

BOOK CLUB QUESTIONS – MY MOTHER’S SECRET

The story is told from three different perspectives: Lizzie Bradshaw, Emma Taylor and her fourteen-year-old daughter, Stella Taylor. What is the effect of discovering things through a child’s eyes? Do we trust Stella more or less due to her interest in fiction?

Jack and Emma’s children are extremely sheltered. Is this justified? Or is their overprotection ultimately damaging to their children?

The various locations in *My Mother’s Secret* are extremely important to the story. What is their significance? What does the contrast of the wide landscape of Tyntesfield and the enclosed bakery suggest about the characters? Are there any other contrasts between the settings and the characters?

Gardening and baking both seem methodical. How do they expose the inner workings of the characters’ minds?

What would *you* do in Lizzie’s situation?

What did you think the mother’s secret really was?

How does the structure of the narrative help us piece together the story?

The plot is littered with doubles. How does this help us draw parallels between characters?

Truth and secrecy permeate the story. How far are they truly opposites? Which ones benefit the main characters?

Do you think it's better to keep secrets or not?

How much does the literature mentioned in the text foreshadow the story? Did you think there were any parallels between *The Golden Bowl* by Henry James, which Stella was reading, and this story?

My Mother's Secret deals with an extreme notion of adultery. The book asks us to question: is it ever ok? Do you think it's justified here?

Jack is often compared with 'Dr Seuss', what does this make us think about his character during the story? How did you feel about Jack by the end of the book?

At the start of the book Emma seems to lack control: she's nervous, anxious, jumpy. Does the ending suggest she has regained control, or has she lost it?

What did you think about the ending? Does it change the way you feel about Emma? What would you have done?