



Born a Crime

Trevor Noah

Trevor Noah's memoir about growing up mixed-race in apartheid and post-apartheid South Africa is funny, tender, and unforgettable, the kind of book that feels like a long talk with a friend.

Reading level: Easy

Best for: a club that loves memoirs with humor, heart, and a strong narrator voice

Discussion

WARM-UP

1. Curl up and share: which chapter made you laugh out loud, and did you read any bits aloud to someone in your life?
2. Where did you do most of your reading, and what snack or drink became your reading companion?

DIGGING IN

1. Trevor's mom Patricia steals the whole book. Which of her moments warmed your heart the most, and who in your life does she remind you of?
2. So much of Trevor's childhood is about finding belonging across languages and groups. When in your own life have you felt like you slipped between worlds, in a small or big way?
3. Food and home life show up everywhere, from his grandmother's kitchen to backyard meals. What food memory from your own childhood did this book gently stir up?
4. Trevor leans on humor to talk about hard things. How did that tone make you feel as a reader, and do you have your own people who use jokes as comfort?

GOING DEEP

1. Looking back at the whole book, which scene do you think you'll still be thinking about next month, and what feeling does it leave you with?
2. Patricia raises Trevor with a fierce mix of faith, toughness, and love. Without spoiling anything, what did her parenting teach you about how love can show up in unexpected forms?

On the table

- 🍲 **Slow-cooked beef stew with samp or rice**
A nod to the hearty South African home cooking that fills the book's kitchens
- 🍲 **Vetkoek with curried mince or jam**
Soft fried dough buns Trevor mentions fondly, perfect cozy finger food
- 🍰 **Milk tart (melktert) squares**
A creamy, cinnamon-dusted South African classic for a comforting sweet bite

To sip

- ☕ **Rooibos tea with honey and milk (no alcohol)**
South Africa's beloved warm hug in a mug
- ☕ **Amarula hot chocolate**
Cream liqueur made from the South African marula fruit, stirred into cocoa
- ☕ **Pinotage by the glass**
A South African red varietal, easy and warming for relaxed sipping

Run of show

- 7:00** **Soft landing**
Greet guests with rooibos and a blanket on every chair. Let people settle and graze.
- 7:20** **Warm-up share**
Go around with the two warm-up questions while plates get filled.
- 7:40** **Main course and theme talk**
Serve the stew and vetkoek, work through the theme questions gently.
- 8:20** **Dessert and deep dive**
Bring out melktert and Amarula cocoa. Slow down into the two deep questions.
- 8:50** **Trivia and bookmarks**
Play a low-key trivia round and hand out bookmarks as keepsakes.
- 9:10** **Scorecards and goodnights**
Fill out scorecards together, share one-word reactions, send everyone home warm.

HOST TIPS

- Keep lighting low and lamp-based, with a few candles for that fireside feel.
- Pre-plate desserts so the conversation never has to pause for serving.
- If a question stalls, share your own answer first to keep the mood inviting, not quiz-like.

Playlist

warm, soulful South African sounds with a gentle, living-room glow

- 01 Pata Pata - Miriam Makeba
- 02 Asimbonanga - Johnny Clegg & Savuka
- 03 Homeless - Ladysmith Black Mambazo & Paul Simon
- 04 Weekend Special - Brenda Fassie
- 05 Stimela - Hugh Masekela
- 06 Ndihamba Nawe - Mafikizolo
- 07 Diamonds on the Soles of Her Shoes - Paul Simon
- 08 Thula Baba - Lira

Trivia

1. In what country does Born a Crime take place? (South Africa)
2. What late-night TV show did Trevor Noah host after this book came out? (The Daily Show)
3. What is the name of Trevor's mother, who is at the heart of the memoir? (Patricia)
4. Roughly what year was Trevor Noah born, making his existence 'a crime' under apartheid law? (1984)
5. What is the name of the system of racial segregation that shaped Trevor's early childhood? (Apartheid)
6. Trevor is known for speaking many languages. Name any two languages he grew up using. (Any two of: English, Xhosa, Zulu, Afrikaans, Sotho, Tswana)
7. In what year was Born a Crime first published? (2016)
8. What South African township features heavily in Trevor's childhood stories? (Soweto (also acceptable: Alexandra))

Rate the book

Warmth ☆☆☆☆☆

Humor ☆☆☆☆☆

Heart ☆☆☆☆☆

Storytelling Voice ☆☆☆☆☆

Cozy Re-read Factor ☆☆☆☆☆

One word for how this book made me feel: _____

A moment I want to remember: _____

Who I want to read this next: _____

YOU'RE INVITED

Stew, Stories, and Trevor Noah

Bring your softest sweater and your favorite reading memory. We're gathering for warm mugs, comfort food, and a cozy chat about Born a Crime.



Plan your own book club night

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