

DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR ZERO O’CLOCK

1. Why do you think Geth Montego is so fascinated by the boy band BTS? What purpose do music and fandom play in her life?
2. Geth has OCD. What does Geth say about how the public’s perception of the disorder differs from the reality? How does the pandemic affect her OCD?
3. Through much of the book, Geth wears a smiley-face mask. What do you think the mask represents? How does Geth’s attitude toward wearing masks change from the beginning of the book to the end?
4. Several times, Geth talks about the foxes that are infesting her neighborhood. Why do you think she is so interested in foxes? What do they symbolize to her?
5. How does the spread of the pandemic affect the various merchants in Geth’s neighborhood? How do those reactions differ?
6. How does Geth fail to be a good friend and ally to Tovah and how does she change by the end of the novel?
7. Quade’s family is rich and successful. Why does he turn against Diego?
8. How do you think Geth’s interactions with the police throughout the book inspire her decision to join the Black Lives Matter movement by the end?
9. How do Geth’s playlists reflect her changing attitude toward Kevin?
10. Why are Geth and Karhakonha initially at odds? Why do they eventually develop a closer bond?
11. How do the books Geth reads for school—*The Plague*, *The Catcher in the Rye*, and *Lord of the Flies*—help her to better understand the pandemic happening around her? How do those books, in her view, fall short?
12. Geth and her friends frequently communicate by text, often using emojis. Do you think text is an adequate substitute for face-to-face communication? Do emojis help you show more emotions or do they limit your range of expression?
13. Why is Geth drawn to the streaming series *Text Z for Zombie*? How does the plot of the show reflect what Geth experiences during the early months of the pandemic?
14. Geth talks about how the philosophy of Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung played a large role in BTS’s music. How does Jungian imagery show up in Quade’s rally in the woods?
15. In the book, Geth talks about the fact there are different kinds of loneliness and different kinds of grief. What kinds of grief have you experienced? What kinds of loneliness have you lived through?
16. Geth does a lot of shopping at Open Market. Why do you think that is? And do you think her beverage of choice—pomegranate juice—has any particular significance?
17. What connections do you see between the poem “Ozymandias” by Percy Bysshe Shelley and the demise of the Ozy theater chain in the novel?
18. Geth becomes obsessed with getting into Columbia University. Why is it so important to her? Do you think people get too worked up about getting into certain schools?



ZERO O’CLOCK | by C.J. Farley
Pub. Date: September 7, 2022 | 288 pages | Young Adult Fiction
Trade paperback original, \$15.95, ISBN: 978-1-61775-975-8 | E-book, \$15.99, E-ISBN: 978-1-61775-992-5
Review copies upon request | Digital review copies via Edelweiss | BLACK SHEEP, AN IMPRINT OF AKASHIC BOOKS
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