

Discussion Questions for  
*Scent of Lilacs*  
by Ann H. Gabhart

- Scent of Lilacs* is set in Hollyhill, a fictional small Kentucky town with two stoplights. The post office is at one end of Main Street and the courthouse at the other. Have you ever lived in a town like that? What are the advantages of living in a town where everybody knows everybody? Are there disadvantages?
- Jocie has a unique relationship with Wes. How do you think Wes helped Jocie? Have you ever had that sort of friendship or kinship feeling for someone who wasn't actually a family member?
- Wes tells Jocie he's from the planet Jupiter and is always telling her Jupiter stories. Did you enjoy his Jupiter stories? Why do you think Jocie liked them so much? Do you think she ever believed them or was simply having fun with the stories? Did you have a family member who liked to tell stories?
- In *Scent of Lilacs*, Jocie finds out everybody has a story. She grows up a little when she hears Aunt Love's story and realizes why Aunt Love has always been so prickly and unhappy. Can knowing other people's stories help us be more patient and understanding with them?
- Toward the end of the book, Aunt Love, who previously always wore drab, dark colors, wears a red hat to church. What do you think that hat symbolized in Aunt Love's life?
- David wants to pastor a church but in the 1960s churches often wouldn't hire a preacher who'd been divorced no matter the reason for the divorce. David tried to save his marriage, but Adrienne deserted him and Jocie. Was it fair for churches to ban divorced ministers in the past? Is that no longer an issue for most churches?
- When Adrienne leaves in the middle of the night, she was planning to go alone, but Tabitha heard her and insisted on going too. How do you think Tabitha's life would have been different if she'd stayed asleep that night and not gone with her mother?
- While David was serving in a submarine during World War II, the Lord called him to preach in a very unusual way. Did you find his experience hard to believe? Have you known other preachers who have had unusual spiritual experiences when they received the call to preach?
- Why do you think Jocie ran away after Ronnie Martin's hateful words made her doubt everything she'd always believed about her life? What should she have done instead?
- Jocie was in the middle of an actual tornado. Have you ever seen or been in a tornado?

- Lilacs are Jocie's favorite flower, not just because of their beauty but because of their wonderful scent. Which flowers do you think have a lovely scent?
  
- *Scent of Lilacs* is about family relationships that can sometimes be complicated. What did Jocie learn about family and about depending on the Lord in this story?