

## ***The Giver of Stars* by Jojo Moyes**

Discussion questions from the publisher

1. While writing and researching *The Giver of Stars*, author Jojo Moyes visited Kentucky several times, stayed in a tiny cabin on the side of a mountain, rode horses along the trails, and met the people of Kentucky. Did the characters and sense of place feel authentic to you?
2. Alice, a Brit, is an outsider, but eventually acclimates to her new home in Appalachia, and even falls in love with her new home. She grew up in a rarefied world in England, so the change to “unremarkable” Baileyville proved quite the shock to her system. Have you ever moved to a distinctly different location? What was that transition like? How did you adapt?
3. Literacy and censorship are significant issues in *The Giver of Stars*, issues that affect the women of the novel very differently from the men. Why do you think Moyes chose to focus on these topics?
4. Moyes has said she wanted to write a book about women who had agency and who actually did something worthwhile, rather than simply existing in a romantic or domestic plotline. Margery is the unofficial leader of the librarians and Alice eventually inherits that role when Margery is jailed. Yet throughout the book, most of the women do have their moments of agency. Which of these moments struck you most intensely? Did you ever wish a character had taken action when she hadn't? If so, when, and what could she have done different?
5. The novel features families from vastly different backgrounds, and one of the central issues in the book is that of class inequality. In which scenarios did you see these dynamics play out, and between which characters?
6. There are numerous ways in the book in which the acquisition of knowledge changes characters' lives: protecting their homes, educating their families, liberating themselves from marriages. Have you ever experienced such a shift—after gaining new knowledge—in your own life? How did it happen? If not, what held you back from making a change?
7. The relationships between men and women in this book vary greatly—from Margery and Sven's loving, mutual respect and passion, to Bennett and Alice's bewildered lack of understanding to the true love affair that blossoms between Alice and Fred. How did you come to understand the differences among these relationships? Did you relate to any of them in particular or to any of the problems these women faced in their romantic relationships?