



The War That Saved My Life

by Kimberly Brubaker Bradley

READING TIPS:

The War That Saved My Life can be read aloud to young readers over a series of days or weeks or read independently by older kids in the weeks leading up to a group discussion. Having an adult help facilitate the book club meeting, both to provide historical context for the book's events and setting, and to help readers talk through the many emotions this layered novel can stir, is important.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Describe Ada. Name three qualities that she shows throughout the book. What does Ada really want in life?
2. What is a clubfoot? Why did Mam think Ada was "bad" because she was born with a clubfoot? How did meeting other people help Ada gain a different perspective on her disability?
3. Describe the relationship between Ada and Jamie. Why does Jamie want to go back home to Mam?
4. Freedom is a major theme in this book. Look at page 86 where Miss Smith and Ada talk about the meaning of freedom. Why is freedom important in this story? What does freedom mean to you?
5. Describe Miss Smith. How does she empower both Ada and Jamie in different ways? How do Ada and Jamie help her?
6. Why was Butter so important to Ada? How did Butter help her learn persistence and confidence? Do you have a pet or a hobby that makes you feel like Ada feels when she rides Butter?
7. Ada, Jamie, and Miss Smith tell several small lies to each other in this story. Discuss if or when it is okay not to tell the truth. What is the difference between telling lies and being a liar?
8. How does the war change people, regardless of their social class? What role did women play in the war?
9. How did you feel at the end of the story? Which characters do you have empathy for? Who changed the most from the beginning to the end of this story?
10. The title of the book seems like a **paradox** since we often associate war with loss of life. Discuss how this war saved Ada's life.