

## Bloomsbury Girls Discussion Group Questions

1. Bloomsbury Girls is set in 1950's London, not long after the Second World War. What aspects of the world of Bloomsbury Girls seemed the most different from modern society? What aspects seemed the most like the world today?
2. The three main female protagonists have followed very different paths to bring them to the bookshop. Which of the character's history did you find the most interesting and relatable? Who did you empathize with the most?
3. Evie, Vivien and Grace each have obstacles blocking their individual paths to happiness and professional success. Which of these obstacles – emotional, societal, and physical – did you relate to the most? What did you believe was the greatest challenge each one faced?
4. In keeping with the tradition of bookstores in novels, the bookshop itself looms almost as large in *Bloomsbury Girls* as any of the individual characters. Did it remind you of other fictional bookstores? Why do you think novels about bookshops are so popular with modern readers?
5. Evie Stone is faced with a moral dilemma – either follow the rules of the bookstore or flaunt them and, in doing so, change the lives everyone there. Do you agree with how she resolves her dilemma in the end?
6. There are many real-life figures who factor in the story, including Ellen Doubleday, Daphne du Maurier, Sonia (Orwell) Blair, Peggy Guggenheim, Samuel Beckett, and Elsie Wakefield: how well did you know of each of them before reading the book? Who fascinated you the most and why? Who would you most want to sit down and have a cup of tea with?
7. Of all the male characters, Ashwin Ramaswamy faces the most challenging of circumstances: what traits and trials does he share with the three main female protagonists, and in what ways does racism force him to behave differently?
8. Although the men in the book act in ways true to their time, several of them are able to rise above the traditional constraints of 1950's society. Who do you think was best able to do this and why? What qualities do these men share that allowed them to do this?
9. What is your favorite scene in the novel? What plot development did you anticipate and enjoy the most?

10. Which characters did you most want to spend more time with? What do you imagine happens to each of the three main characters after the events of the book?