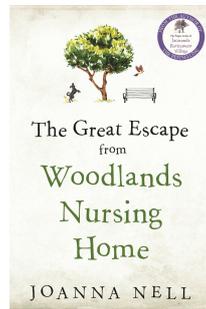


BOOK CLUB QUESTIONS

THE GREAT ESCAPE FROM WOODLANDS NURSING HOME



1. Hattie is a spinster. What does the word 'spinster' mean to you? Is it an out-dated term and what does it say about the way society views unmarried women?
2. Walter is aware that some of his views are a little un-PC. Is he simply a product of his generation, and how much can be forgiven?
3. Loneliness is a theme running through the novel. To what degree is personality a factor in how Hattie and Walter each experience loneliness?
4. Sister Bronwyn is a favourite among the residents of Woodlands Nursing Home. What does her unconventional approach say about staffing in the aged care industry as a whole?
5. Hattie likens Walter to a kookaburra that laughs at his own jokes. How does she use birds to help her understand human behaviour?
6. What role does Icarus play in the novel and what does he represent in a broader sense?
7. Health and safety plays a major role in the everyday lives of the residents, for better and for worse. How do we balance the need to keep people safe with encouraging independence and respecting an individual's right to make their own decisions?
8. What does the book say about friendship? What does the relationship between Walter and Murray reveal about male friendship?
9. Fanny Olsen has a wartime secret that is disclosed in the novel. To what extent is she still fighting for the resistance? Is Woodlands a prison or a home?
10. After reading this book, and taking into account any personal experiences, do you think the current model of aged care is working? How could it be improved and what are the alternatives to facilities like Woodlands?