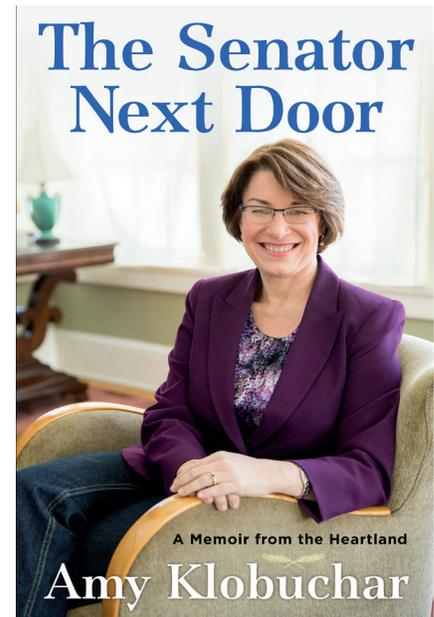


The Senator Next Door

Amy Klobuchar

Discussion Questions

1. In the early chapters of her book, Senator Klobuchar proudly details her family's immigrant experience. How did that experience affect her stance on immigration today? How does your family's experience compare?
2. From grade school through law school, Senator Klobuchar's education played a huge role in shaping her. What aspect of her education do you think benefitted her the most? How has your education affected the person you've become?
3. Throughout her book, Senator Klobuchar stresses the importance of fostering personal and professional relationships. How do you think our government could benefit from her attitude?
4. Senator Klobuchar candidly discusses many of her family's struggles, including the divorce of her parents, her father's path to sobriety, and juggling the demands of work and family. Did you know these personal stories before you read this memoir? Does knowing these stories change your opinion of the Senator? Have you had similar experiences in your family?
5. Do you agree with Senator Klobuchar's stance on bipartisanship? Are there any particular political issues that you think politicians on both sides of the aisle must unite on?
6. What did you find most interesting about the Senator's time in the private sector and as chief prosecutor for Hennepin County? Did any details or aspects of her prior jobs surprise you?
7. In the beginning of Chapter 8, "Running for the Senate," Senator Klobuchar details her thought process leading up to her decision to run for office—ultimately eschewing focus groups and polls in favor of following her own instincts. When faced with a major decision in your own life, such as a career move, how do you handle the situation?
8. Senator Klobuchar put in a ton of legwork to campaign for both Hennepin County Attorney and the U.S. Senate—making countless phone calls, doing scores of parades, and carefully studying up on the issues. What are some campaign efforts from other politicians that have impressed you? Have you ever changed your opinion of political candidates based on the way they ran their campaigns?
9. On page 246, Senator Klobuchar refers to her constituents as “guardian angels...in that they believe that citizen advocacy matters.” Have you ever contacted your local, state, or federal representatives to ask for their assistance advocating for change? What was your experience like? How did your representative respond?



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10. From former Minnesota Secretary of State Joan Growe to Vice President Walter Mondale, Senator Klobuchar credits many mentors with helping guide her political career. Do you have a mentor who has supported you? Have you ever mentored anyone else? Why are these relationships important?
11. In Chapter 7, “Without Fear of Favor,” Senator Klobuchar recalls occasions when she made tough decisions as Hennepin County Attorney. Based on your reading of the entire memoir, what character traits and principles do you think helped guide the Senator? Can you recall other instances of politicians standing up for their decisions even if those decisions were unpopular?
12. Senator Klobuchar is one of only twenty women currently serving in the U.S. Senate. Do you think the Senate would benefit from more women in higher office? Would you like to see women play a larger role in other areas of government?
13. On page 264, Senator Klobuchar writes, “we would be much better off if our citizenry demanded a commitment to long-term governing in the areas of middle class issues (student loans, mortgages, workforce training, family/medical leave, wages).” She also lists “tax reform, infrastructure and scientific/medical research financing, energy and climate change, immigration, and education” as issues needing more attention. Do you agree with this list of priorities? Are there any issues you think should be added or removed?
14. What did you think of Senator Klobuchar’s handling of the I-35W Mississippi River Bridge collapse? How does this compare with the way other elected officials have handled disasters? How did bipartisanship play a role in helping Minnesota recover from this disaster and get the bridge rebuilt?
15. How does *The Senator Next Door* compare to other memoirs you’ve read?
16. After reading *The Senator Next Door*, do you agree with Senator Klobuchar that politics is still the art of the possible?