



1. Do you think that there is a stigma against women who do not become mothers? If so, how much more damning is it for a woman who chooses not to have children rather than one who is simply unable? Do you think women who don't want children are judged more harshly than men who don't?
2. Do you view Claudia as a selfish person? How much do you think she is defined by her decision not to have children? Was your first impression of her a favorable one? Did you draw conclusions about her character after the first sentence of the novel?
3. Do you think that most people would see a partner who doesn't want children as a deal-breaker? Is this an issue that one can compromise on? Is there such thing as a deal-breaker when it comes to true love, or does true love conquer all?
4. Do you believe in soul mates? If so, do you believe that soul mates, by definition, want the same things in life?
5. There is a statement in *Baby Proof* that reads, "The biggest decision a woman can make in life is not who to marry but who should be the father of her children." Do you believe that, for most women, the issue of children and motherhood (and who to share that with) supersedes every other decision in their lives? Or do you think that women today wrestle with the decision to have children more than they care to admit?
6. Do you feel it was fair and reasonable for Ben to back out of their agreement not to have children? Is this a realistic promise in the first place? How would this have been a different story if it had been Claudia who changed her mind? Were you more frustrated with Ben for changing his mind about having children, or with Claudia for being unyielding in her views?
7. Through the characters of Daphne, Maura, and Jess, *Baby Proof* examines ways in which motherhood impacts relationships and vice versa. How do these side stories relate to the central theme of Claudia's decision to be "childfree"? How do you think Claudia's relationship with her own mother contributed to her feelings regarding having children?

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8. There's a scene in the novel in which Claudia, Maura, Daphne, and Jess are having lunch, and Claudia observes: "But as I listen to the three women I love most, I can't help but think how crazy it is that we all want something that we can't seem to have. Something that someone else at the table has in spades." How does the issue of motherhood in *Baby Proof* tap into more universal themes of unexpected outcomes and unfulfilled desires? What do you think of Daphne and Tony's request of Claudia? What do you think of Maura's decision to stay with Scott?
9. Claudia's disdain for Scott's infidelity is evident in her comments about him. Her disapproval of Jess's serial dating of married men seems more tempered, even though it could be said that without women like Jess, Scott would have no one to cheat on his wife with. Do you feel that our love for our friends frequently allows us to give them a pass for bad behavior? How often do you hide or minimize your true feelings in order to be supportive of a friend?
10. Discuss the ending of *Baby Proof* in relation to O. Henry's classic tale "The Gift of the Magi." Do you feel that the ending was satisfying? Do you think Claudia and Ben will go on to have children?

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