

The Silent Governess Discussion Questions

Which character in the novel did you most like or relate to? What drew you to that character?

The book's opening quote says, "The best proof of wisdom is to talk little, but to hear much...." Do you agree? Have you ever wished too late you had followed this advice?

Has a childhood regret remained with you into adulthood? What have you learned about getting past such regrets?

What did you learn about the life of governesses which surprised you? Do you think you would have enjoyed being a governess in the early nineteenth century? Why or why not?

Governesses were expected to teach literature, poetry, French, Italian, geography, the sciences, religion, arithmetic, needlework, dancing, and drawing, and to play a musical instrument. How does this compare with your own (or your children's) education? Anything on the list you wish you'd had the chance to learn?

How might discovering that your origins are different from what you've always believed affect you? Would you have reacted differently than Edward?

Legal adoption as we know it was not practiced in Regency England. Unless a child was a peer's natural son born in wedlock, he might be left some money but could not inherit his father's title or estate. Women could not usually inherit either. Did this surprise you? Strike you as unfair?

Where do you get your identity? From your parents, your profession, your kids, your church, your relationship with God? How has the source of your identity changed over the years?

Has your view of God been influenced by your earthly father or another person? Positively or negatively? If negatively, what ways have you found to overcome that influence?

Did any character or happening in the novel surprise you? How so? And did you enjoy the twist?