

Discussion Questions for A Chance for Kallie Mae

Book Club Resources

1. Have you ever thought about how different your life might be if you couldn't read? What would you miss most if you lacked reading and writing skills? What would be hardest to do?
2. No school was near enough for Kallie Mae to attend when she was first at school age. Then when a school was opened nearby, family needs kept her from attending. Was there anything she could have done differently?
3. Feuds were common in mountain communities in the 1800s. Sometimes the governor had to send in officers to keep the peace. The feud between Kallie's and Quinn's family was more of a personal matter between neighbors. Why do you think families were unable to find a way to make peace with one another? How would you handle such a situation with a neighbor?
4. Do you think the whispers and remarks Emmie heard about the birthmark on her face caused her to think everything that went wrong was her fault? Have you or someone you've known had something like that shake your or their confidence in looks of abilities?
5. Why do you think Kallie was so hesitant to let Emmie start school? Was she being overprotective because of Emmie's birthmark or did she have other reasons?
6. It was once thought that if people didn't have the chance to learn to read as children that they would be unable to do so. Why do you think that was true since people were obviously learning new things in their work and lives at all ages?
7. Cora Wilson Stewart was an unusual woman for her time. Just being a woman school superintendent was extraordinary in the early 1900s. Her life showed what a difference one determined person could make. She changed the lives of hundreds of people in her own area, but then she traveled across the nation sharing her ideas of adult education as more and more adult learning schools opened. Why do you think she had such a passion to eliminate adult illiteracy?
8. Quinn was such a good man. Why do you think he never tried to reach out to Kallie before their chance meeting in the woods?
9. Which character did you like best in the story? Why?

10. At the first night of the Moonlight Schools, Mrs. Stewart and the teachers expected maybe 120 people to show up, but around 1,200 showed up instead. Do you think they were surprised, perhaps overwhelmed, by the turn-out or simply overjoyed?
11. Do you think calling the school Moonlight Schools made them more memorable? Did walking at night to the schools show how much they wanted to learn to read?
12. Had you heard of Moonlight Schools before you read *A Chance for Kallie Mae*?