

## A BOOK CLUB GUIDE FOR

# Forbidden

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## Welcome Activity

Have each member of the club write down something on a small slip of paper from their youth that was “forbidden” either by their parents, school, religious practice, or other influence. Without identifying themselves on the slip of paper, put all of the slips of paper into a hat or jar. The host of the party would then read the “forbidden” acts and the group could either try to guess who wrote it, or see how many in the group had the same act forbidden in their lives. Let the discussion evolve naturally as to why those acts were forbidden, and to what purpose. Some discussion questions could be, was there an advantage or disadvantage to avoiding the act? Are these same acts forbidden in their lives

## Discussion Questions

If you could choose between living as a nomad in the desert like Jayden, or in the temple like Leila, which place would you choose and why?

Jayden had to give up the jewelry that her mother gave her on the night of her betrothal ceremony to Dinah to save her sister, Sahmril. Did you feel that Dinah was justified in asking for something for herself? Why or why not?

Jayden belly dances over her mother’s grave, and as a prayer. The women in the temple belly danced for a much different purpose. How do you view belly dancing? Did you learn anything new about this ancient dance from the novel?

What character in the book is most like you? Why do you think so?

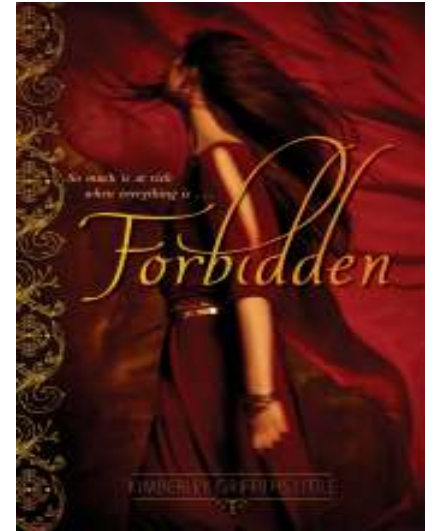
What did you learn that you didn’t know before by reading this novel or what surprised you most?

Do you believe that Horeb had a right to kill Kadesh? Why or why not?

Why do you suppose Horeb didn’t kill Jayden when he had the chance? What is he saving her for? Why does he need her?

How did Jayden change from the girl at the betrothal ceremony in the first chapter to the girl at the end of the book who leaves her life behind and sets out on her own? What experiences contributed to the changes in Jayden?

What do you think will happen to Jayden in the future? Do you think Kadesh is alive, and if so, will she find him and live happily ever after? What will become of Horeb, her father, Leila, and Sahmril?



## Fantastic Reviews!

“Lush, lyrical, romantic. *Forbidden* transports readers into a vividly imagined place and time.”  
—Claudia Gray, *New York Times* bestselling author.

“Deep, beautiful, and haunting. READ THIS. It’s simply gorgeous.” —  
Martina Boone, author of *Compulsion*.

“The writing is absolutely STUNNING! I could taste the exotic foods, hear the chime of the belly dancer’s belts, and experience all the beautiful sights and sounds of the desert.” —Jacqueline Garlick, author of *Lumiere*.

# A Night of Belly Dancing!

*Belly dancing was important in Jayden's life. She used it to bring herself strength during difficult times, as a prayer, and to worship. To bring this ancient art to life, here are a couple of ideas for you to try at your book club gathering.*

**Watch:** There are videos available to watch on line of belly dancing [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com). Search under belly dancing. You could play some of these videos while you enjoy eating the honey cake recipe (see below) as entertainment to end your book club evening.

**Learn:** Belly dancing takes many lessons to learn, but there are many videos available on [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) that teach basics moves of belly dancing. For those who want to participate, you could try out belly dancing at your book club night. Search the internet under: "beginning belly dancing" to find a video that best suits you and your group. Here is one to help you get started: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zFuazve2fws>

**Experience:** Your book club participants could go to a local establishment or restaurant where belly dancing is performed (if available in your area). Search the internet for venues where you live.



## Enjoy Honey Cake

*At Jayden's betrothal ceremony, tea and sweet cakes or breads were served. Below is a traditional middle eastern honey cake that would be similar to something that was served that night. (recipe adapted from [www.amideastfeast.com](http://www.amideastfeast.com))*

### Ingredients:

1/2 cup + 1 Tbsp all purpose flour  
1/2 cup granulated sugar  
3 eggs  
1/2 tsp. baking powder  
1/3 cup butter  
1/2 tsp. vanilla

### Topping:

1/2 cup butter  
3/4 cup slivered almonds  
1/3 cup honey  
3/4 tsp. cinnamon  
1/2 cup granulated sugar

### Directions:

- 1.. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F.
2. Grease a 10-inch pan with butter or cooking spray.
3. Melt 1/3 cup of butter in a small saucepan.
- 4 Using an electric mixer, beat the sugar, eggs, and vanilla until everything turns white.
5. Pour in melted butter and stir completely.
6. Using a sifter, sift the flour and baking powder into mixture and mix well.
7. Pour ingredients into the greased pan and bake for 10 minutes or until a fork comes out clean.
8. Melt 1/2 cup butter in a small saucepan for topping.
9. When melted, add sugar, honey, cinnamon and almonds.
10. Stirring constantly, bring to a boil.
11. Pour over finished cake and return to the oven for 15 minutes.
12. Allow to cool before serving.

