

Reader Guide Questions

THE DINNER PARTY

Jewish Book Council

1. Of all the holidays in a year, why do you think the author chose to set this novel around the holiday of Passover? What is the meaning of Passover? What does it mean to you?
2. Why do you think the author chose to end the novel at Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur? What is the meaning of these holidays? What do they mean to you?
3. Would it surprise you to learn that the original title of the book was *The Last Supper*? Why do you think the author originally named the book *The Last Supper*? What does this title mean to you? Why do you think she changed it?
4. Have you ever had a holiday dinner go awry?
5. What is the significance of food in the novel? Why do you think that food plays such a central role in Jewish life?
6. Sylvia's children all have biblical names. What do you think is the significance of the names Sarah and Rebecca, in terms of this story? Gideon?
7. Why do you think the author included the song "Chad Gadya" in the book after the close of the Seder? What does this song mean to you?
8. Do you think that Sylvia truly forgave Sarah? Do you think that Sarah truly forgave Sylvia? When it comes to family, does forgiveness matter?
9. When it comes to intermarriage, do you think it's important for a person to convert to Judaism?
10. In Chapter Thirty-Five, Sylvia talks to Gideon about the importance of Jews marrying Jews. Do you think it's important to marry within your faith? Why or why not?