



STUDENT GUIDE

CLEMENTINE

Tillie Walden

Overview: Clementine is back on the road, looking to put her traumatic past behind her and forge a new path all her own. But when she comes across an Amish teenager named Amos with his head in the clouds, the unlikely pair journeys North to an abandoned ski resort in Vermont, where they meet up with a small group of teenagers attempting to build a new, walker-free settlement. As friendship, rivalry, and romance begin to blossom amongst the group, the harsh winter soon reveals that the biggest threat to their survival...might be each other.

IMPORTANT SETTINGS

- Pennsylvania
- Georgia
- Penn State
- Appalachian Trail
- Amish Country
- Killington Mountain Ski Resort, Vermont
- Epsey's Compound

NOTABLE CHARACTERS

- Clementine
- Lee
- Meredith
- Joy
- Rabby
- Amos
- Helen (horse)
- Ricca
- Georgia (Right)
- Olivia (Left)
- Epsey
- Tim
- Dr. Barnwell (cat)

KEY THEMES

- Survival
- Coming of age
- Legacy
- Grief and loss
- Adulthood
- Sexuality
- Hope vs realism
- Religion
- Rites of passage
- Resilience
- Disability



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What do you think was the main theme of the book? Pick out two quotes that best illustrate the theme that you identified.
2. Building off of your identified theme, pick three panels from the book that feature art that represents your theme. For each panel chosen, explain how it represents your theme.
3. What does it say about characters like Amos who want to bring back human rituals like rumspringa outside of the “normal times?” Do you think it’s a sign of hope, or a foolish endeavor?
4. When things get hectic in your life, what rituals/habits do you hold on to help you cope or ground yourself?
5. Often a person’s ability to trust is based on past experiences or interactions with people. How do Clementine’s previous experiences influence her ability to trust the people she meets in the story? Provide a specific example.
6. Clementine had a visible physical disability. How does that affect the way she is treated by other characters in the book? Give two different examples of the ways other characters react to her.
7. The book features dynamic relationships between the characters. Pick three examples where the art communicates these relationships or enhances the dialogue between characters. For each, briefly explain what the art communicated to you about the character’s interactions.
8. Think of a time in your life where you have had to leave something behind in order to make a positive change or move forward. How hard was it to leave that thing behind? When did you realize that you had done the right thing?
9. Pick a single word you would use to describe Clementine in the first half of the book. What word would you use to describe her by the end of the book? How do you think her motivations and actions differed in the second half of the book?
10. The memory of Lee guides and helps shape Clementine’s outlook on the world. How does the memory of her experience with Lee help or hinder her relationships with other characters?
11. Discuss the difference, in your mind, between “surviving” and “thriving.”



TEACHER'S KEY

Reading/Interest Level: Grades 9-12

Common Core Aligned Pre-Reading

Comprehension and Collaboration:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1

Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9-10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

To build on themes of resilience, have students reflect on the following ideas. Focus on both academic and personal examples. Provide two examples for each:

- Consider times where you prefer to work independently.
- Consider times when you tried to tackle a task alone but ended up needing help.
- Think of times where you thrive with the help or support of others.
- Think about a situation where you were initially hesitant to ask for help, but were later thankful that you did.

STRUCTURED QUESTIONS

Ask students to answer one of two questions on a note card anonymously.

- I am confused by...
- I don't understand why....

1. Place students in small groups and hand them the cards with questions (one per member). Have students try to answer the question/clear up the confusion.
2. Emphasize that some questions may not have an objective answer and that it is ok if the group does not achieve a consensus.
3. Have each group share two of their answers. (e.g. name the answer that was easiest to answer. Share the questions that had the most discussion.)

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1.B

Work with peers to set rules for collegial discussions and decision-making (e.g., informal consensus, taking votes on key issues, presentation of alternate views), clear goals and deadlines, and individual roles as needed.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1.C

Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that relate the current discussion to broader themes or larger ideas; actively incorporate others into the discussion; and clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1.D

Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives, summarize points of agreement and disagreement, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views and understanding and make new connections in light of the evidence and reasoning presented.



ONE ITEM ACTIVITY

Ask students to imagine themselves in the Killington Mountain Ski Resort setting in the book. Assuming they had warm clothes, shelter, and modest food:

- Ask them to pick one essential item they would want to have with them.
- Ask them to briefly write down the reason they picked the item.
- Have students pair up and share their answers and reasoning.
- Have students ask their partner what they would bring if they were allowed another additional item.
- Repeat the activity with different partners and have students tell their partner the additional items they have previously chosen before indicating a new one.

INDEPENDENCE ACTIVITY

1. Have students independently complete a small quick write activity.
 - What are the top three skills/traits you have that would help you survive in Clementine's world? (These may be specific skills like cooking or personality traits like leadership or patience).
 - Of those three skills, which is the one skill that would help you the most? Write it down on a note card. Briefly explain why you chose that one as the most helpful.

- Give an example of a situation where that skill would be helpful.
2. Bring students back together. For the next part of the activity, have students display their notecard (carry it or have them write it on a name sticker). Ask students to stand up and walk around the room and briefly talk to students about their skills. Tell them to imagine they were trying to find other people to help them survive in the setting of the book. Have students circulate/talk until they have identified 2-3 other students that have skills that would compliment theirs. Come back together as a group to share their choices.
 3. Optional: Ask students to write about their choices or tie it to specific examples/themes from the book as their exit ticket from class.

RECOMMENDED TITLES FOR FURTHER READING

- *Everyday Hero Machine Boy* by Tri Vuong and Irma Kniivila. Skybound, 2022.
- *Locke & Key* by Joe Hill, illustrated by Gabriel Rodriguez. IDW, 2011.
- *Sentient* by Jeff Lemire, illustrated by Gabriel Walta. TKO Presents, 2021.
- *On a Sunbeam* by Tillie Walden. First Second, 2019.
- *The Walking Dead, vol. 1: Days Gone Bye* by Robert Kirkman, illustrated by Tony Moore. Image Comics, 2013.

