

The Hideaway Discussion Questions

1. Sara fled Sweet Bay and The Hideaway as soon as she was able. Do you think that decision had more to do with her parents' death and the pain associated with that time in her life or because of Mags's mystery and eccentricities? A combination of the two?
2. After leaving her parents, husband, and former life, Mags makes a new life at The Hideaway. In essence, her friends at the B & B become her new family. Have you ever found yourself in a situation where you've had to make a new life and family with the people around you?
3. Mags's parents expected her to marry a man from a respectable family who made enough money to keep her in the life she was used to. They also expected her to look the other way when Robert strayed and to wait for him to return to his senses and his marriage. How are marriages in general different today? How are they the same? Do you—or someone you know—have experience similar to Mags's?
4. As Sara peels back the layers and hears stories from Mags's friends, she learns Mags had a full, rich life before becoming the unconventional grandmother Sara knew. Have you ever been surprised to learn something about a family member you thought you knew well? How did your childhood view of this person differ from your opinion once you grew into adulthood? Did the new revelations change the way you thought about the person?
5. In a sense, Mags uses The Hideaway as a way to hide from her life and difficult situation in Mobile. In what way are other characters in the book hiding? Think of Sara in New Orleans, Allyn at Bits and Pieces, and Dot's friends at The Hideaway. Do you have any experience with hiding in a comforting or safe place when things in your life feel out of control?
6. Sara comes to regret that she never took the time to get to know who her grandmother really was. Do you have experience with familial regret? Has someone passed away or otherwise passed out of your life whom you wish you had taken a chance to ask key questions, whether about your past, his or her past, or some other event they had experience with? How do you deal with or make peace with that regret?
7. When we first meet Sara, she is fully devoted to her work and doesn't make much extra time for friends, family, or extra pursuits. How does Sara evolve over the course of the book? What did you think about her decision to return to New Orleans and Bits and Pieces after spending the summer at The Hideaway? Do you understand her?
8. Sammy Grosvenor has a vision of Sweet Bay as a tourist destination. Those who live in Sweet Bay want it to remain the sleepy town it's always been. What do you think of the tension between progress and the desire to keep things the same? Do you know of a place that has undergone a similar fight with progress?
9. Mags left her parents and husband to escape a life that was suffocating. Would you have had the courage to make a decision so opposite your family's expectations? Do you think Mags made the right decision to leave her home? What about her decision to stay at The Hideaway?

10. If Sara had been able to meet Mags as a young woman, do you think they would have been friends? Would they have agreed with each other's life choices?