

***So Shall We Stand* by Elyse Larson**
Reading Group Guide

1. Nella's dilemma as a young mother was common to many during World War II. How could she care for her baby and serve her country at the same time? What do you think about having young mothers serve in military service?
2. Many mothers in London sent their children to the country, to Canada, and even to the United States for safety. But they found that that was not always best for the children. How could such a situation be handled today, considering our increased understanding of children's needs and the possibility of child abuse by strangers?
3. The deaf child Annie had made a good adjustment to her disability. Why do you think she was doing so well? Do you know any disabled people? What might you do to help them?
4. After Peggy became a Christian, she discovered that her prejudice against the gentry still lingered. What constitutes prejudice? What are the symptoms? What are some practical ways of ridding ourselves of prejudice?
5. Peggy felt compelled to fight for the opportunity to continue to teach creative arts to the village schoolchildren. What have you been willing to fight for with regards to children's welfare? How would you handle a difficult person who stood in the way as Lady Westmoreland did?
6. Nella decided to deceive her parents for their own safety. Was her deceit justified? Did it help or hinder the situation? Could this violation of her personal standard of honesty be called hypocritical?
7. Peggy and Nella, very different in temperament as well as in early childhood experiences, became devoted friends soon after they met. Why do you think this was so?
8. True friends help each other to become better people. How did Peggy help Nella? What did Nella contribute to Peggy?
9. Both Nella and Peggy fell in love with men quite different from what they'd expected. What might some of their problems be? How may the men's personalities bring out the best in their women? What is important for an enduring and happy marriage?
10. Both Peggy and Nella let the past dictate the present. What bound Nella to her past? What bound Peggy to her past? At times we all let ourselves become prisoners to our past. What can help us break free?
11. Nella was angry at God for not protecting the life of her husband. She rejected what her mother had said by way of encouragement. Can you see why? What can we do to fortify the faith of the people we love? What can we do to help others through adversity?
12. Elizabeth said, "It's not God's fault, Nella. We're none of us totally innocent. Nations as well as individuals suffer the consequences of their sins." Does God still deal with whole nations, as well as with each of us individually? What does the Bible say about this?
13. How did Gwenyth's diary influence Nella? Peggy? Bryan? Why do you suppose Nella responded to the writing of this unknown girl more readily than to her own parents? Who, besides your parents, has influenced you for good?

14. Gwenyth said in her diary, "There are those who say if one doubts, he has no faith. I say faith without doubts is a weak-kneed faith." Do you agree or disagree with her? Is her viewpoint scriptural? If you were helpless in a life-threatening situation with memories of God's past protection, what would be your statement of faith?

15. Since the terrorist attack on the United States, we have a clearer sense of how the British felt when they were expecting Germany to invade. On the dedication page of *So Shall We Stand* read the quote from Sir Winston Churchill's speech. Why do you think his words rallied the nation? Does the time make the man, or does the man make his time? Did Churchill and Roosevelt fulfill a destiny or just succeed when placed under pressure?