



# Farewell Cuba, Mi Isla

Alexandra Diaz

Tome Society Book Award

## Discussion Guide



### Pre-reading questions

1. This book is about a girl and her family who flee Cuba in 1960. What do you know about Cuba? What do you know about Fidel Castro and his communist rule of Cuba?
2. What do you like about the cover? What clues do you see on the cover about what may happen in the book?
3. This is a historical fiction book. Have you read a book set in this time period? What is your favorite time period to read about?

### Post-reading questions

1. Victoria's parents decide to go to the United States when the Cuban government starts being overtaken by communism. Jackie's family decides to stay. Do you think they each made the right choice for their families? Why or why not?
2. Victoria and her family's lives are very different in Florida than they were in Cuba. What are some differences you observed?
3. Victoria's father holds strict views about the roles of boys and girls in the household. In what ways were these views unfair to Victoria and her siblings?
4. Look at the cover again. What details do you see and how do they connect to the details of the story?
5. What were the differences between Victoria and Jackie's real lives versus what they wrote to each other in letters? Why do you think each chose to leave out real facts about their lives?
6. Why do you think Jackie and Victoria had trouble with their friendship after Jackie arrived in Miami? What experiences did they each have that changed them? What changes did you see in their personalities and how they viewed the world and each other?
7. When her family is living in Miami, Victoria discovers that her mother never really learned any domestic skills (cooking, cleaning, etc) because she always had servants to do household chores for her. Who do you think should teach children these skills - their parents or their schools? Do you think everyone should learn these skills regardless of economic status?

### Post-reading activities

1. Do some more research on Cuba, Fidel Castro, Communism, and how it affected Cuba and the Cuban people. Compile your findings into an infographic. Follow the Historical Fiction Infographic competition guidelines and submit your final work for judging.
2. Read page 42-43, starting with Jackie telling her mother about the debate assignment in school. Form groups and prepare for a similar debate. Each group should choose one of the systems of government - Communism, Socialism, or Capitalism. Take turns discussing, debating, and sharing your opinions on the different systems.

3. The author introduces lots of Spanish words and phrases in the book. Write some down and use the context clues in the book to guess what they mean. Then, check the glossary in the back of the book and see if you were correct.
4. Phil and Monique are from Haiti, another Caribbean country. Do some research on the history and culture of Haiti. How does it compare to Cuba?

### **More About This Book**

Publisher's Discussion Guide:

<https://www.simonandschuster.com/books/Farewell-Cuba-Mi-Isla/Alexandra-Diaz/9781534495401>

Author's Website: <https://alexandra-diaz.com/>