

Book Club Discussion Guide



So Many Beginnings by Bethany C. Morrow, Page 1 (November 2021)

So Many Beginnings: a Little Women Remix

By Bethany C. Morrow

About the author:

Bethany C. Morrow is an Indie Bestselling author who writes for adult and young adult audiences, in genres ranging from speculative literary to contemporary fantasy to historical. She is author of the novels *MEM* and *A SONG BELOW WATER*, which is an Audie, Ignyte and Locus finalist. She is editor/contributor to the young adult anthology *TAKE THE MIC*, the 2020 ILA Social Justice in Literature award winner. Her work has been chosen as Indies Introduce and Indie Next picks, and featured in *The LA Times*, *Forbes*, *Bustle*, *Buzzfeed*, and more. She is included on *USA TODAY*'s list of 100 Black novelists and fiction writers you should read.

Source: Author's website (<https://www.bethanycmorrow.com/>)

About this book:

Four young Black sisters come of age during the American Civil War in *So Many Beginnings*, a warm and powerful YA remix of the classic novel *Little Women*.

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North Carolina, 1863. As the American Civil War rages on, the Freedpeople's Colony of Roanoke Island is blossoming, a haven for the recently emancipated. Black people have begun building a community of their own, a refuge from the shadow of the "old life." It is where the March family has finally been able to safely put down roots with four young daughters:

Meg, a teacher who longs to find love and start a family of her own.

Jo, a writer whose words are too powerful to be contained.

Beth, a talented seamstress searching for a higher purpose.

Amy, a dancer eager to explore life outside her family's home.

As the four March sisters come into their own as independent young women, they will face first love, health struggles, heartbreak, and new horizons. But they will face it all together.

Source: Publisher's website (<https://us.macmillan.com/books/>)

Discussion Questions:

1. How did you experience the book? Were you engaged immediately, or did it take you a while to "get into it"? How did you feel reading it—amused, sad, disturbed, confused, bored...?
2. Describe the main characters—personality traits, motivations, and inner qualities.
 - Why do characters do what they do?
 - Are their actions justified?
 - Describe the dynamics between characters (in a marriage, family, or friendship).
 - How has the past shaped their lives?
 - Do you admire or disapprove of them?

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- Do they remind you of people you know?
3. Are the main characters dynamic—changing or maturing by the end of the book? Do they learn about themselves, how the world works and their role in it?
 4. Discuss the plot:
 - Is it engaging—do you find the story interesting?
 - Is this a plot-driven book—a fast-paced page-turner?
 - Does the plot unfold slowly with a focus on character?
 - Were you surprised by complications, twists & turns?
 - Did you find the plot predictable, even formulaic?
 5. Talk about the book's structure.
 - Is it a continuous story...or interlocking short stories?
 - Does the time-line move forward chronologically?
 - Does time shift back & forth from past to present?
 - Is there a single viewpoint or shifting viewpoints?
 - Why might the author have chosen to tell the story the way he or she did?
 - What difference does the structure make in the way you read or understand the book?
 6. What main ideas—themes—does the author explore? (Consider the title, often a clue to a theme.) Does the author use symbols to reinforce the main ideas?
 7. What passages strike you as insightful, even profound? Perhaps a bit of dialog that's funny or poignant or that encapsulates a character? Maybe there's a particular comment that states the book's thematic concerns?
 8. Is the ending satisfying? If so, why? If not, why not...and how would you change it?

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9. If you could ask the author a question, what would you ask? Have you read other books by the same author? If so how does this book compare. If not, does this book inspire you to read others?
10. Has this novel changed you—broadened your perspective? Have you learned something new or been exposed to different ideas about people or a certain part of the world?

Source: *Lit Lovers* (<https://www.litlovers.com/>)