



Book Club in a Bag

Discussion Questions

The Berry Pickers by Amanda Peters

1. *The Berry Pickers* is a story told from two perspectives. Was it easy to move between Norma and Joe's narratives? Was it easy to travel between the memories of the past and present day?
2. After the devastating disappearance of Ruthie, what kept the family bound together? What struggles did they face in the aftermath of this loss?
3. Joe was the last person to see Ruthie before she disappeared, and this haunted him for the rest of his life. How do you think that Joe's guilt affected his life, or changed who he could have become?
4. Two families were forever changed on the day that Ruthie disappeared. As you read about Indigenous children being forcefully taken from their families, has this novel changed you in any way? Do you feel more reflective about your own childhood?
5. Do you have a special place that you visited as a child that evokes strong memories?
6. Joe was portrayed as an angry, violent, heavy drinker even though his parents were hard-working, family-first people. Do you think this was an accurate depiction of Joe, or are there factors to be considered in how you think of him?
7. The family faced two major episodes of racism: when the local sheriff in Maine won't help search for Ruthie, and when they return home, the local Indian Agent wants to take away the remaining children. Discuss the effects of this racism on the family. How do you feel you would have reacted to these situations?

These questions were created by Clarington Library, Museums & Archives staff to enhance your discussion of the book.

Author Biography

I am a woman, a daughter, a sister, an Auntie, a cat mom, a dog mom, a friend, a descendent of a revolutionary war sailor, of accused witches and Mi'kmaq ancestors. A Canadian, a traveler, a wine drinker, an admirer of stained glass, a listener of jazz and old country, a reader of books, and a teller of stories.

<https://amandapetersauthor.com/>

Book Club in a Bag Terms of Use

Simplify your book club selection with Book Club in a Bag! Visit our website at www.clarington-library.on.ca/bookclubinabag to see a list of available titles, view the availability calendar and fill in a Book Club in a Bag Request Form.

Booking a Kit

- Booking may be made up to a year in advance
- Please check the calendar accessible on our website for availability
- Fill out the form with your information, and a staff member will be in touch to confirm your booking.
- Pick up your hold at the circulation desk. Your notification may come in a few days early, but it will remain available until your specified pick-up date.

Terms of Loan

- This kit includes 12 regular print copies and 1 audiobook copy.
- 6-week loan period
- No renewals
- Kit may be picked up at or returned to any branch.
- Kit must be returned at the desk during operating hours, not through an exterior drop box.
- All items are checked out to one member's card.
- The member who borrowed the kit is responsible for:
 - The distribution and return of all items to their group members and
 - Any damages to the books/bag, or lost items.
 - The cost of a damaged or lost book varies depending on the item.