



Book Club in a Bag

Discussion Questions

“The Light Between Oceans” by M.L. Stedman

1. When Isabel tries to get Tom to open up about his family, he responds: “I’ll tell you if you really want. It’s just I’d rather not. Sometimes it’s good to leave the past in the past” (pages 44-45). Do you think it is possible to leave the past in the past?
2. Discuss the theme of opposites in “The Light Between Oceans”—darkness and light; safety and danger; land and water; truth and lies. How do these opposing forces shape your reading?
3. Tom believes that rules are vital, that they are what keep a man from becoming a savage. Do you agree with him?
4. Which characters won your sympathy and why? Did this change over the course of the novel? Did your notion of what was best or right shift in the course of your reading?
5. Tom and Isabel’s deception impacts the lives of everyone around them. What did you think of the other characters’ reactions when they discover the truth about Lucy? Consider Hannah, Gwen, Septimus, Isabel’s parents, Ralph, and Bluey.
6. Discuss Hannah’s reunion with Grace. Do you think she had fair expectations? Did you agree with Dr. Sumpton’s advice to Hannah about completely cutting Lucy off from Isabel and Tom?
7. Were you surprised by Isabel’s final decision to admit her role in the choice to keep Lucy—freeing Tom, but losing her child forever? Why or why not? What would you have done?
8. What did you think of the conclusion of the novel? What emotions did you feel at the story’s end? Did it turn out as you expected? Were you satisfied?

The above questions are from Simon & Schuster Canada (2016). Reading Group Guide: The Light Between Oceans. http://www.simonandschuster.ca/books/The-Light-Between-Oceans/M-L-Stedman/9781501106484/reading_group_guide

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