

**Reading Group Guide for
Hannah's Choice
by Jan Drexler**

1. At the beginning of Hannah's story, we see her assuming her mother's role in the family because of Annalise's ongoing depression. But as the story progresses, we start to understand the deep guilt she carries because of her younger siblings' deaths years earlier. Which of these do you think was the stronger motivating factor for Hannah's desire to help her family?
2. In the first few chapters of the story, Hannah thinks of her life as "before" and "after." She has good memories of the time before their family was changed forever by the death of the little ones, and now lives in the gray, empty time after that event. Is there something that has happened in your life—good or bad—that created this kind of dividing line? In other words, what is the most significant life-changing experience you have had?
3. Hannah and her sister, Liesbet, were very close as young girls, even though they have grown apart since then. If Liesbet hadn't met George McIvey, do you think the rift between the sisters would ever have been mended?
4. Since her family was so fractured by the tragedy of the diphtheria epidemic, Hannah sought companionship among their neighbors. Even though her friendship with Adam caused her parents to worry later on, he provided the loving and stable big brother she needed during her growing-up years. Has God provided such a person in your life? A mentor, or a friend who helps you get through the tough times in life?
5. Contemporary Amish life is an endless source of curiosity for fans of Amish fiction, but in the 1800s the Amish often encountered prejudice and ridicule like Hannah did when she went to the Lancaster market with Christian at the beginning of the story. What signs of that same prejudice concerning the Amish do you see in our time?
6. A recurring conflict between Hannah and Adam is his involvement with the Underground Railroad. If you were living in southern Pennsylvania at that time, would you have defied the Fugitive Slave Law to help escaping slaves? Or would you have chosen to obey the law? Before you answer, remember that this was not an easy question for people of that time. Try to think of a similar situation today, where the law of the land goes against biblical beliefs. Now what do you think you would have done in Hannah's place?
7. When the men from Somerset County come visiting to recruit families for the new settlement in Indiana, Hannah's father, Christian, is confronted, for the first time, with the idea of moving away from their home. Have you ever been faced with

the decision of whether to move your family away from your home? What were the circumstances, and what was your response?

8. Liesbet's infatuation with George McIvey leads her down the path to disaster. Even though Hannah can anticipate the tragic consequences of Liesbet's choices, she is powerless to stop her. Why do you think Liesbet is so determined to leave her family and community to go with George? Is her affection for him a case of true love, or does she have other motivations?
9. Have you ever been in a relationship like Hannah and Liesbet's? Perhaps you have watched a sibling or a friend make the wrong choices, or perhaps you were the one who made the wrong choices while your loved ones kept you in their prayers. Do you have any words of advice for someone traveling that same road?
10. When Josef Bender meets Hannah, he decides almost immediately that she is the girl he wants to marry. What do you think about this quick decision? Have you ever known of a similar case of "love at first sight"?
11. Throughout this story, Hannah and her family are working at one task or another in almost every scene. Activities we think of as hobbies, like knitting, spinning, and weaving, are necessary life-skills for the Yoder family. What hobbies do you enjoy that your great-grandparents would have considered necessary tasks?
12. Partway through the story, Annalise talks to Hannah about her recovery from her depression. She says, "I've learned the hard way that when you fight against God, all you are left with is misery." Can you think of a time when you fought against God's plan for your life? Could you share with the group what God taught you through this experience?
13. Hannah's friend, Johanna, seems to be determined to marry Hannah's brother, Jacob. What do you think of these two? Do you think it's a match? What do you think Johanna's part of the story should look like in the next book?