

1. Why do you think the author chose to write the story from three points of view rather than a single narrative? Why do you believe she chose to write three fictional characters rather than selecting a historical figure to document?
2. France was in a period of relative prosperity during the era of the 'King's Daughters' program, yet there were scores of women who wanted to participate. What do you feel were their motivations and aspirations?
3. What did it seem were the main difficulties French women, particularly those who lived in cities, most acutely suffered upon arrival in New France?
4. Rose's situation was terribly common; women could be imprisoned for the rest of their lives by their families for slight offenses. We see that the "charity hospital" where Rose lives is an abysmal place, but when offered the chance to leave the Salpêtrière Rose hesitates. In fact, many women offered their freedom chose to stay in the hospital. Why do you think a 17th century woman would opt to remain imprisoned?
5. Elisabeth seems to have the easiest time adapting to life in New France. She claims she "had less to leave behind", though the truth of that statement is questionable. What about her personality enables her to make the transition more easily than her peers and to embrace the tumultuous changes in her life?
6. Many of the women who agreed to become 'King's Daughters' spent a good amount of time in convents, boarding houses, and with 'sponsor families' before marriage. The Sisters made sure their domestic skills were up to muster and gave them plenty of advice on selecting their husbands. What do you imagine the key pieces of advice were and do you think Nicole followed them?
7. Rose decides fairly soon after her arrival that she wants to enter into religion. This decision could have been socially ruinous for her, despite the revered status of the Church in the colony, especially after she rejects a promising suitor. Why do you think this is, and why was Sister Mathilde so hesitant to let Rose take orders?
8. Aside from the emotional heartache of her miscarriages, Elisabeth and Gilbert also face some social stigma for their childless state.

This is especially true because of their openly affectionate nature toward one another. What do you feel are the reasons for this social pressure and what does it say about the expectations of marriage in 17th century Quebec?

9. We see Nicole transition from the shy farm girl to the capable social maven during the course of the book. What enables this transformation and growth?
10. How does the fire symbolize Elisabeth's relationship with her mother, and what else could it symbolize about her future?
11. What are the reasons for Manon's departure, both stated and implied? Do you feel she was justified in her decision to leave?
12. In the end, Rose is able to overcome her trauma to enjoy her marriage, but she will always carry the scars. How do you think this will affect her relationship with Henri and her children moving forward?
13. The depiction of the clergy throughout the book is varied. The nuns are depicted as industrious and motherly, while Father Cloutier in particular, is depicted as petty and scheming. What do you feel is the reason for this contrast?
14. Alexandre could have used his pull to influence the judicial system in the Beaumonts' favor when the bailiff decides to enforce the king's edict on the bakery. Why do you feel the women took this more subtle approach, and do you think the women's backchannel approach ultimately as effective?