

Discussion Questions

For

Miss Dee Dunmore Bryant

These questions are designed to enhance your group's discussion of *Miss Dee Dunmore Bryant* by Isabella Alden.

1. Daisy was eight years old when she began working in the canning factory; and schoolboys were able to buy and drink alcoholic cider in stores. Were you surprised to learn these facts about children's lives in the Nineteenth Century? What other historical facts in the book surprised you?
2. Daisy's letter to the newspaper editor resulted in thirty-five different dolls being sent to her. What did you think of the generosity of the public response to her letter? Have you ever heard or read a stranger's story that touched you? How did you respond?
3. Ben Bryant's conscience wouldn't allow him to work in a store where alcoholic cider was sold to children. He quit his job, even though his family needed the money Ben was paid. Have you ever been in a situation where you had to choose between your conscience and your employer's demands? What happened? If you were in Ben's position, what would you have done?
4. Miss Webster became an important friend and confidante for the Bryant children. Did you have someone in your life, past or present, who influenced you for good? Is there anyone in your life you are trying to influence for the better?
5. Ben Bryant and Rufus Kedwin were best friends, but they were not at all alike. While Ben was optimistic and appreciated opportunities that came his way, Rufus was gloomy and pessimistic. Have you ever known someone like Rufus who was pessimistic? What do you think is the best way to deal with someone like Rufus? Do you believe positive thinking can influence a person's life? Why do you think so?
6. Which character did you find most interesting? Why?
7. What do you think motivated Judge Dunmore to get involve in the lives of the Bryant family? Were you surprised by his actions? If you were in Judge Dunmore's position, would you have done the same for the Bryants? What would you have done differently?

8. Throughout the book, the Bryants repeatedly make sacrifices for each other. Ben and Line give up school so they can go to work; Daisy gives up the most beautiful doll so it can be donated as a “tenth”; and Mrs. Bryant gives up evenings home with her children so she can earn extra money watching another family’s baby. Do you think some of their sacrifices were not necessary? When is a sacrifice too much? Under what circumstances do you think it is fair to put yourself before others?

Add your own questions here:

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