

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR *GRAINGER COUNTY TOMATOES*

Please feel free to print and handout

-SPOILER ALERT- For those that have not read the entire book, the ending will be spoiled.

1. Overall, what are your thoughts on the story and how it ended?
2. What was your favorite part of the book?
3. What are your thoughts on Elizabeth from where she was in the mining camp and what she accomplished toward the end of the book? Could you relate to her in anyway?
4. A lot of research went into the prison farm system in the early to mid-1900s. Had you heard of prison farms before?
5. Could you relate to Claire and how she loved Nancy Drew?
6. Did you think Gordon was the villain when he was first introduced?
7. Did you like the chapters with Irving tilling, fertilizing, and sowing seeds?
8. Elizabeth saw herself as eternally married to her husband, did you ever think she would end up with Irving or Luke?
9. Norman was vital to this story, what parts of the book that included Norman were your favorite?
10. What were your thoughts after Gordon drove his truck through the kitchen? What about when Elizabeth was transported to Chicago?
11. Why do you think Elizabeth told Irving to go back home?
12. Did you like it that Norman gave Elizabeth his farm?
13. Did you catch the parallels from Elizabeth working at Harris Clay Mining Camp and Irving working at Norville Industries? These settings are intentionally included in the story to be the opposite of farm life.
14. Did you like the ending where Elizabeth is running through the factory?

Fun Facts: Nick read Nancy Drew books when he was a child. He developed this story after hearing that a chef in France once had Grainger County Tomatoes flown to his restaurant because he claimed they were the best in the world. The photograph on the cover of a farm does not represent Grainger County as the entire county landscape features giant rolling hills. The four men in the coffee shop that Elizabeth meets are based on real men who met with each other in a small-town coffee shop in the 1940s. The attorney telling Norman the proposition in Chapter 2, the prison farm chapter, Elizabeth making a partnership with Irving, Claire interviewing Sleeves in Jail and Elizabeth running through the factory were chapters that were plotted out before Nick even began writing this novel.