

Sophie McKenzie has returned with a new enticing thriller **Blood Ties**, which we think is more than gripping enough to become Red House's book of the month and worthy of becoming your very own book group's chosen text. Yet again we've racked our brains and come up with some activities for you to do with your friends and questions for you to ponder over. But with some serious issues involved get ready for some deep and meaningful conversations to flow!

Blood Ties Discussion Questions

- Is Theo's mum being fair by keeping his past from him? Why?
- Do you become angry at the way Rachel is treated by her parents?
- Were you surprised to find out that Max was a girl?
- Should Rachel stick up for herself when she is faced with bullies? How did it make you feel when she finally humiliates Jemima? Imagine that you are still at the party after Theo and Rachel have left, what are Jemima and her cruel crew saying now?
- Who is more threatening to Theo and Rachel- RAGE or Elijah?
- How do Rachel and Theo's views of each other alter throughout the novel?
- Did you fear for the characters at any point in the book?
- What was your reaction when Theo met Daniel? What would you feel in the same situation?
- Were you surprised at what happened to Mel?

Blood Ties Activities

- Elijah created a super stylish yet daunting underground lair in which to carry out his work. Put your heads together with your mates and come up with an impressive lair for Elijah, where he can carry out his experiments and gather together his clones. What technology would you add to stop people escaping? Or would you choose to make the lair so exciting that no one would want to escape? Keep in mind that Theo and Rachael managed to escape, so you need to make your plan fool proof!
- Boys – **this activity is for girls only!** Merge your wardrobes and grab your make-up for your ultimate get together. Rachel suffers from self-image problems and was in need of a makeover to increase her confidence, which was sure to get some flattering comments from boys like Theo. So get on your gladrags and make each other look your most glam.
- Are you all in a thoroughly argumentative mood for an exciting debate? There are loads of important and interesting issues that come to play within the novel, and its time for you to rant about them. The most fun way to do this is split your friends into two groups and give each of them a particular side of the argument, which makes sure that you can see both sides of the story. So even if you don't believe what you are arguing for, you must find reasons to agree. This is a lot of fun as you really have to act to show that you agree with what you actually completely disagree with! So here's one huge issue to start you off:
 - Is genetic engineering wrong?