



# The History of Silver Lake as Told Through Its Deeds

## Discussion Questions for Book Clubs

Welcome to our guide for Book Club Discussion Facilitators using "The History of Silver Lake as Told Through Its Deeds." As discussion facilitator, in addition to your regular questions like "What was your favorite part of the book? Will this book leave a lasting impression?" and crafting your own questions, feel free to choose a few from this list to guide your discussion. Take your time during the discussion and focus on 5-8 questions that explore key themes such as family, faith, education, wartime service, and resilience in the face of adversity that are revisited throughout multiple chapters. You can also draw from our Educator and Student Discussion Questions to delve deeper into specific parts of the book. Consider the themes and characters of "The History of Silver Lake as Told through its Deeds" as you prepare. Think about how the book is structured and use bookmarks or make a list of page numbers for easy reference during the discussion. To ensure everyone's voice is heard early on, consider asking members to briefly share their opinions on the book.

### Discussion Questions

Q1: How does the author convey the passage of time in "The History of Silver Lake as Told through its Deeds"?

Q2: "The History of Silver Lake as Told through its Deeds" is described as having a "spiral" structure, indicating that it revisits certain themes and concepts in a recurring pattern. What are some of these themes that are revisited multiple times throughout the book, highlighting the interconnectedness of its narrative?

Q3: How does the chapter "More Figures in Silver Lake's Story" serve as an ending to the book? Why was Robert "Bobbie" Vernon Stonesifer, Sr. saved as the last entry?

Q4: Reflecting on the diverse journeys depicted in "History of Silver Lake," how does the collective resilience of individuals like Barbara Gross Forgas, Andy Torchia, Harry F. Peck, and Bobbie Stonesifer inspire a deeper understanding of resilience amidst adversity?

Q5: Why is it important to preserve local history, even if it may not always "take hold" with the local population? Why is folk lore so captivating and often rival local history in interest?

Q6: How do the Torchia, Henkelmann and Miller families prioritize family unity and connection, especially in the face of challenges such as war, financial hardships, and changes in their lives?

Q7: Discuss the role of tradition and heritage in shaping the values and priorities of the Torchia, Henkelmann and Miller families. How do they pass down these traditions from one generation to the next?

Q8: Reflect on the intergenerational relationships within the Torchia, Henkelmann and Miller families. How do grandparents, parents, and grandchildren contribute to the richness of family life and the passing down of values and traditions?



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Q9: Reflect on your own family experiences and traditions. How do they compare to those of the Torchia, Henkelmann and Miller families? What lessons can you learn from their stories about the importance of family in your own life?

Q10: How does faith influence the actions and decisions of characters like Meade Torchia, Andy Torchia, and Reinhold Henkelmann in the narrative?

Q11: Why do people name their children after victorious generals in war, as was likely the case with Winfield Scott Hammond after General Winfield Scott and William Grant Stonesifer after Ulysses S. Grant?

Q12: Explore the experiences of two soldiers who were present at Normandy during World War II – Harry Peck in his disabled landing craft and Dr. Eugene Hetrick in battlefield hospitals.