

American Born Chinese by Gene Luen Yang

Access the *American Born Chinese* **Topic Page** in *Gale In Context: Literature*. Use the **Topic Page** before, during, and after reading the novel to help answer the questions below.

BEFORE READING:

Use *Gale In Context* to answer the following:

1. How does Gene Luen Yang's personal background and experiences influence his writing and artwork? In what ways does he draw from his own cultural heritage and identity in his storytelling?

2. How does Gene Luen Yang's work contribute to the representation and portrayal of Asian-American experiences in literature and graphic novels? In what ways does he challenge stereotypes and provide nuanced portrayals of Asian-American characters?

3. Are there any controversies or debates surrounding Gene Luen Yang's work? What are some different perspectives on his writing and its portrayal of cultural and ethnic identities?

4. What are some of the author's motivations or intentions behind writing *American Born Chinese*? How does this particular graphic novel fit into his larger body of work?

From Your Own Knowledge and Experiences:

1. Have you ever read a graphic novel before? If so, what do you enjoy about the format? If not, what are your expectations or assumptions about graphic novels?

2. What do you know about the experiences of immigrants or individuals with immigrant backgrounds? Are there any specific aspects or challenges that you find interesting or important to learn more about?

3. How do you think cultural identity and heritage shape an individual's sense of self? Can you think of any personal experiences or examples from other stories that highlight the complexities of cultural identity?

4. What are some stereotypes or misconceptions that you have encountered regarding different cultural or ethnic groups? How do you think these stereotypes can impact individuals' experiences and perceptions?

5. How does representation in literature and media contribute to a broader understanding of diverse cultures and experiences? Why is it important to have diverse voices and perspectives in storytelling?

6. What do you think the title, *American Born Chinese*, suggests about the story? What are some possible themes or ideas that you anticipate exploring in the book?

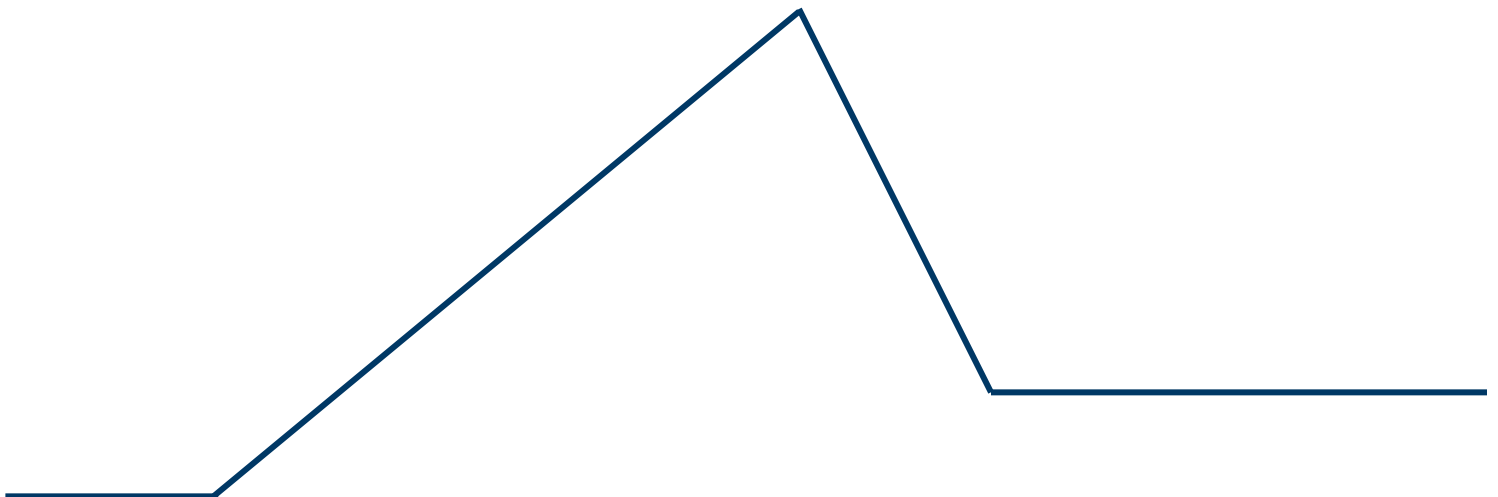
7. Are there any social or cultural issues that you hope this book will address? Why are those topics important to you?

DURING READING:

As you read *American Born Chinese*, take notes on the developments of the characters in the novel, how do you meet each character, how does your understanding of them change as they go through the book, why does it change. Make sure to be specific with examples (include page numbers).

CHARACTERS	
Jim Wang	
The Monkey King	
Danny	
Chin-Kee	

Complete the plot diagram below, filling in events for each element of the story including the exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution.



DURING READING:

The following are the themes depicted in *American Born Chinese*. As you read, take notes (including page numbers) of how you see these themes portrayed in the book.

THEMES	
Cultural Identity & Assimilation	
Stereotypes & Prejudice	
Self-Acceptance & Authenticity	
Mythology & Cultural Heritage	
Family Dynamics & Expectations	
Coming-of-Age & Self-Discovery	

AFTER READING:

1. How do the different storylines in the novel intersect and contribute to the overall message or themes of the book? In what ways do they enhance each other's impact?

2. How does the Monkey King's journey mirror Jin's journey of self-acceptance and cultural identity?

3. How do the characters, particularly Chin-Kee, challenge or reinforce stereotypes? How does the book address the harmful effects of stereotypes and the importance of breaking free from them?

4. How does the title, *American Born Chinese*, encapsulate the central themes and conflicts explored in the novel? How does it reflect the experiences of the characters and their struggles with identity?

5. How do the illustrations enhance the storytelling and convey emotions or messages that words alone might not capture?

6. How do the characters' journeys of self-discovery and acceptance resonate with you? What messages or lessons do you take away from the book regarding cultural identity and the importance of embracing diversity?

7. How does the novel contribute to discussions about representation, cultural identity, and the immigrant experience? What insights or perspectives does it offer that can broaden our understanding of these topics?
