

Book Club Discussion Guide



The Spoon Stealer by Lesley Crewe, Page 1 (April 2022)

The Spoon Stealer

By Lesley Crewe

About the author:

I love the ordinary moments. I celebrate everyday things.

They are too often lost in the race for something grand. I hold dear our humdrum routines. These accumulating hours make up our lifetimes and when we remember, it is always the simplest of pleasures that make us happy. These are the memories I create in my books.

Hubby and I were raised in Montreal, but have lived in the same house in rural Cape Breton for forty-five years. It remains a sanctuary for our children and pets, both living and remembered. My writing began as an exercise in trying to understand my world and quickly became something that brought me joy. I dearly love my family, baby blueberry Gia, all creatures great and small, children's books and breathing in the wild ocean air.

Also, raisin tea biscuits.

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

About this book:

Lesley Crewe's newest novel brings readers from WWI England to 1960s Nova Scotia, following a spoon-stealing memoirist who inherits the family farm—and the family. Born into a basket of clean sheets—ruining a perfectly good load of laundry—Emmeline never

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quite fit in on her family's Nova Scotian farm. After suffering multiple losses in the First World War, her family became so heavy with grief and mental illness that Emmeline felt their weight smothering her. And so, she fled across the Atlantic and built her life in England. Retired, she now lives in a small coastal town with her best friend, Vera, a small white dog. When she joins a memoir-writing course at the library, her past unfolds for her audience, and friendships form. She even shares her third-biggest secret: she is a compulsive spoon stealer. When Emmeline unexpectedly inherits the farm she grew up on, she knows she needs to see what remains of her family one last time. She arrives like a tornado in their lives, an off-kilter Mary Poppins bossing everyone around and getting quite a lot wrong. But with her generosity and hard-earned wisdom, she gets an awful lot right, too. A pinball ricocheting between people, offending and inspiring in equal measure, Emmeline, in her final years, believes that a spoonful—perhaps several spoonfuls—of kindness can set to rights the family so broken by loss and secrecy.

Source: <https://lesleycrewe.com/>

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?
 - Do they remind you of people you know?

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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? (See our free LitCourses on both Symbol and Theme.)

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?

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8. Is the ending satisfying? If so, why? If not, why not...and how would you change it?

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: <https://www.litlovers.com/>