

**Reading Group Guide for
An Appalachian Summer
by Ann H. Gabhart**

(Spoiler alert—these questions assume you've already read the book)

1. The book opens with Piper at her debutante ball. In years past, a girl's coming-out party was considered an important way to find a suitable husband. Do you think you would have liked being a debutante? Why or why not?
2. Piper wanted to do "something different." Why do you think she felt that way? Was it hard for her to shed some of society's expectations and break away from the normal path for a young woman of her age and social standing?
3. Jamie went to where Piper's ball was being held but didn't go inside. Should he have crashed the party even without an invitation? What held him back and made him leave without Piper seeing him?
4. Piper's parents told her that love would grow once she married. Is that true? What has to happen for that love to grow in a marriage if romantic love isn't present before the vows are spoken?
5. Piper had a special bond with her aunt Truda. Why do you think that was? Have you ever had a particularly close relationship with an aunt or a relative other than your parents or siblings?
6. When Truda was a young woman, she didn't want to settle for marriage to a man she didn't love. Do you think her special evening with Jackson caused that, or would she have felt that way whether they had experienced that magical time together or not?
7. Piper felt as though she had entered a different world when she reached the mountains, but she was excited about being there. Why do you think young women like Piper were so enthusiastic about their volunteer work as Frontier Nursing couriers? What was it about the experience that made these young women want to sign their own daughters up at birth to someday have the opportunity to follow in their steps as volunteer Frontier Nursing couriers?
8. Did this story make you want to know more about Mary Breckinridge and the Frontier Nursing Service? Do you think it would be fun to visit Wendover, the headquarters of the FNS, and where she lived? Here's a link to find out more about Wendover, a National Historic Site and now a bed-and-breakfast: <https://wendoverbb.com/>