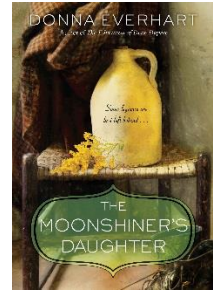


Reading Group Guide
THE MOONSHINER'S DAUGHTER by Donna Everhart



1. Jessie witnessed her mother's brutal death at the age of four. As time went on, she came to her own conclusions as to what happened. Do you believe Jessie was destined to become self-destructive because of what she saw, or was it because she couldn't get the answers she sought?
2. Jessie grew to hate making moonshine, and this put her at odds with her father. Do you think his reasoning to stay silent was justified?
3. Merritt, Jessie's younger brother, didn't remember their mother's death, and couldn't relate to Jessie's sorrow or her intense dislike for what he viewed with pride, a family legacy. What did you think of Merritt and Jessie's relationship? What did you think of how he treated Jessie?
4. Jessie's "best" friend was Aubrey. Do you think she was ever concerned for Jessie's well-being, or did you find her mostly selfish and self-absorbed?
5. The timeframe is 1960, and eating disorders were not well known. Despite lack of public awareness, Mrs. Brewer, the school nurse, recognized it. If she could have known Jessie at a younger age, do you believe her herbal teas, support and advice could have helped Jessie battle the "monster?"
6. Jessie's other family members, Uncle Virgil, Aunt Juanita and cousin Oral were each responsible in their own ways for creating discord. Of those three, who did you view as the most harmful to Jessie?
7. The leather journal Jessie's father kept with family's moonshine history as well as her mother's picture became critical and important items to Jessie, giving her a better sense of belonging and understanding. These inanimate objects held such significance for Jessie. What do you think is the reason for this?
8. Fire is a component used in various major events in the story. Why do you believe the author chose it?
9. What did you think of the ending? Given Jessie's behaviors, did this seem like the most likely outcome?