

TRUTH BE TOLD

SUE DIVIN

DISCUSSION NOTES

1. What did you know (if anything) about Northern Ireland before reading Truth Be Told? Where did you hear or learn these things? Did those sources tell 'the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth'?
2. Faith and Tara look almost identical – how are their lives, cultures and beliefs similar or different?
3. Who is your favourite supporting character? Why?
4. What mental health issues do characters face? What are their coping mechanisms? How do they find healing or support?
5. Why does Faith struggle with coming out? Where is the line (if anywhere) between freedom of religious belief and homophobia?
6. There is a saying 'Forgive and forget.' What hurts do different characters face? What is more important for healing – truth, justice, or something else?
7. Both Tara and Faith's families have painful histories. How much did they tell their daughters? After a conflict, is it better to tell the next generation everything or nothing?
8. What diverse identities are represented in the novel?
9. Often, the story told of Northern Ireland is simplified to 'Catholics v. Protestants'. Why is that? In what ways is the truth more complicated than that?
10. What are the different forms of violence in the story? Is Truth Be Told an 'anti-violence' novel?
11. Truth Be Told tells the story of three generations of women. How does the story show that Northern Ireland has changed over time?
12. Patriarchy is a system in which men hold the power and women (or those identifying differently) don't. What examples of patriarchy are in the novel?
13. What type of leadership qualities do different characters show in the novel?
14. How does politics impact people's everyday lives in the story? Are there political issues you feel passionate about?
15. What are the big issues in the book? What has formed how characters think? What in the story made you think? How do we become independent thinkers?

