



BOOK CLUB KITS

THIS KIT CONTAINS

- ◆ 3 Regular Paperback Copies
- ◆ 2 Large Print Copies
- ◆ 1 Book on CD

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

THE BOOK WOMAN OF TROUBLESOME CREEK BY KIM RICHARDSON

- 1) The Kentucky Pack Horse program was implemented in 1935 by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) to create women's work programs and to assist economic recovery and build literacy. Looking at the novel, how did the program affect the people in this remote area? Do you think library programs are still a vital part of our society today?
- 2) How has a librarian or book lover impacted your life? Have you ever connected with a book or author in a meaningful way? Explain.
- 3) Missionaries, government, social workers, and various religious groups have always visited eastern Kentucky to reform, modernize, and mold hill folk to their acceptable standards. Do you think Cussy faced this kind of prejudice from the outside world? Is there any prejudice or stigma associated with the people of Appalachia today?
- 4) How do you think Cussy's father feels after he marries her off to an abusive man? Why do you think he agrees to Charlie Frazier's proposal in the first place? What do you imagine life was like for an unwed woman at that time?
- 5) Imagine you are making a community scrapbook like the ones Cussy distributes to the people of Troublesome. What would you include? Do you think these materials were helpful to Cussy's library patrons?
- 6) When Cussy receives the cure for her blueness from Doc, she realizes there's a price to pay for her white skin, and the side effects soon become too much to handle. If you were in Cussy's shoes, would you sacrifice your health for a chance at "normalcy"? If there weren't any side effects, do you think Cussy would have continued to take the medication? Would you?
- 7) How do you think Cussy feels when she is ostracized at the Independence Day celebration, despite her change of skin color? Can you relate to her feelings of isolation? Do you think these kinds of racial prejudices are still prevalent today?
- 8) Back then, entering into a prohibited or interracial marriage in Kentucky was a misdemeanor that could result in incarceration, and we see these racial tensions attempt to sever Cussy and Jackson's relationship. Discuss anti-miscegenation laws and marriage laws. Do you think this kind of prejudice still exists toward interracial couples?
- 9) What do you think happens to Cussy, Jackson, Honey, and the other inhabitants of Troublesome after the story ends? Imagine you were Cussy. How would you feel leaving Troublesome for good?
- 10) 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?