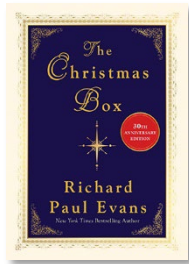


The Christmas Box 30th Anniversary Edition Reading Group Guide



This reading group guide for The Christmas Box 30th Anniversary Edition includes an introduction, discussion questions, and ideas for enhancing your book club. The suggested questions are intended to help your reading group find new and interesting angles and topics for your discussion. We hope that these ideas will enrich your conversation and increase your enjoyment of the book.

Introduction

Thirty years ago, Richard Paul Evans wrote a small Christmas tale for his two young daughters—an expression of love celebrating the joy of fatherhood and the beauty of childhood. Within a few years, what began as a private expression of love for his daughters evolved into a beloved gift whose popularity quickly spread throughout the world. Soon, his masterpiece became a global phenomenon, becoming one of the best-selling books of the century.

Now, this special anniversary edition brings this heartwarming novel to a new generation. The moving and unforgettable story of a widow and the young family who come to live with her is a modern classic from the “king of Christmas fiction” (*The New York Times*) that you’ll want to share with all your loved ones.

Topics & Questions for Discussion

1. The book begins with a quote from Natalie Merchant. What did this quote mean to you before you read the book? Did the meaning of the quote change after you finished the story?
2. The story is written in the first-person point of view. Do you believe this decision impacted how you read and connected with the story? If yes, how?
3. Throughout the story, Richard Paul Evans includes vivid descriptions of the book’s settings—for example, the deep description of Mary’s house. How did this impact your reading experience? Do you believe this was intentional?

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4. What was your impression of Mary when she first entered the story? Did that impression change by the end?
5. What was your first impression of the angel dream? What message did you believe it was sending? Did your opinion of the message change by the end of the story?
6. At one point in the story, Keri asks Mary what senses she believes are most affected by Christmas. Out of the five senses (sight, smell, taste, touch, hearing), which do *you* believe are most affected by Christmas? If you don't celebrate Christmas, answer according to your own favorite religious holiday.
7. How did your view of fatherhood, and the role of a father, change throughout the story? Is it different from the way you saw those things before you finished the book? How did Richard's journey impact you?
8. At the end of the story, Richard makes the decision to burn Mary's letters. Do you agree with this choice? Would you have done the same? Why or why not?
9. While the story focuses on Richard, how do you believe Keri was impacted by his journey? How did she evolve throughout the book?
10. A main theme of the story is child loss. After finishing the book and understanding Mary's experience, what ways do you believe you can support someone going through the grief of child loss?
11. Traditional household roles had a major impact on Richard and Keri's experiences, with Richard working outside the home and Keri taking care of the household responsibilities. How do you think the story would differ if these roles were switched?
12. This story has impacted the lives of millions of readers in different ways. What do you think was the most impactful scene, and why?

Enhance Your Book Club

1. At the beginning of the book, Richard Paul Evans discusses the Christmas Box Angel monuments around the world. Find the closest Angel monument to you and pay a visit, if possible.
2. One real-life impact of Richard Paul Evans's story was the Christmas Box Houses that shelter abused and neglected children. If possible, find a children's shelter near you and volunteer for a day.
3. The Christmas Box is an object that reminds you of what's important in life. Go around the group and discuss what *your* object—your Christmas Box—would be, and why.
4. It's crafting time! With your group, gather materials to build and decorate your own Christmas Box and discuss what you will fill it with.