

BOOK CLUB QUESTIONS FOR THE CIGAR FACTORY: A NOVEL OF CHARLESTON

- 1) Did you feel engaged immediately with the book or did it take you awhile to “get into it?”
- 2) Describe Cassie’s **character**—personality traits, motivations, and inner qualities.
 - Why does she agree to help Mr. Rolands’ Sr. when she is a young cigar maker?
 - Are her actions justified?
 - How has the past shaped her life?
 - Do you admire or disapprove of her?
 - Does she remind you of anyone you know?
- 3) Describe Meliah Amey’s character—personality traits, motivations, and inner qualities. Why does she refuse to join the other workers when Francine is fired? Are her actions justified? How has the past shaped her life? Do you admire or disapprove of her? Does she remind you of anyone you know?
- 4) How do Cassie and Meliah Amey experience their Catholicism? Similarly or differently, and how?
- 5) Describe Brigid and Binah? How do you respond to their choices in relationships?
- 6) Meliah Amey, Binah, and Brigid face challenges in their marriages. Who do you think has the stronger relationship and why?
- 7) In Chapter 23, Brigid reflects upon Manus while she is in the hospital. What do you think is meant by the following passage: *Of all the things she may not know about him, of this she was certain: if it would help her get better, Manus would fight one hundred rounds against any weight class, for that was both the depth and the limit of his love for her.*
- 8) How does the Gullah-Geechee influenced language, and its depiction, relate to the novel’s theme? Was the language a challenge? Did it add or detract from the story as a whole?
- 9) The novel ends with a question posed to Cassie from Meliah Amey. There is no answer provided from Cassie. Why do you think the author chose not to provide a response? How do you think Cassie would answer and why?
- 10) Has this novel changed you—broadened your perspective? Have you learned something new or been exposed to different ideas about people? Is the history revealed significant only in terms of Charleston and the Carolina Lowcountry or does it hold relevance in any way to one’s understanding of America in general, both past and present?