

Katherine E. Standefer

Lightning Flowers Book Club Expectations



Thanks for inviting me to join your book club meeting! Authors need (and love!) their readers. After so many years of writing alone, it's a pleasure to get to dive deeper with you—whether we discuss the events of the book, the themes embedded in it, the writing process, particular passages, or the publishing process. Let's dig in!

Because I am a full-time working artist—which means I no longer have a “day job” that pays the bills—my writing, speaking, and one-off teaching engagements are how I earn my living! Since I'm meeting with your book clubs for free, our time together is precious. Below, you'll find some bullet points around how to best respect my time and energy.

- As you probably know, book clubs are often as much social events as they are explorations of a title. If your group typically spends time catching up on your lives or deciding on the next book, consider asking me to arrive a bit later to the conversation. To be clear, I love chatting! But—especially as I battle Zoom fatigue—I have to be careful right now about how much time I allot to an event. And I don't want you to miss out on your important friendship/community check-in time!
- You're responsible for deciding on the structure of our conversation. Though I love teaching and may ask questions of book club participants in discussion, I won't be facilitating or giving a talk. Consider deciding on a “point person” who will introduce me, introduce your book club and/or members, and move our discussion through its various stages. If you want me to prepare a reading from the book, let me know ahead of time if you can. I'm happy to take any questions you might have.

- It's my expectation that the majority of book club participants will have purchased my book. I am a huge fan of libraries—**and** I need to sell many thousands of copies of my book before I will ever see a royalty payment because of the way publishing contracts are designed. (I'm happy to talk more about this in our meeting if you're curious, but essentially the publisher fronted me a certain amount of money to help me write the book at all—known as an “advance”—and I have to earn that amount back before royalty checks begin.) If your book club participants borrowed the book from a library, consider buying copies of *Lightning Flowers* as gifts. Thanks for understanding that book sales are my bread and butter!
- For the same reason, I ask that your book club contain at least six participants. While intimate conversations can be fun, it's not sustainable for me to offer my time to tiny groups as part of this book launch. If your book club is usually micro-sized, consider inviting a few extra friends for this meeting, or merge with another book club for this special event!
- It's my intention to spend 60-90 minutes with book club groups. I'll do my best to establish our timeline with you ahead of time; most will fall right at 60 minutes. If we've been together more than 75 minutes, know that I'm probably looking for the right way to both honor our great conversation and complete our time together. In some cases, I may have two book clubs back to back.
- If you are interested in compensating me financially for our time together, my Venmo name is @Katherine-Standefor-1, my paypal account runs through kestandefor@gmail.com, and my Zelle is linked to the phone number 847-544-8946. I am also a Patreon artist, supported monthly by those who love my writing. Learn more at <https://www.patreon.com/katherinestandefor>. I can't tell you how much I appreciate these offerings.
- You can also support my book in the world by: posting about it (and our gathering!) on social media; talking about it with your friends; liking & commenting on posts about it; scheduling me for events through your organizations and schools; telling local bookstores to bring me in; leaving a positive review on Amazon, Goodreads, or other book sites; ordering it through a variety of independent bookstores so they know they should stock *LF*; or attending my book events (find them at katherinestandefor.com/calendar).
- Please prioritize ordering the book through independent booksellers rather than Amazon, which is a predatory organization that makes it harder both for

authors to earn a living and for publishers and bookstores to stay afloat, while also boasting a terrible environmental and labor record. (*Lightning Flowers* is a book about ethical supply chains. Gently ask yourself: are “easy, low-cost and high-speed” the values I believe in most, when those attributes come about at a cost to authors, employees, small businesses, and the environment?)

- My assistant Kristen will be sending you a list of discussion questions. These are geared toward groups conducting their conversation without me present, so they may not be perfect for our experience together. (Most book clubs are more interested in aspects of my book writing process.) However, distributing these questions to your group members for their consideration during and after reading can enrich our conversation.

Thank you for so thoughtfully engaging with Lightning Flowers, and for inviting me to meet with you!

Warmly,
Kati