

SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOUR BOOK CLUB TO ENJOY

1. GENERAL:

- How did you experience the book? Were you engaged from the start or did it take you a while? How does the title relate to the book?
- How did you feel reading it? Were you sad, happy, afraid, disturbed, confused, bored, or entertained?
- Does the book give you a clear picture of the world it was creating?

2. CHARACTERS:

- Describe the main characters: strengths, weaknesses, personality characteristics, motivations, inner qualities.
- Why does that character do what he or she does and is it justified?
- Pick two or three characters and describe the dynamics between or among them.
- How does the any character's past life affect their lives in the book?
- Do you particularly like or dislike, admire or not admire, approve or disapprove of a particular character? Why?
- Does any one character remind you of someone you know?
- Do the main characters change, mature, or develop by the end of the book? Do they learn something about themselves, someone else, or life?
- Would you consider the theater itself a "character" in the book? Why or why not?

3. PLOT:

- Does the story interest you? Is this a plot-driven book or does the story focus on character development?
- How is the book structured? Did it use flashbacks and one or many points of view?
- Why do you think the author chose to write the book from Veronica's point of view?
- How does the way the book is arranged help or detract from the ideas it contains?
- Is the book's structure a continuous story or interlocking short stories? Do you understand the chronology? Why do you think the author choose to write the story the way she did and what difference does it make in the way you understand it?

4. MAIN IDEAS AND THEMES:

- What main ideas and themes does the author explore? Does the author use symbols to reinforce the main ideas?
- What types of symbolism do you find in this novel?
- What do these objects really represent and how do characters react to and with these symbolic objects?

- What themes, e.g. ambition, loneliness, love, envy, self-discovery, recur throughout the book?
- How is the setting of the book important to the theme?

5. WRITING:

- What passages strike you as insightful or profound?
- Is any of the dialogue particularly funny or poignant or does it encapsulate a character?
- Are there any comments in the book that capture the book's thematic concerns?
- Is the ending satisfying? Why or why not?
- What is the great strength - or most noticeable weakness - of the book?
- What did the author try to do in the book? Was she successful?
- Does the author use certain words and phrases unconventionally and is it interesting to you? Does the author make up new words and, if so why? Is it effective?
- Does the author have a mastery of language?
- Do the quotations at the beginning of each chapter add to or detract from your enjoyment of the book? Do they capture the major theme, character or event of the chapter that follows?

6. BEYOND THE PAGES OF THE BOOK:

- Do you find the characters believable?
- Which character do you identify with and why?
- What makes the main character sympathetic or unsympathetic?
- Pick a character of interest to you and explain why that character acts the way he or she acts.
- Are the plots and subplots believable and interesting? Did the author leave any unsettling loose ends?

7. AUTHOR DALE E. MANOLAKAS:

- If you could ask the author a question, what would you ask?
- Would you read or other works by the author, Dale E. Manolakas?
- What is the author's worldview?
- How does this book fit into or fight against a literary genre? Does this book typify a regional (Southern, western) novel?
- Does the book address broader social issues? Does the author take a stance on, for example, anarchy versus capitalism? How is a particular culture or subculture portrayed?
- Where could the story go after the book ends? What is the future of these characters' lives? What would our lives be like if we lived in this story?
- How does this book compare to other books you've read? Would it make a good movie?
- Is there a film adaptation of this book? What is brought out or played down in the film version?
- Has this novel changed you—broadened your perspective? Have you learned something new or been exposed to different ideas about people or a certain part of the world?