General Book Club Questions: Fiction

Use These As Discussion Starters for Any Fiction-Based Book Group

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Creating book club questions can keep discussions fresh and thought-provoking. For fiction books, here are some general questions that can help guide the group.

Most books printed today come with a special discussion section designated for book club groups, either in the back on the book or at an accompanying website. However, for older books or those lacking a book club guide, here are some general questions that can be used as discussion starters for any fiction book club.

Story, Plot and Theme-Based Book Club Questions

1. Was there a particularly striking scene in the novel? Share it with the group, and then discuss why and how it impacted each person.

2. How did the setting affect the plot? Site examples.

3. Was the story well developed, or were there any loopholes that made the book loose its interest?

4. Did the author present the conflict of the book in a realistic context? Were the characters' struggles addressed in a believable way?

5. What motivated the story? Was the novel plot-driven or character-driven? Explain.
6. What was the theme of the novel?

**Character-Focused Book Club Questions**

1. What was your first impression of the characters and how did they (or did they not) evolve for you over the course of the novel?

2. Were the characters believable? Site examples.

3. Was the dialog convincing? Site examples.

4. Was there a minor character that outshined a more central character? Explain.

5. If you could meet any character from this book and ask him or her one question, which would it be and what would you ask? Why?

**Reader-Based Book Club Questions**


2. Share favorite passages of the book with the other group members.

3. Would this novel would make a good movie? Why or why not? Who should be cast as each of the main characters in the group's ideal version of the film?

4. Would the group read more from this author? Why or why not?

**Tips for Formulating Thought-Provoking Book Club Questions**

1. *Keep questions open-ended.* The purpose of a book club is to encourage free-flowing dialog between all the members. Questions should not simply have "yes" or "no" answers, but should promote the members to incorporate their personal insights and opinions to the book and the posed topic.

2. *Involve all the participants.* If forming personalized questions, why not ask each member of the club to come to the next meeting with a question or two. Not only will this formulate a wide variety of discussion points, but will also give each participant an opportunity to offer the rest of the group a chance to view the book in a different way.

Remember that these questions are general and can be applied to any fiction book. They can also be presented more specifically to fit the individual novel and needs of the book club. Questions for non-fiction book club can be found here.

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Lisa Rufle - If I had to describe myself in one word, it would easily be: curious. So as a natural extension of my curiosity, reading is my life's ...