

Reader Questions:

- 1) Beyond a tool for soothing anxiety, what do you think Hanna's worry stone represents?
Does the fact that it's made of rose quartz have some symbolic value?
- 2) Maternal relationships play a huge role in the narrative of *The School for German Brides*.
They range from mostly healthy to highly toxic. Which mother-child relationship did you find the most intriguing? How do you feel the mothers influenced the way their children react to stress and trauma in their lives?
- 3) Likewise, many of the fathers and father figures in this story are absent. How does this impact the characters and their growth?
- 4) Klara is a central figure, but not a main character. She floats between Hanna and Tilde's worlds, and of course her own. What do you think her purpose was in the narrative?
What did you think of her character overall?
- 5) The two main characters, Hanna and Tilde, spend very little time together throughout the course of the book. Why do you think the author chose to keep them separated? Is there a deeper meaning at play?
- 6) Though wildly in love, Samuel and Tilde have a complicated start to their relationship.
Do you think he was wrong to try to break things up so she wouldn't stay behind? Was she wrong to press him into marriage?
- 7) Samuel decides to leave his wife and unborn child to seek out the truth about his family.
What do you believe was his thinking in this decision? Do you think he was justified or foolish? Why? How do you feel about Tilde's reaction to his departure and how her feelings about it evolve over the course of the book?

- 8) Numerous times, characters describe the bride school as luxurious and restful. Does that mesh with the way Hanna sees the building? What ambiance do you feel is evoked in the descriptions shown through Hanna's point of view?
- 9) How does Tilde manage to pull herself out of her grief and begin to plan for a life without Samuel? What are the signs that she doesn't expect him to come back?
- 10) Do you think Hanna and Klara ever truly mend their relationship before the end of the story? Why do you think they seem so tightly knit at the bride school after so many months apart?
- 11) At Hanna's wedding, Aunt Charlotte offers Hanna a dire warning. What were her motives? What do you think of the relationship between Aunt Charlotte and Hanna? How did it evolve over the course of the book?
- 12) Tilde interacts with her father in two separate scenes in the book. How does the father-daughter dynamic change between the two scenes? How does each character respond differently in the second scene than they did in the first?
- 13) In the epilogue, it's revealed that both Tilde and Hanna have led full lives. They got careers in the paths they chose, remarried, and carved their own paths. Why do you think the author chose to make Hanna barren? What is the deeper meaning?