

THE DERBY DAREDEVILS

KENZIE KICKSTARTS A TEAM



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Discussion Questions for *The Derby Daredevils: Kenzie Kickstarts a Team*, by Kit Rosewater/Illustrated by Sophie Escabasse

The Usual Suspects (Questions you kind of answer about all the books you're reading these days):

- What was your favorite part of the book?
- What was your least favorite?
- Did you race to the end, or did you take your time with it?
- What did you think of the writing?
- Would you want to read another book by this author?
- Would you read another book in this series?
- Which characters would you like to meet in real life?
- Do you wish the ending had been different?
- Would the book make a cool movie? Video game? TV show?
- What is one thing you could ask the author if you could talk to him or her?

Questions about *Kenzie Kickstarts a Team* (specifically about this book: these are the thinking/talking questions!):

In *Kenzie Kickstarts a Team*, Kenzie calls herself "Kenzilla" and Shelly calls herself "Bomb Shell". Make up a derby name for yourself! You can play with your own name, or make up a totally new name for yourself. Some ideas to help you:

1. Write a list of words that you like or that inspire you.
2. Write a list of action words that describe you or that you want to describe you.
3. Look rhymes or cool sayings, like "Captain Chaos" or "Major Mayhem".
4. Use a dictionary or thesaurus to find words that are like the words you chose.

Create a poster to tell people about your roller derby team! What would you draw? Be sure to include when the tryouts are!

Kenzie's dad is transgender, and Kenzie thinks of his "beforre" stories like the stories of an undercover agent with a big secret. Do you ever think of yourself as someone different, like a secret agent or a superhero?

Why does Kenzie think Tomoko will be good at roller skating? How does she convince Tomoko to join the team?

Why does Kenzie get upset when Shelly and Tomoko become friends?

Coach Mambo tells Kenzie that she can't control change; she just has to "focus on how you pivot and skate forward". How does this work for real life and for roller derby?

When Kenzie thinks that "the M&M brain wasn't working the way it used to", it's because Shelly thinks differently from Kenzie. Does that mean their friendship isn't working? Why or why not?

When Kenzie thinks about Bree, she begins to understand how her dad felt in his "before" stories. What do you think that means?

Kenzie and her friends need to promote their team to get more potential members! What are some ways you would pick to get the word out about your team?

Kenzie tells little lies to Julia and Camila to get them interested in joining the team. Is that fair to the two girls? Why or why not?

Kenzie thinks that Shelly kicked her out of the Dynamic Duo in favor of Tomoko. Is it possible to have more than one good friend? Why or why not?

All of the girls make the team even though they weren't the winners. Mambo said the scrimmages (test bouts) were held to see how everyone worked together. What is more important to you: working as a team, or working as a group of people interested only in themselves? Why?

Roller Derby Positions

A team's full lineup for a jam will consist of one Pivot, three Blockers and one Jammer. Each team may field up to five players for each jam.

- Pivot - The pivot blocker wears a helmet cover with a stripe on it. She generally starts at the first starting line and serves as the leader of her teammates playing in that jam. As most teams play the pivot position at the front of the pack, she is also often the last line of defense to stop the opposing jammer from escaping the pack.
- Blocker - The other three blockers do not wear helmet covers. All blockers may all play offense and defense at any given time and frequently switch between offensive and defensive tasks. The rules do not differentiate the remaining three blocking positions from one another. However most roller derby teams choose to assign names and focus areas to the blocking positions for strategic purposes.
- Jammer - The jammer wears a helmet cover with a star on it. She lines up at the second starting line and begins play at the second start whistle. The jammer's goal is to pass opposing blockers and emerge from the pack as quickly as possible. If she is the first of the two jammers to escape the pack without committing any penalties, she gains the strategic advantage of being able to stop the jam at any time by placing her hands on her hips. Once a jammer laps the pack, she begins scoring one point for every opposing blocker she passes legally. She can continue to lap the pack for additional scoring passes for the duration of the jam.

(Source: Women's Flat Track Derby Association, <https://wftda.org/faq/derby-positions>)

Roller Derby Lingo

assist—a motion administered by one player to help another player (usually the jammer) gain advantage. An assist can include pushing, pulling, redirecting, or *whipping* another skater.

blocker—a skater whose job is to stop or block the other team's *jammer* from passing while also enabling her own team's jammer to score. Typically, there are four blockers per team on the track, including the *pivot*. The remaining blocker positions are often referred to by number: *two*, *three*, and *four*, usually with the pivot at the front and the four at the back.

bout—one roller derby 'game' or 'match,' which lasts 60 minutes and, per WFTDA 4.0, is divided into two 30 minute periods.

hip check—a bump delivered using the hips while skating immediately next to the target.

hip whip—a form of assist in which a player (usually the jammer) grabs her teammate's hips to swing herself forward.

hit—when a skater makes forceful contact with another skater.

jam—a two-minute period during which the action happens. The jam may last less than two minutes if the *lead jammer* decides to *call off the jam*. There may be any number of jams in a *bout*.

jammer—the skater on the track who can score points. The jammer is identifiable by the star on her helmet. The jammer starts each jam behind the pack. After she has lapped the pack once (known as a *nonscoring pass*), she is eligible to score points for each subsequent skater she laps.

lap—verb: to make one full pass through the pack; noun: one full pass through the pack. Note that this may take more than just one trip around the length of the track. Can also be used to describe the length of the track (e.g., from jammer line to jammer line).

pack—the mass of blockers from both teams skating around the track together. Each jammer's goal is to get through or around the pack.

pads—protective gear required for skaters: wristguards, elbow pads, and knee pads. Skaters are additionally required to wear a helmet and mouthguard.

referee—or *ref*, also known as a *zebra*. An enforcer of the rules. Referees are dressed in black and white stripes and have whistles so that they can start and end jams and draw attention to penalties. *Jam refs* keep track of jammers, while *pack refs* (some inside the track boundary and some outside) keep track of the pack.

wall—when two or more blockers skate side-by-side to create a multi-player block to contain another team's player(s).

whip—an *assist* technique wherein one skater uses another skater's momentum to propel herself. For example, a jammer may grab a blocker's arm, and the blocker will use her power and momentum to pull the jammer forward.

(Source: Silicon Valley Roller Girls: <https://svrollergirls.wordpress.com/roller-derby-a-glossary/>)



ROLLERGIRL IN TRAINING

Source: UrbanThreads.com

Want to learn more about roller derby?

Junior Roller Derby Association: <https://www.juniorrollerderby.org/>

The JRDA has junior league listings from all over the world: the U.S., Canada, Australia, Europe, and the UK! Find leagues here:

<https://www.juniorrollerderby.org/page/show/2532276-jrda-member-leagues>

United Kingdom Roller Derby Association: <https://ukrda.org.uk/>

Women's Flat Track Derby Association: <https://wftda.com/>

Sampling of Roller Derby Leagues:

Gotham Girls Junior Roller Derby (NYC):

<https://www.gothamgirlsrollerderby.com/about-ggjd>

Houston Roller Derby Juniors (TX): <https://houstonrollerderby.com/juniors>

London Roller Derby Junior League: <https://londonrollergirls.com/teams/junior-league/>

Peninsula Junior Derby (CA):

<https://www.peninsularollergirls.org/peninsula-junior-derby-1>

Philly Roller Derby Juniors (PA): <https://phillyrollerderby.com/juniors/about-prdj/>

Rose City Rollers Junior Rosebuds (OR):

<https://www.rosecityrollers.com/league/#junior-rosebuds>

Santa Cruz Derby Groms (CA): <https://www.santacruzderbygroms.com/>

Roller Derby Reads



Derby Daredevils #2: Shelly Struggles to Shine, by Kit Rosewater - the second book in the Derby Daredevils series is written from Shelly's point of view. The Daredevils are officially part of the junior roller derby league and getting ready for their first tournament, and Shelly is trying to figure out what she's best at, so she can take home the Star Skater award.



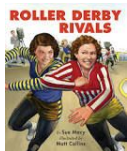
Dorothy's Derby Chronicles: Rise of the Undead Redhead/Woe of Jane Doe, by Meghan Dougherty - Two-book series (I'm still waiting for a third!) about an up-and-coming roller derby team and a ghost that haunts the roller rink.



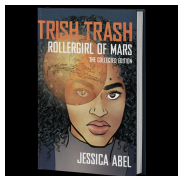
I Know a Girl Who... Skates Roller Derby!, by Robert Anderson - Learn about teamwork, friendship, and fun with Mimi, who shares what she's learned through roller derby.



Roller Girl, by Victoria Jamieson - graphic novel about 12 year-old Astrid, who learns more about herself after she signs up for roller derby while her best friend signs up for dance.



Roller Derby Rivals, by Sue Macy - true story of post-World War II roller derby rivals Toughie Brasuhn and Gerry Murray.



Trish Trash: Rollergirl of Mars, by Jessica Abel - Trish is a 15-year old who works on her aunt and uncle's moisture farm by day, works toward becoming a top jammer on the Martian roller derby team by night.