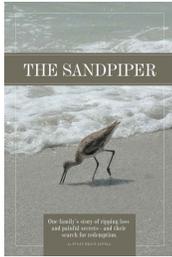


Books by the Stack

The Sandpiper by Susan Lovell



Local Author Susan Lovell tells a story about the Cameron Family, their struggle to understand and forgive each other, and their white-shingled cottage on Lake Michigan.

Why you'll like it: *Local Setting. Family Drama. Moving.*

About the Author: Susan Brace Lovell earned undergraduate and graduate degrees with honors in English from the University of Michigan and taught high school and college English. She co-founded Cadence, a weekly newspaper in East Grand Rapids, Michigan, and is the author of four non-fiction histories. Lovell is a longtime member of the Salvation Army and sits on the Grand Rapids Salvation Army Advisory Board. She and her husband live in Grand Rapids.

Questions for Discussion

1. How did you experience the book? Were you engaged immediately, or did it take you a while to "get into it"? How did you feel reading it—amused, sad, disturbed, confused, bored...?
2. Describe the main characters—personality traits, motivations, inner qualities.
 - Why do characters do what they do?
 - Are their actions justified?
 - Describe the dynamics between characters (in a marriage, family, or friendship).
 - How has the past shaped their lives?
 - Do you admire or disapprove of them?
 - Do they remind you of people you know?
3. Do the main characters change by the end of the book? Do they grow or mature? Do they learn something about themselves and how the world works?
4. Is the plot engaging—does the story interest you? Is this a plot-driven book: a fast-paced page-turner? Or does the story unfold slowly with a focus on character development? Were you surprised by the plot's complications? Or did you find it predictable, even formulaic?

5. Talk about the book's structure. Is it a continuous story...or interlocking short stories? Does the time-line move forward chronologically...or back and forth between past and present? Does the author use a single viewpoint or shifting viewpoints? Why might the author have chosen to tell the story the way he or she did—and what difference does it make in the way you read or understand it?
6. What main ideas—themes—does the author explore? (Consider the title, often a clue to a theme.) Does the author use symbols to reinforce the main ideas?
7. What passages strike you as insightful, even profound? Perhaps a bit of dialog that's funny or poignant or that encapsulates a character? Maybe there's a particular comment that states the book's thematic concerns?
8. Is the ending satisfying? If so, why? If not, why not...and how would you change it?
9. If you could ask the author a question, what would you ask? Have you read other books by the same author? If so how does this book compare. If not, does this book inspire you to read others?
10. Has this novel changed you—broadened your perspective? Have you learned something new or been exposed to different ideas about people or a certain part of the world?

(Questions by LitLovers.)



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