

- 1 The author, Stan Sakai, was very influenced by cinema, especially Japanese cinema and the samurai films of director Akira Kurosawa. Did you notice some of the various film references throughout *Usagi Yojimbo*? Which ones stood out to you?
- 2 What did you think of the art style of this book? Later issues of *Usagi Yojimbo* are in color; did you like the black and white elements in this book?
- 3 The book shows numerous depictions of war and violence, yet the story is accessible for younger readers. How does Sakai balance these aspects? What does he say about war?
- 4 The story takes place in the seventeenth century. What elements make it so relatable for readers today?
- 5 The series is notable for being meticulously researched and historically accurate. How does this come through in the story? Do you feel like you learned anything from reading it?
- 6 Usagi is an honorable hero who follows the Bushido code (justice, courage, benevolence, politeness, sincerity, honor, loyalty, and self-control). How does he reflect these virtues? Is he consistent with his values?
- 7 Discuss the relationship between Usagi and Mariko. Could they have ended up together in different circumstances?
- 8 Is this your first time reading *Usagi Yojimbo*? If not, how were you introduced to the series? If so, do you plan to continue reading? What are you looking forward to as it progresses?
- 9 What did you enjoy most about *The Ronin*? What was the most surprising thing about this collection of stories? Would you recommend this to a friend/someone new to comics?
- 10 Have you read other Usagi Yojimbo stories from Stan Sakai? If so, what is your favorite story and why? Perhaps his most notable is *The Grasscutter*—have you made it that far? What did you think?
- 11 Recently, a streaming video adaptation of *Usagi Yojimbo* (*Samurai Rabbit: The Usagi Chronicles*) was released. Have you seen it? If so, what does it get right about the long-running comics series? Are there any notable differences?

