

Reading Group Guide for

A CHRISTMAS MEMORY

Discussion Questions

1. Richard Paul Evans has written more than 40 bestselling novels, yet has said, *A Christmas Memory* may be, to him, his most meaningful book. Why do you think this one was so important to him?
2. *A CHRISTMAS MEMORY* reads much like a Memoir. In the Author's Note, Richard writes "...when a writer bases a story on a life experience, it is usually the core of the story that is kept intact, while the names and details are changed. In a way this book is the opposite of that. While the main story is a composite of several of my childhood experiences, it's the details that remain stubbornly intact, some indelibly scarred into my memory." How much of this story do you think is real?
3. The author states that the mid sixties were a time of a cultural revolution, with civil unrest and race riots. How does this compare to today?
4. The author begins the story with the loss of his brother in Vietnam. What do you remember of the war? What were your feelings around it?
5. Mr. Foster is a role model for the young Richard. How have the portrayal of male figures in media changed over the years?
6. Richard's mother had an idyllic vision of her childhood home. Was it her memories that had changed or the world she grew up in?

7. Richard spent a lot of time alone and unsupervised by his parents. Was this common back then? How has parenting changed in the last fifty years.
8. Before reading this book had you ever heard of a Kintsugi vase? Why do you think the author chose it to represent his family?
9. Little Ricky is obsessed with robots. Do you think culture romanticized technology more back then?
10. The author says that Mrs. Covey was an accurate portrayal of his teacher. Did you ever have a teacher like Mrs. Covey? Did you ever have a teacher who was the opposite?
11. Mrs. Covey tells the children there is no Santa. Was it her place? Should children be told to believe in Santa?
12. Richard best friend is Beau. What role do animals play in a child's life? How about yours?
13. Little Ricky said that he had never read a book that "spoke" to him. What books changed your life?
14. What part of the book had the greatest impact on you?