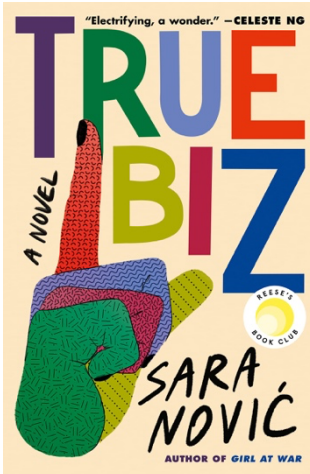


True Biz

By Sara Nović



True biz (adj./exclamation; American Sign Language): really, seriously, definitely, real-talk

True biz? The students at the River Valley School for the Deaf just want to hook up, pass their history finals, and have politicians, doctors, and their parents stop telling them what to do with their bodies. This revelatory novel plunges readers into the halls of a residential school for the deaf, where they'll meet Charlie, a rebellious transfer student who's never met another deaf person before; Austin, the school's golden boy, whose world is rocked when his baby sister is born hearing; and February, the

headmistress, who is fighting to keep her school open and her marriage intact, but might not be able to do both.

This is a story of sign language and lip-reading, disability and civil rights, isolation and injustice, first love and loss, and, above all, great persistence, daring, and joy. Absorbing and assured, idiosyncratic and relatable, this is an unforgettable journey into the Deaf community and a universal celebration of human connection.

Discussion Questions

1. What are some key aspects that you learned about the deaf community?

2. Is True Biz the right title for this novel?

3. Out of the three main storylines – Charlie, Austin and February- which one did you engage most with? Who do you think have the weakest storyline?
4. How would Charlie’s upbringing have been different if she could also have learned ASL?
5. Austin has it all – until it initially appears his sister is born hearing. What impact does this have on Austin and his relationship with his dad?

Thank you to our volunteer Hannah for choosing this title and creating the resource.