

THE GRACE YEAR

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Do you think *The Grace Year* takes place in an alternate past or is this our possible future? If in the past, how did we evolve from this? If in the future, how did we get here?
2. What is the role of nature in the book? How do the meanings of flowers and their use enhance the story?
3. Do you think Tierney's dreams are her magic? Does she have the power to see the future?
4. Aside from the hemlock silt, why do you think the girls act the way they do during the grace year? Is it a product of their upbringing or is anyone capable of this?
5. Why do you think a practice grew out of selling the grace year girls' parts as an aphrodisiac or youth serum? How is this related to our current society's obsession with youth?
6. What do you think of Kiersten's statement on page 141: "The grace year is ours. This is the one place we can be free. There's no more tempering our feelings, no more swallowing our pride. Here we can be whatever we want. And if we let it all out, we won't have to feel those things anymore. We won't have to feel at all." Does this change your view of Kiersten?
7. What are your feelings towards Tierney's mother? Why do you think she acts the way she does? How did your opinion of her change at the end of the novel?

8. How does Tierney change during the course of the grace year?
9. Which men in the novel do you think would support giving more power to the women? What makes a good ally in the fight for equality?
10. Based on the ending, what is the future of the women of Garner County?

