



# The Vanderbeekers of 141<sup>st</sup> Street

## By Karina Glaser

### Club Tome It List Discussion Guide



#### Pre-Reading Questions

1. The Vanderbeekers were not the first ones to live in their home. If your family was not the first to live in your home, do you know anything about who lived there before you? Do you wonder if other kids climbed the trees in your yard or how the former occupant decorated your bedroom? Can you find out anything about the previous owners? Do they have memories of living there?
2. If your family is the first family to live in your home, what memories or secrets would you like to share with future occupants?
3. What are some of your gifts/talents? How do you share those with your family?
4. Would you rather hear bad news or good news first? Why??

#### Post-Reading Questions

1. Do you have a favorite character in the book? Do you see a part of yourself in that character, perhaps a positive characteristic of one of the Vanderbeeker children (speaking to others, cooking for the family, etc.)?
2. The Brownstone is more than just a house, it seems like a member of the family. Do you think that the house was a character in the novel? Why or why not? Refer to passages in the book to support your opinion.
3. Can you make a connection between The Vanderbeekers of 141st Street and other books you have read? Why do you think Mr. Biederman decided not to renew the Vanderbeeker's lease? What made him change his mind? Is Mr. Biederman and his transformation like any other characters you have encountered? How?
4. The Vanderbeeker children have a serious problem to solve. Do you think that it was right that they decided to solve it without help from any adults? Why or why not? What do you think would have happened if they had involved their parents or other adults in their plans?
5. Describe the people in the neighborhood in the book. Is it what you expected for a neighborhood in a big city? Does such a sense of community exist in your neighborhood?
6. Have you ever had someone decide something for you? How did that feel? Why do you think Jessie hid Benny's invitation to take Isa to the dance?
7. What do you think about Jessie's inventions? Have you ever tried to invent something? How did it turn out? What is something you think needs inventing?

#### Post-Reading Activities

1. Create a family portrait of the Vanderbeekers or of the neighborhood friends and submit it to the It List Fan Art.
2. Watch Karina Yan Glaser's book trailer for The Vanderbeekers of 141st Street, then shoot your own book trailer or review while walking (or driving) around your neighborhood or community to show the similarities and differences and submit it as an It List Book Trailer or It List Book Review Blog Article.
3. Write an I Am poem for the brownstone (or any of the characters in the novel) and submit it to the It List Poem competition.

#### More about this book

- Flipgrid Topic Link: <https://flipgrid.com/ee8c2781>
- Interview with the author: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G4dS\\_ULYB4s&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G4dS_ULYB4s&feature=youtu.be)
- Author's Official Website: [www.karinaglaser.com](http://www.karinaglaser.com)