



## Discussion Questions

1. *The Things We Keep* is told from the points of view of Eve, Anna, and Clem. How does this structure enhance your experience as a reader? How would this novel have been different had certain sections been omitted or told from a different point of view?
2. Did you learn anything you didn't previously know about dementia while reading this novel?
3. When Eve suggests to Angus that Anna and Luke are in love he says, "But even if they loved each other once, they can't really love each other now, can they? How can you love someone you don't remember?" Eric makes a similar argument, saying that people with dementia are incapable of falling in love. But Rosie says "Dementia steals things—memories, speech, other abilities. But I don't think it changes who you are or who you love." What did you think about love and dementia as you were reading? Did you agree more with Angus and Eric or with Rosie? Did your ideas change as you read? Why or why not?
4. *The Things We Keep* explores both what it's like to live with Alzheimer's disease and what it's like to live and love someone who has it. How did you react to the decisions Jack made and the way he and his wife treated Anna? Did you agree or disagree with them? What did you think of the way he and Luke's sister reacted to the relationship between Anna and Luke? How would you have reacted if you were in their positions?
5. What lessons does Eve learn from Anna that make her think differently about events and people in her own life?
6. Anna and Eve are at the center of this story, but *The Things We Keep* is full of colorful secondary characters. Who were your favorites?



7. Eve is initially unsettled when Rosie lies to Anna and tells her that she will take her home the next day to see her mother (who is no longer alive) and her brother. Rosie tells Eve, "We can make each moment frightening for her with the truth. Or we can lie to her and make each moment happy and joyous." How did you respond to this scene? What would you do if you were in Rosie's position? What do you think you would want someone to do if you were in Anna's position?
8. Eve risks her job at a time when she desperately needs it to help Anna and Luke despite being told that to do so is wrong and harmful. Why? What about the events in her own life make her feel so strongly about helping Anna?
9. Were you surprised by the truth about Anna's fall? Did you have any guesses about what happened as you were reading? Did they change as the novel progressed?
10. Sally Hepworth does a skillful job of creating characters who are well-rounded and complex and not defined by one characteristic or one action. Where do we see examples of this throughout the story?