

Reading Group Guide for  
*While Love Stirs*  
by Lorna Seilstad

1. Sisterhood is one of the themes of The Gregory Sisters series, and Charlotte is the middle child. What role does birth order play in her character and that of her sisters? What was your favorite sister scene? How does the sisterhood of the Gregory girls compare to your relationships with your own sisters, if you have any?
2. The culinary arts have taken front stage as of late with various television programs, but in *While Love Stirs*, culinary contests and demonstrations are nothing new. What surprised you about Charlotte's world of cooking? Why do you think the gas stove was such a blessing to the women of the early 1900s?
3. Charlotte cannot break into the world of professional chefs in a traditional way. Today female chefs are still often overlooked. They rarely receive the adulation and recognition of male chefs. Some claim it's a press issue; others believe it's because the field remains largely male dominated. What do you think? How do you feel the field is changing? How far have we come in the last hundred years with women in the workplace?
4. Tessa, who will be the main character in the next book in the series, keeps life interesting. Why do you think she has so many varied interests? What career path do you think she'll eventually follow? How does being in *Peter Pan* fit her character? Have you ever known anyone like Tessa, who tends to push the boundaries?
5. There are many locations mentioned in *While Love Stirs*. If you could step back in time, which one would you most like to visit? The lake? The amusement park? Summit Avenue? Why?
6. Joel struggles with words that were spoken to him as a child, comparing him to his father. How have these words shaped him? How has his father's illness affected him? When you were a child, did anyone say anything to you, good or bad, that still affects you today? Why do you think words can have such a powerful hold on us?

7. Charlotte and Joel have a relationship that comes to a boil quickly, especially in the beginning. Why do you think that happens? What do think it would take for an often volatile relationship like theirs to survive and thrive? What do you think drew the two of them together?
8. Why was it so important for Charlotte to be on a crusade to change the way hospitals serve food to their patients? Why doesn't Joel buy into her ideas? Whose side were you on? What surprised you about how much was known about nutrition at this time?
9. Charlotte is guilty of using Lewis as a backup plan. Why does she do this, and what does it reveal about her? Is it wrong to have a backup plan? Why do you think some people settle for whoever happens to be available or interested in them?
10. As a people pleaser, Charlotte finds it hard to tell Lewis the truth. Why does she not feel the need to please Joel? Are you a people pleaser? How can this make your life more difficult?
11. In the story, Joel shows tendencies toward obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD). What does this reveal about him, and what role does it play in the story? How does Joel grow beyond his need for control? Do you know anyone who suffers from OCD? Do you have any rituals you need to follow? Why or why not?
12. Charlotte takes a journey of fear versus faith in *While Love Stirs*. How does the story of Elisha and the empty jars apply to her journey? When have you had to count on the Lord to fill your jars or provide for you in a difficult time?



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