

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Addie MacNeill, an orphan from Prince Edward Island, finds connection with author Lucy Maud Montgomery and her beloved *Anne of Green Gables* heroine, Anne Shirley. Discuss the similarities and differences in the lives of these PEI girls, how those characteristics influenced their writing as they grew, and what that meant to Addie.
2. Addie is sent away to school while grieving the loss of her parents and faces a new life in a new country. Yet, on the ship bound for Boston, kindly Mrs. Simmons befriends her, focusing on her physical needs of food and companionship, on her emotional needs through inviting Addie to pour out her heart, and on her spiritual needs by reminding her that the Lord loves her and she will never be alone. Have you ever been on the receiving end of such a gift in time of need? Have you ever given such a gift, as Mrs. Simmons did? Please share your experience.
3. As a New Girl, Addie has every reason to hope Mildred Hammond, the Old Girl assigned to mentor her, will be kind and help her assimilate into life at Lakeside. Why does Mildred treat Addie as she does? What do you think of Addie's and her friends' responses to Mildred's treatment? Do any of their responses go too far?

4. When the Great War began, many German American families were treated with distrust and in some cases enmity, like the Meyer family, who had not only lived in and contributed to the community, but believed themselves well liked. Do you see any similarities in the treatment of immigrants today?
5. Augusta and Emma, the girls who distribute white feathers to men and teen boys not yet enlisted, believe they are in the right, proving their patriotism in time of war. What do you think of their actions? Were the headmistress or others in any way responsible for the girls' actions? Was there anything Dorothy or Addie might have done to prevent the tragic outcome for Cal Salley?
6. Grieving the loss of her brother, Ruth insists that Addie and Dorothy terminate their relationship with the Meyer family. Do you understand why she felt as she did? Considering the war and the pledge of the girls to stick by one another, were her demands justified?
7. Addie falls in love with Stephen Meyer even as she knows Dot has always harbored dreams of a life with him. Do you think Stephen and Addie were considerate of Dot's feelings? Could they have done anything differently in that regard? Should they have?
8. For many years, Dot guards her shame over her interference in Stephen and Addie's relationship, even keeping the secret from her husband. How does that secret impact her life and her marriage? Do you agree or disagree with her decisions? Why?
9. After the Halifax Explosion, Addie makes a life-altering decision to change her identity and completely sever herself from her past. Do you understand her reasons for doing so? How do you imagine her life might've unfolded differently if she'd remained Adelaide MacNeill?

10. In her new life, Rosaline loses the friendship of the Ladies of the Lake but finds a friend and sister in Portia, who also suffered deep loss in the explosion. How do the two women support each other? How do they differ in processing their grief? What role does faith play in their relationship?
11. At the moment when the world is opening for Bernadette, she learns the truth of her identity and her relationship to Rosaline. How do you think that knowledge will affect their relationship in years to come?
12. The enduring friendships between the Ladies of the Lake—sisters of the heart—make up the core of this story. Do you have any such deep or long-term friendships of your own? Take a moment to share who they are and what they have meant in your life.