

AND THEN WE SCREAMED



10th Sept 2026

The mind-blowing new novel full of mystery, conspiracy and dark secrets from bestselling Holly Bourne, for fans of Kathleen Glasgow and e. lockhart

Everything was perfect in the small town of Maple Lakes...until the cheerleaders started screaming.

When cheerleader Abigail starts screaming in the middle of an exam, people laugh. But as more girls start breaking into uncontrollable screaming fits, it's clear something is seriously wrong.

Book Club Questions

1. In this book, the author intersperses the narrative with excerpts of the documentary which takes place five years after the events of the novel. Why do you think the author chose to write the book in this way?
2. Discuss how the small-town setting of Maple Lakes adds to the feeling of unease as the girls start screaming.
3. At the beginning of the documentary, Clover remarks "The first girl to scream was a cheerleader. Typical, really. I always wonder how differently things would've gone if someone less popular than Abigail Maiden had started screaming".
 - i. Think of other representations of cheerleaders you have seen in books, films and TV and discuss these in relation to Clover's statement. How does Abigail compare to them?
 - ii. Imagine one of the other screamers, such as Miss Finley, was Patient Zero, what impact do you think this would have had on the events of the novel?
4. As the novel progresses, we learn the harrowing reason why so many people are screaming. How did this reveal make you feel? Was it the reason you expected?
5. Amidst the horror of the events of this novel, a heartwarming romance starts to blossom between Clover and Brody. Discuss how Brody's reaction to Clover's screaming compares to Travis and his treatment of Abi before and after she starts screaming.
6. Look at the final excerpt of the documentary from p.377-383. Discuss how this ending made you feel.
7. Both Pastor Maiden and Kyra Spelling reject Dr Gillian Abelman's diagnosis that the screamers are all suffering from a mass psychogenic illness. What do you think of their arguments? Can you think of any real-life events where people have reacted in a similar way to Pastor Maiden and Kyra Spelling?
8. The author was inspired by real-life stories of social contagions and the theories behind them, plus the rise of "scream clubs". How does this real-world element impact your reading of the novel?

hollybourne.co.uk

 hollybourneya

 @usborneya

USBORNE