

## December 2023: Gender Queer Discussion Questions

*Note: Maia Kohabe uses non-binary pronouns as she does not identify as either female or male. These pronouns are e, eir and em. They are used for she or he, their and them.*

1. Gender Queer has several scenes that are sexually explicit and are often cited in censorship challenges in school districts. What would change if these scenes were omitted or heavily censored to avoid any depictions of sexually explicit material?
2. Media and art are important for Kohabe's self-discovery. From music to books, e seeks out art that reflects emself. What is a piece of media that has helped you understand yourself, and how does that relate to Kohabe's experiences?
3. How do Kohabe's metaphors for gender evolve and change over me? Think back to eir use of the two-half souls, the scale, and the sleeping seed. What aspects of eir conception of gender become more nuanced or change entirely over me?
4. Examine how Kohabe's art and text interact. Does the text ever become inseparable from the art? How does font choice impact art and vice versa?
5. Kohabe began writing Gender Queer partly to explain eir gender identity to eir parents. Gender Queer began as a comic series on Instagram. How does this purpose shape the way Kohabe writes and depicts scenes?
6. Who do you think is the primary audience for Kohabe's work? Consider what jargon is used and what is defined and undefined.
7. What would change if Gender Queer was written entirely in prose with no pictures? What does the graphic novel medium give to the story?
8. Fan culture and LGBTQ+ culture are tied together in Kohabe's story. How does fan culture allow Kohabe to explore eir identities and feelings? Why might fandom and fanfiction writing be popular with LGBTQ+ people?
9. Kohabe fears that being honest about eir identity in the classroom would be "too political" but does not give any context for this statement. Kohabe also attends a trans rights march but does not give any context for the march. What recent events might make em feel this way?
10. Kohabe uses an art style of simple lines and solid, flat colors. At one point, somebody calls Kohabe masterful at cross-hatching, a technique used to create shading effects with closely clustered parallel lines. This technique is not present in Gender Queer. Why did Kohabe use this art style? Consider the art styles of other graphic novels or comics and compare them against Kohabe's style. Discussion questions adapted from Super Summa.

*Source: coloradovirtuallibrary.org*