

Discussion questions

Discussion guides are now available for many titles. They can raise issues the group hadn't considered, offer a different viewpoint and really get the conversation going.

However you don't have to use a guide or questions written for a specific title. The suggestions below can be used with any book.

The Bookmark technique

Whenever a passage makes you react, put a slip of paper in the book noting your reaction: surprise, anger, laughter, tears etc. When your group meets, you can discuss if you felt the same and why/why not. This is great for looking more deeply at a book.

Discussion topics and questions for use with any book

- Choice of title
- Cover: does it appeal to you? Is it appropriate?
- Blurb: was it a factor in choosing the book? Is it honest or publisher's hype?
- Author: how does this compare with previous book? If a first novel, how do you rate it? Would you read more?
- Plot: what is the structure? How well does it work?
- Pace: page-turner or slow build?
- Characters: fully fleshed or one-dimensional? Loveable or repellent? Do your feelings for them make the book more/less enjoyable?
- Setting: believable or sketchy? Too researched or very atmospheric?
- Themes: what are they? Do they get in the way of the story or add to its enjoyment?
- Imagery/symbolism: what sort is it? How does it enrich the story?
- Language: is it noticeable? For what reason?

