

# READING GROUP GUIDE

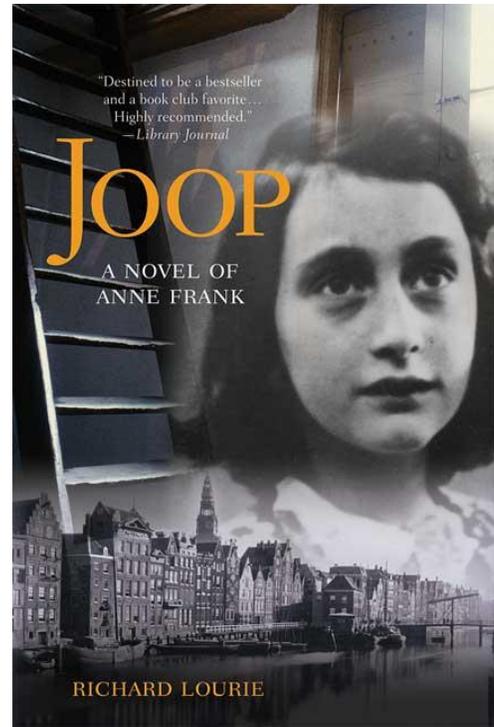
## *Joop*

*A Novel of Anne Frank*

*By Richard Lourie*

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### **About this Guide**

The following author biography and list of questions about *Joop* are intended as resources to aid individual readers and book groups who would like to learn more about the author and this book. We hope that this guide will provide you a starting place for discussion, and suggest a variety of perspectives from which you might approach *Joop*.

### **About the Book**

From internationally renowned author and translator Richard Lourie comes this highly acclaimed fictionalized account of the man who may have betrayed Anne Frank. Set in present-day Amsterdam, *Joop* begins with the startling confession of an old man—a secret he has never told anyone. Transporting readers through the agonizing Nazi takeover of World War II, *Joop* recounts his role as a boy seeking his father's praise and desiring to shelter his family. He figures out a way to provide for them, but in doing so, he sets in motion a chain of events that will horrify the entire world.

Extraordinarily written, with much honesty and humor, *The Book of Kehls* is the engaging story of a family that has known love, courage, and heartbreak in equal measure—and survived.



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## About the Author

**Richard Lourie** is the critically acclaimed author of a number of fiction and nonfiction books, including *The Autobiography of Joseph Stalin* and *Sakharov: A Biography*. His articles and reviews have appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The New Republic*, *The Nation* and many other influential publications. He served as Gorbachev's translator for *The New York Times*, and is currently a correspondent for *The Moscow Times*. He lives in New York City.

## Discussion Questions

1. Is Joop responsible for Anne Frank's death? Partially? Fully? Not at all?
2. Does he feel enough remorse for the suffering he helped cause?
3. Is Joop's brother Willem partially responsible for Anne Frank's death? Joop points out that Willem did eat the extra food they got for betraying Anne Frank which might have saved him from death during the terrible last winter of the war.
4. Should Joop have done anything possible to keep his father alive?
5. How do you understand the dream Joop has when he is ill with diphtheria? Is it mere delirium? Or does it have meaning? Or is it a mix of meaning and delirium?
6. How does the quote from George Orwell help you understand the book?
7. What is the role of food in this novel?
8. Does the book exploit the memory and image of Anne Frank or is it a sincere attempt to understand what motivates people during wartime?

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