



ANNE OF GREEN GABLES BY L.M. MONTGOMERY

Questions for Group Discussion

1. Anne's red hair is iconic, yet a recent independent edition of the books portrays Anne on the cover as a blonde. Do you think this matters? How important do you think her red hair is in the novel? What symbolism, if any, does it have?
2. Mark Twain described Anne as 'the dearest and most moving and delightful child since the immortal Alice [in Wonderland]'. Why do you think he is so enchanted by her?
3. When Matthew Cuthbert brings orphan Anne Shirley home to the farm he shares with his sister Marilla, she says, 'But we asked for a boy. We have no use for a girl.' What does the book reveal about prevailing gender attitudes of the time?
4. We see Anne mature as the book progresses, but arguably she doesn't really change inside. However she does have a huge influence on people around her. What changes does she effect in the other characters, particularly Marilla?
5. L.M Montgomery struggled to find a publisher for Anne of Green Gables. But when she did, it was a runaway success, reprinted ten times in the it's first year of publication. Why do you think it was such an instant hit?
6. One of the most striking aspects of Anne's character is her vivid imagination. Do you think her imagination helps or hinders her?
7. 'One can't stay sad very long in such an interesting world, can one?' is just one example of Anne expressing delight at the world around her. Given her harsh start in life, what do you think is at the root of Anne's eternal optimism?
8. This book was banned as being subversive in communist-occupied Poland after the Second World War. What ideas and values espoused by the book do you think prompted this?
9. Schoolteacher Mr Phillips is openly infatuated with his pupil, 16-year-old Prissy Andrews, although nothing explicit is mentioned. Anne and her friends are fully aware of this but regard it as amusing. How do you feel about it in the light of today's #MeToo movement?
11. Fashion is an important theme in the book. How does L.M. Montgomery use fashion to reveal character traits and societal attitudes?
12. Women of all ages and social statuses feature in Anne of Green Gables. Do any of the characters defy society's expectations of women at the time? If so, how? Do you regard Anne of Green Gables as a feminist novel?
13. Anne often criticizes her own physical features. Are there things about your appearance you would like to change? Can we learn anything from Anne about liking ourselves as we are?