED with the street skipping art, Double Dutch. When the two meet, sparks fly, in this colorful slice-of-life graphic novel about the wonder of platonic friendship and finding your identity.

Jay is always scribbling poetry in their notebook. When they come across Skip, a Double Dutch team, they befriend the members—and decide to join, too. For the first time ever, Jay has a place to belong—and friends to confide in.

But Jay’s friendship with their new bestie Beah is intense, both in and out of Double Dutch. As Beah and Jay help each other grow into the people they will become, it challenges their friendship and their own identities.

About the Author

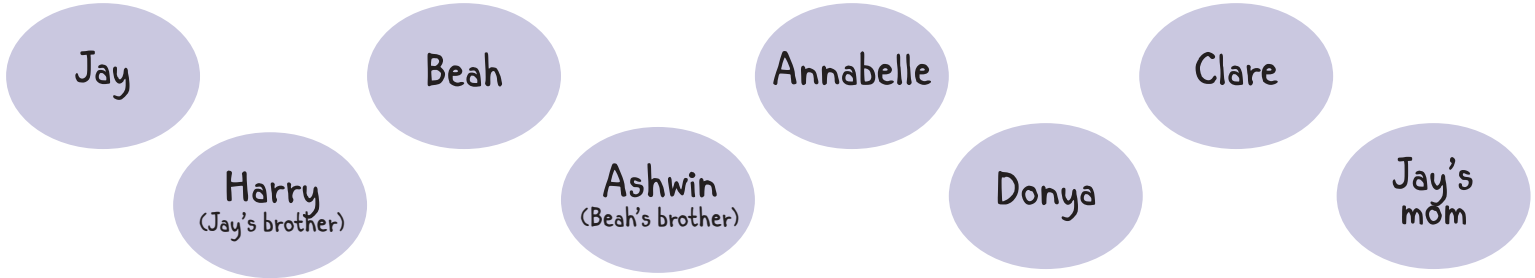
Sarah Burgess has been working in animation for seven years and drawing comics since forever. Their passion lies in drawing character-driven stories that focus on the complexities and exploration of relationships and people. They are most known for their comics on mental health; they also draw a webcomic, *The Princess Beast*, inspired by shōjo manga and all about social anxiety. *Skip!* is based on their relationship with their own childhood best friend, who they describe as their first love to this day.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS !

This discussion guide will help students explore the book's key themes, ideas, and details, and in turn engage kids in thoughtful consideration of their own experiences. The guide can be used in small or large groups to start a conversation or as writing prompts for independent work.

The main characters in Skip! are:



SELF DISCOVERY AND FINDING ONE'S OWN VOICE

Review the cited pages and answers the questions.

Pages 10-11

Jay's mom says to them, "Why don't you join a club or something?" "Find a place where you belong."

Page 13

Their mom's words play in their head and Jay sings, "I just don't fit in anywhere."

Pages 14-18

Susie invites Jay to watch her group dance. Jay asks, "Could I join you?" That took a lot of courage and then they were told they were told, "That's not great, Jay." And called "clumsy, awkward, a shy, quiet nobody."

Qs:

- Where do you feel like you belong and fit in?
- What are situations where you've felt like an outsider?
- What in Jay's life makes them continue to have the energy to try again? Is it an internal or external power?

Pages 117-118

Jay reveals to Beah, "I wish I was like you. You know what you want!" They say, "I can't decide anything about myself." They wonder if they want to write, sing, skip, and whether they want to be a boy or a girl. Jay thinks they need to fit into a category.

Qs:

- What categories are you aware of at your school?
- Do you fit into one?
- Can a person be easily categorized?

On page 149, try to answer the questions Jay writes down in their book. Answer for Jay. And consider their last question for yourself, "... what it should mean... to be me?"

Page 184

Jay wanders and ponders, "I should say sorry – but it's so scary."

Page 230

Jay tells Ashwin, "I want to say I'm sorry... I'm just no good at talking."



Page 234

Ashwin responds, "It's hard to say sorry. Say it how you want to say it."

Qs:

- Why is it scary for Jay to say sorry?
- What are other ways someone could truly express an apology without talking?

COMPETITION

Review the cited pages and answers the questions.

Page 46

"Just admit that you miss me." What does this reveal about what's going on with Annabelle? Later in the book, on page 232, Ashwin says to Jay, "If she hated you, she wouldn't be so mad," referring to Beah.

Q:

- How could this same statement apply to Annabelle and Beah?



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS !



Pages 64-65

When Annabelle confronts Jay at school perceiving them as a threat, she says "You know she's just using you, right?" "When she doesn't need you anymore... she will drop you."

Ashwin steps in and says, "Some people will just say anything to get under your skin."

Qs:

- How can words whether true or not affect a person?
- Have you ever been told something that rocked your world or make you question something that you thought was certain?
- What are steps one can take to "unhear" such remarks?

Page 107

When Jay runs into Ashwin in the upstairs bathroom, they share a moment talking about their artsy interests – music and rhymes. The scene depicts a connection between the two which is broken by Beah declaring, "... it's my sleep over" and "Don't poison Jay's mind."

Qs:

- Have you ever been in a situation or witnessed a situation where one person is trying to control who one can be friends with?
- How did you navigate it or what was the outcome?

FRIENDSHIP

Review the cited pages and answers the questions.

Page 121

Jay pulls a piece of paper from their pocket and Beah asks them to rap it out, "You shine on me. Got me to see a whole new shiny world." Jay is revealing their true feelings for Beah. It's a platonic friendship filled with a great deal of love.

Qs:

- What can such a friendship do for a person?
- Can you think of a person that "shines" on you?
- How do you "shine" on your friends?



Page 218

When Jay reveals the reason that Beah hasn't been around, Donya and Clare respond, "Why would you think we wouldn't want to support Beah? Do we look like terrible friends??"

Page 247

So happy to be reunited with Jay, Beah says, "You're so important. It doesn't matter what we do! I just wanna be here for you!"

Qs:

- What do these statements reveal about Donya, Clare, and Beah?
- As Jay and Beah's friendship progresses, what signs indicate that these two could be friends forever?
- What are the qualities of a true friendship?
- What are five ways to navigate a problem that arises between friends?

