



Book Club in a Bag

Brother **by David Chariandy**

1. Did you enjoy Chariandy's narrative technique of alternating between a present-day story and flashbacks? What is the effect of telling the story in this style?
2. Describe the family dynamics in Michael's family. How were the relationships between Michael, Francis, their mother, and their father?
3. How does Michael and Francis's relationship as brothers evolve over the course of the events depicted in *Brother*? Of the flashbacks to their childhood, which event(s) have the biggest impact on their relationship and why?
4. The older figures in Michael and Francis' world are immigrants, although they themselves are Canadian-born. How does Chariandy incorporate the themes of foreignness and loss of home through the different characters' eyes?
5. What picture is the author attempting to paint of Scarborough where *Brother* is set? Do you think the story is specific to the setting, or is it more universal?
6. Discuss the ways that music and food enrich the telling of *Brother*.
7. Do you think Ruth was a good mother to Michael and Francis while they were growing up? Why or why not? How do Ruth's attitudes and aspirations differ from those of her sons? When in the novel do parents and children appear distant from each other, and when do they connect?
8. Discuss Francis's interaction with the police immediately before he gets shot. Could the tragedy have been prevented? In what ways does Francis' death impact Michael, and how does he cope with it?
9. What did you think of *Brother*? What aspects did you enjoy and which aspects did you find challenging in the novel?

The above questions were taken from
<https://www.penguinrandomhouse.ca/books/26281/brother-by-david-chariandy/9780771023330/reading-guide>

Author Biography

David Chariandy was born and raised in Scarborough, Ontario. After earning his degrees, he moved to Vancouver where he is an English professor at the Simon Fraser University. His creative work often addresses themes of racism, class, and belonging.

<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/david-chariandy>

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