

Discussion Guide: *Just Ash*

1. After Ash gets his period, why do you think people start assuming he's a girl?
2. How does Ash feel when people misgender him and pressure him to present as a girl?
3. When people perceive Ash as a girl, how do they treat him differently than they would treat a guy? Consider Corey, Tyler, and Naia.
4. What parallels does Ash see between himself and Salem's accused witches in the 1690s?
5. What does Michelle tell Ash about her experience as one of the few Black people in Salem? How is this similar to and different from Ash's experience as an intersex guy?
6. What does Ash learn from attending InterPersonal meetings? What is something he discovers that surprised you as a reader?
7. Compare Ariel's feelings about being intersex to Thomas's. Why do you think their relationships with their bodies are so different?
8. How do you feel about the way Ash ultimately gets his mother to drop the custody battle? If you were in Ash's position, what do you think you would do?
9. Ariel tells Ash that Ash's parents have been abusive, a label that surprises Ash. What are some examples of his parents' emotional and psychological abuse? How is his mother's abuse different from his father's?
10. What do you think of Ash's reflection that "a lot of the grief I'd gotten over the past year was because my body committed the unpardonable sin of being part female"?