

The Reader Chapter 8-11 Discussion Questions

Essential Question: How does Schlink use language, technique, structure, and style to shape meaning in this novel?

1. What does your group make of the relationship between Hanna and Michael? Who is in charge? How does Schlink use diction and plot to indicate who has power in this relationship?
2. When does Schlink portray Michael as childlike and when does Schlink portray Michael as wise in Part I? How does this connect to the use of Michael's younger and older narrative voice strands? #bildungsroman
3. Discuss several examples of when Schlink has Michael's youthful lack of experience causes him to misunderstand his relationship with Hanna.
4. How is this book an allegory for intergenerational conflict in Germany? What motifs does Schlink use to further his metaphorical foil?
5. To what extent are you sympathetic with/for Hanna? When are you critical of her behavior and why?
6. What is the effect of all the allusions Schlink uses in these chapters on Michael's characterization?
7. Discuss the metaphorical significance of Hanna's streetcar job.
8. How does Schlink further the motif of books in chapters 8-11?
9. Discuss the significance of the title at this point in the novel.
10. When does Schlink use rhetorical questions in Part I? Does Schlink give the younger Michael or the older, reflective narrative voice of Michael more rhetorical questions? Why? Effect?
11. What is the Christian significance of Easter? What is the effect of Schlink choosing to place their biking trip during that holiday?
12. Explore Schlink's use of the motif of violence in the novel.

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