

Temple Secrets Book Club Discussion Questions

1. Who was your favorite character? Why?
2. What do you think motivated Iris? On the one hand she could be cruel and dismissive to Queenie, yet she had loved Spud Grainger for decades. Do you think she is a sympathetic or unsympathetic character? Why?
3. How much of a person's character would you say is shaped by what has happened in the past, and by past generations?
4. Did it bother you that Queenie was willing to overlook so many of Iris's faults in order to live with Iris? Why?
5. Do you believe that keeping secrets is justified sometimes? Should Queenie have told Violet who she really was from the very beginning? Why?
6. What do you think of Rose coming home to see her mother on her deathbed? In what situations might estrangement from one's family sometimes be necessary for self-preservation?
7. The author paints Old Sally with a quiet grace and an aura of wisdom about her. How do you think she does this? Have you ever had an old wise woman in your life? If so, what was meaningful about your relationship with her?
8. In what ways do you think racism still shows up in relationships where people of color work for people who are white?
9. How was the Temple Book of Secrets an agent of change for the entire family?
10. How did you feel about Edward's seeming redemption at the end of the novel? Discuss people in your life who have seemed totally one way and then who surprised you with something you never knew about them.

11. What role do you see Violet playing in the novel? What did you think of her ability to perceive ghosts? How might her children end up different from her because of her choices?

12. In the final scene, were you hopeful that all of the characters could live together peacefully? If you were to write a sequel for this novel, what do you imagine happening?