

The Six by Loren Grush Discussion Questions

1. Each of the Six blazed a different path to become an astronaut. Which path did you find the most interesting? Which was the most unlikely?
2. The Six had to endure many difficult, tedious and at times seemingly random trials in their preparation to become astronauts --- everything from mental math to flying fighter jets. Which trials were the most interesting or surprising to you? What would you have struggled with?
3. The story of the Six is filled with rich side characters, including Nichelle Nichols, Jerrie Cobb, George Abbey, Carolyn Huntoon, Bob Crippen and so many more. Who stuck out to you as endearing? Who added the most to your personal experience with this book?
4. How did you feel reading about the sexism the Six faced? Did any instances of sexism particularly surprise or anger you?
5. At the July 1962 House subcommittee hearings on qualifications for astronauts, astronaut John Glenn said, "Let me preface my remarks by one statement: I am not 'anti' any particular group. I'm just pro-space." Discuss the parallels with cultural discourse today. How much do you agree with this statement?
6. A lot has changed since the era of the Six --- but maybe not as much as we thought. What is the same and what is different about attitudes surrounding representation and diversity in the 1970s and '80s versus now?
7. For Americans especially, the *Challenger* explosion was one of the most significant events of the 20th century. How did the knowledge of Judy Resnik's death shape your reading experience? How did the context of the *Challenger* explosion influence what you took away from the other missions, which were generally celebratory occasions?