

Free
LIBRARY OF
PHILADELPHIA



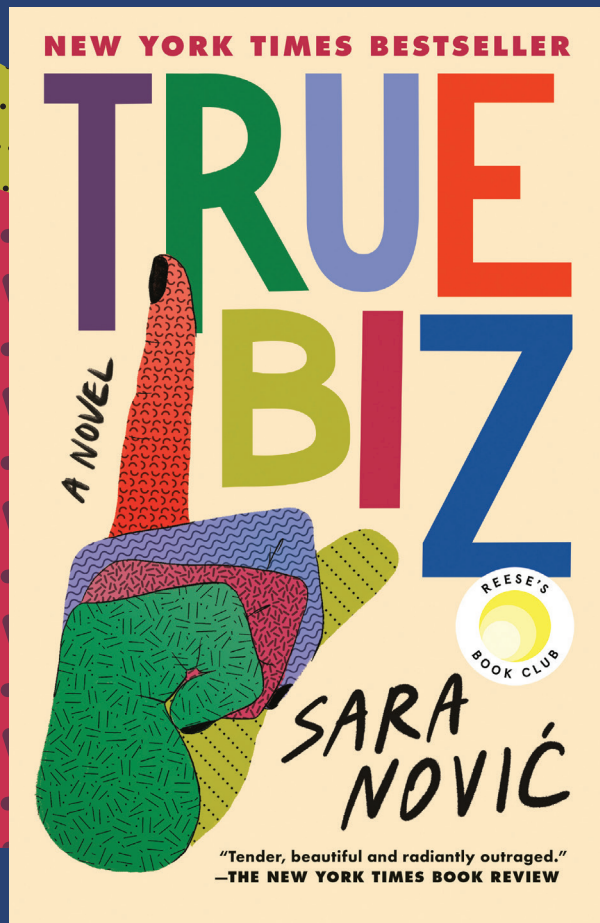
PROGRAMMING GUIDE

April 8 to May 22

Join us for the 2024 season of One Book, One Philadelphia,
and participate in a series of events for all ages
inspired by three incredible books.

2024 **ONE BOOK**
ONE PHILADELPHIA

[free.library.org/onebook](https://www.free.library.org/onebook)



True Biz by Sara Nović

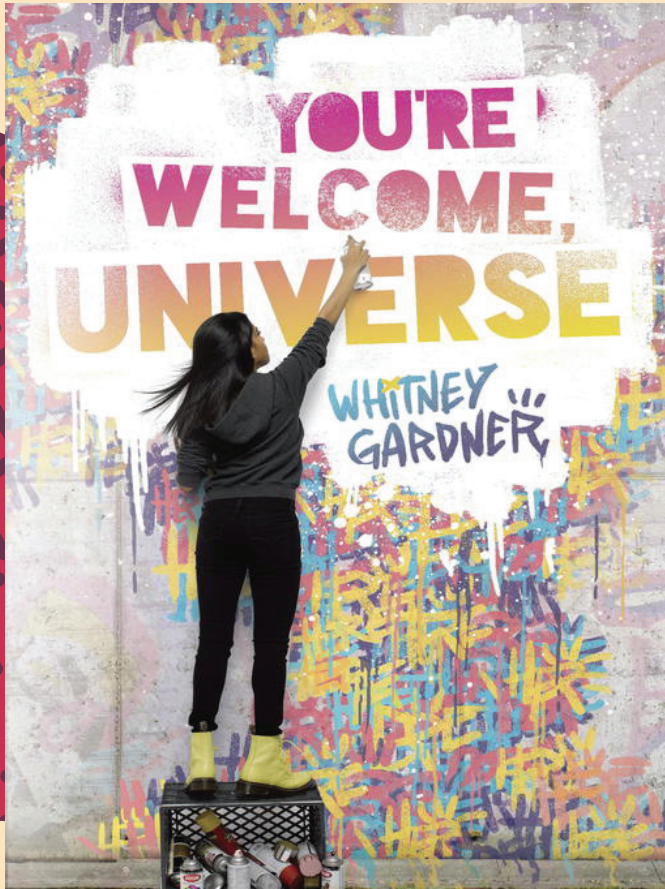
The River Valley School for the Deaf is something of a haven for teens who just want to do the things every other hearing teen gets to do. When the school faces threat of closure, the three characters at the center of this novel—Charlie, a new student at River Valley; Austin, the golden boy from a long line of deaf family; and February, the Headmistress of the school—all struggle with what this might mean for their lives. Focusing on themes of belonging, autonomy, and the importance of self-expression, *True Biz* explores the rich history and culture of the Deaf community.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



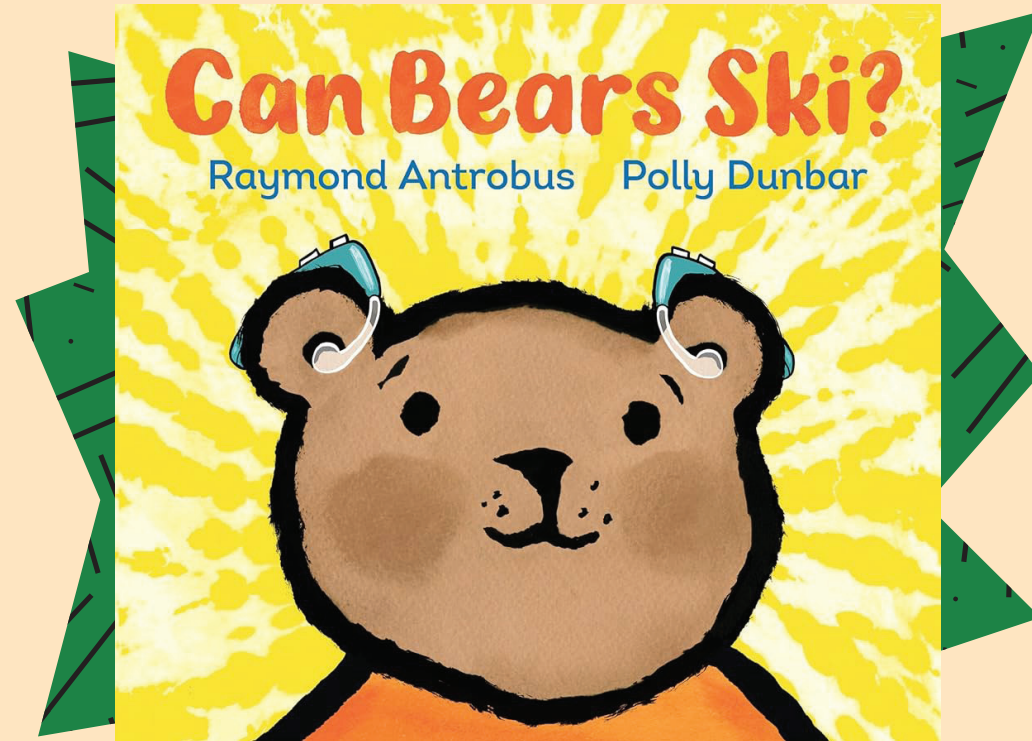
Sara Nović is an author, translator, and educator with an MFA in fiction and literary translation from Columbia University. She is the author of the two bestselling novels *Girl at War* and *True Biz*. Nović is a deaf rights activist and has written about Deaf culture for the New York Times, Slate, and the Washington Post. She lives in Philadelphia.

YOUTH COMPANION



You're Welcome, Universe by Whitney Gardner

When Julia finds a slur scrawled on the wall of her school, Kingston School for the Deaf, she covers it up with a mural of her own. But when she is expelled for her illegal graffiti, she finds herself the only deaf student at her new school. Julia's art is her only outlet in this new environment. She soon realizes she may not be the only graffiti artist in town.



Can Bears Ski?

written by Raymond Antrobus
illustrated by Polly Dunbar

Little Bear feels the world around him. He feels his bed rumble when Dad Bear wakes him up in the morning. He feels the floor shake when his teacher stomps to get his attention. But something else is missing. One day, Little Bear learns that he has been experiencing deafness and will start wearing hearing aids. Little Bear's new world is LOUD and will take some getting used to, but with the love and support of Dad Bear, he will find his way.

JOIN US

April 8 to May 22
for events for all ages.
All events are FREE.

One Book, One Philadelphia 2024 programs include:

BOOK DISCUSSIONS

STORYTIMES AND
READ-ALOUDS

WRITING WORKSHOPS

ART PROGRAMS

FILM SCREENINGS

AND MORE!



Find all events at freelibrary.org/onebook under the Events tab, where you'll find more information about dates, times, locations, and registration.

PROGRAM PARTNERS

The Free Library is proud to partner with organizations across the city to present this year's One Book, One Philadelphia programming. Find events with these partners and more, at freelibrary.org/onebook.

- Building Anti-Racist White Educators (BARWE)
- Deaf-Hearing Communication Centre
- Iffy Books
- The Language and Life Project at NC State University
- Mighty Writers
- Penn ASL/Deaf Studies Program
- Pennsylvania School for the Deaf
- School District of Philadelphia
- Wooden Shoe Books

Want to Learn ASL?

The best way to get signing is to learn from a Deaf teacher! Here are some recommendations for Deaf-led ASL instruction and resources. *Excerpted from True Biz Book Club Guide, courtesy of Penguin Random House.*

Courses

ASL Connect from Gallaudet University

virtual courses, including free intro course
gallaudet.edu/asl-connect/asl-for-free

Deaf-Hearing Communication Centre

available online and in-person in the Philadelphia metro area
dhcc.org/resources/aslclasses

ASL at Home

a family curriculum
[Aslathome.org](https://aslathome.org)

Sign On

by the session classes
[Signonconnect.com](https://signonconnect.com)

ASL Video Dictionaries

[Lifelprint.com](https://lifelprint.com)
[Aslpro.cc](https://aslpro.cc)
[Gcdasl.com](https://gcdasl.com)

Apps

The ASL App
Marlee Signs (iOS only)

FEATURED PROGRAMS

at Parkway Central Library

1901 Vine Street

One Book, One Philadelphia Kickoff Celebration

A Conversation with Sara Nović and Melissa Draganac-Hawk

Monday, April 8, 7:30 p.m.

Montgomery Auditorium

To officially start the new season of One Book, One Philadelphia, join us for a conversation between 2024 featured author Sara Nović and Melissa Draganac-Hawk, Head of School at the Pennsylvania School for the Deaf.

Books will be available for purchase at the library on event night.

A book signing will follow the presentation.

Philadelphia Signs Project: What is Philly ASL?

Panel Discussion and Lecture

Thursday, April 18, 7:00 p.m.

Skyline Room

Did you know that there's a Philly dialect of American Sign Language? Three researchers—Drs. Julie Hochgesang, Jami Fisher, and Meredith Tamminga—have done extensive work conducting interviews with Deaf and Hard of Hearing Philadelphians who use ASL on a regular basis. They have learned that ASL comes to reflect linguistic and sociocultural experiences from deaf perspectives. Drs. Hochgesang and Fisher will present with Domonic Gourdin, who conducts interviews with the project. Come to learn about what makes Philly ASL unique and the ethics of conducting research within Deaf communities.

Anarcho-Curious at the Free Library

Panel Discussion and Audience Conversation

Wednesday, May 1, 7:00 p.m.

Skyline Room

Slash and his friends in *True Biz* present an image of anarchism rarely seen in the news. For those who want to learn more, Anarcho-Curious at the Free Library expands the Anarcho-Curious program periodically hosted by Wooden Shoe Books. The event includes three speakers: Kim Kelly, author of *Fight Like Hell: The Untold History of American Labor*; Andrew Lee, author of *Defying Displacement: Urban Recomposition and Social War*; and the abolitionist educator and organizer Felicia Teter. Kelly, Lee, and Teter will share their stories and an outline of what anarchism means to them. Then, attendees will break into conversation groups to ask questions and discuss. Curious about anarchism? Join us!

One Book, One Philadelphia Finale Celebration

A Conversation with Sara Nović and Ilya Kaminsky

Wednesday, May 22, 7:30 p.m.

Montgomery Auditorium

Join us at 7:30 p.m. at the Parkway Central Library for a celebration to conclude the One Book, One Philadelphia 2024 season, featuring a conversation between *True Biz* author Sara Nović and poet Ilya Kaminsky, author of 2019 National Book Award finalist *Deaf Republic*.

Books will be available for purchase at the library on event night.

A book signing will follow the presentation.



For all in-person events, please register at freelibrary.org/onebook. All events are FREE.



Discussion Guide Questions

Excerpted from *True Biz Book Club Guide*,
courtesy of Penguin Random House.

1. How much knowledge did you have about the Deaf community and/or ASL before you started *True Biz*? In what ways did the novel reflect or augment your understanding?
2. Which character did you identify with most, and why?
3. The conversation around cochlear implants can get thorny quickly, which Nović illustrates throughout the novel with lines like “She’s read about . . . parents deemed negligent for opting against surgery” and “Isolation was a requirement of the implant, her doctor cautioned.” For Charlie, a defective device and poor instruction from doctors and parents leads to “oral failure” and a host of other issues. For other Deaf children, the procedure is so prohibitively expensive it isn’t even a consideration. Discuss the pros and cons of cochlear implants, and the ethical considerations for parents, medical professionals, and device manufacturing companies, citing examples from the novel.
4. How does *True Biz* explore the ways the experiences of Deaf children, teens, adults, and elderly people differ?
5. February is hearing but is headmistress of a Deaf school. Did you have any concerns about this? Why or why not?
6. Nović shows so many varied examples of d/Deaf families and childhoods, from Charlie’s ambivalent parents, to Austin’s celebrated generations of Deaf folks, to Kayla’s experiences code-switching from Black ASL to ASL, to the horrifying abuse Eliot suffers at his mother’s church. Compare and contrast the experiences each student had growing up, and how those experiences helped mold them into the young adults they’ve become.
7. Discuss Charlie’s relationship with her mother. What, if anything, do they owe each other?
8. What kind of responsibility did February have growing up as the child of Deaf parents? How are her childhood experiences similar to those of children of immigrants?
9. Why does February confide in Wanda over Mel about the closing of River Valley? Do you think this was a betrayal? Why or why not?
10. February’s curriculum is interspersed throughout the novel. Describe the effect this had on your reading experience.
11. Like all teenagers, the young adult characters in the novel occupy one of life’s in-between stages—as Austin notes when he’s sifting through magazines at the doctor’s office. “All of them were either adult in the worst way . . . or too childish.” In what other ways do the characters—including the adults—straddle two or more different worlds? If each character were at the center of a different Venn diagram, how would you label the circles?

Acknowledgements

One Book, One Philadelphia

Kelly Richards, President and Director, Free Library of Philadelphia

Monique Moore Pryor, Executive Director, Free Library of Philadelphia Foundation

Terence Washington, Program Director

Nell Mittelstead, Program Assistant

Thank you to our 2024 sponsors for making this season of One Book, One Philadelphia possible:

**Marie and
Joseph Field**



THE SYLVIA W. AND RANDLE M.
**KAUDERS
FOUNDATION**



Special thanks to:

Our featured author, **Sara Nović**, for their incredible generosity.

The One Book Selection Committee members along with Free Library staff and friends, for their contributions:

Jenny Bogoni, Legacy Comms, Jason Freeman, Rachel Fryd, Alix Gerz, Susan Gould, Katherine Gulick, Falena Hand, Sandy Horrocks, Andy Kahan, Charlie McGeehan, Alison McMonagle, Nell Mittelstead, Mieka Moody, Michelle Myers, Larissa Pahomov, Shara Pollie, Katherine Protil, Monique Moore Pryor, Lindo Reyes, Shelley Rosen, Valerie Taylor Samuel, Cherise Shane and Jamie Wilson.

**2024 ONE BOOK
ONE PHILADELPHIA**

 free.library.org/onebook