



Book Club in a Bag

Discussion Questions

The River is Waiting by Wally Lamb

1. Corby is a deeply flawed yet sympathetic character. Does his character challenge your preconceived notions about morality and empathy, particularly within the context of his life decisions? How does he evolve throughout the novel?
2. Consider Emily's guilt over her last conversation with Corby. How does her struggle with forgiveness parallel larger themes within the story? Do you believe forgiveness is essential for personal growth?
3. Consider how addiction and mental health are portrayed within the novel. How do these challenges impact Corby's choices and relationships? In what ways does the story prompt a deeper understanding of the societal and personal dimensions of these issues?
4. The mural Corby painted in the prison library becomes a symbol of his legacy. What does the mural mean to Emily and Maisie? Discuss how art can become a form of resistance and hope.
5. Manny plays a pivotal role in helping Emily reconcile with Corby's death. What does Manny's survival and his eventual contact with Emily suggest about the enduring connections between people?
6. Grief is a central theme in the novel. Evaluate the portrayal of mourning and the diverse coping mechanisms embodied by various characters. Which characters' journeys resonated most with your own experiences, and why?
7. Emily is at a crossroads in her life, torn between her grief for Corby and her new relationship with Bryan. How does she balance these two aspects of her life? Discuss the psychological and emotional intricacies of her choices. Is it possible to have new beginnings when so much of your life is tied to the past?

These questions were taken from <https://www.readinggroupguides.com/reviews/the-river-is-waiting/guide> to enhance your discussion of the book.

Author Biography

Wally Lamb's first two novels, *She's Come Undone* (Simon and Schuster, 1992) and *I Know This Much Is True* (HarperCollins, 1998), were # 1 *New York Times* bestsellers, *New York Times* Notable Books of the Year, and featured titles of Oprah's Book Club. His next three novels were also *New York Times* bestsellers.

Honors for Wally Lamb include a National Endowment for the Arts grant, the Connecticut Center for the Book's Lifetime Achievement Award, the Connecticut Bar Association's Distinguished Public Service Award, and the 2010 Arts and Letters award from the YMCA of New York City. (<https://wallylamb.net/>)

Book Club in a Bag Terms of Use

Simplify your book club selection with Book Club in a Bag! Visit our website at www.cplma.ca/bookclubinabag to see a list of available titles, view the availability calendar, and submit a request.

Booking a Kit

- Booking may be made up to a year in advance.
- Please check the calendar accessible on our website for availability.
- Fill out the form with your information, and a staff member will be in touch to confirm your booking.
- Pick up your hold at the service desk. Your notification may come in a few days early, but it will remain available until your specified pick-up date.

Terms of Loan

- 12 copies are included in each kit.
- 6-week loan period.
- No renewals.
- Kit may be picked up at or returned to any CLMA library location.
- Kit must be returned at the service desk during operating hours, not through an exterior drop box.
- All items are checked out to one person's card.
- The person who borrowed the kit is responsible for:
 - The distribution and return of all items to their group members; and
 - Any damages to the books/bag, or lost items.
 - The cost of a damaged or lost book varies depending on the item.