

The Summer I Turned Pretty

Book Club Questions

1. Author Jenny Han contrasts several different types of love at once: first loves, new loves, and the love between a child and its parent.

Of the different types, which impacted you the most with her depiction? Which ones the least? Why?

2. Belly describes herself as “living for the summer” in the months of June to August, with all her winter months spent as a less real version of herself.

“My whole life was measured in summers. Like I don't really begin living until June, until I'm at that beach, at that house.”

Have you ever experienced a time or place where you felt like a more real version of yourself? When and where was it?

3. The friendship between the two mothers is described as one almost like sisters. How is the love between them made clear?

4. Belly describes driving up to the house on the first day of summer by saying she recognized the familiar flutter in her chest.

“The wind making my hair feel sticky, the salty sea breeze, all of it felt just right. Like it had been waiting for me to get there.”

What is it about the nostalgia of the familiar that can be more exciting than something brand new? Why do you think that is?

5. The primary summer that takes place in this book is the one where Belly shifts from little girl to young woman in the eyes of the boys she sees every summer.

“Everything was the same but not. They looked at me like I was a real girl, not somebody's little sister.”

How is this metamorphosis depicted? How does it shift things for everyone who stays at the house?

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6. How does being the odd one out of the three boys' unit shape Belly's views of herself? How does being included (or excluded) change the way a person is?

7. As much as the book is about life and learning to love, it is also about sadness and human mortality. How are the two themes used by Han to contrast and heighten each other? Do you find this technique effective? Why or why not?

8. When Belly starts seeing Cam, she gains her first real boyfriend (even if she still thinks about Conrad). Do you think what she does when trying to make Conrad jealous is justified or unfair? Explain.

9. The summer Belly brings her best friend Taylor to Cousins Beach, she knew before it even happened that she would regret it.

How is the fact that you can be best friends with someone and not want to share your whole life with both be true at the same time? What are other examples of contradictory truths are there in the book?

10. From the beginning, Belly's relationships with each of the characters in the book are what drive the story.

From brother figures turned love triangle, to an older brother and mother with their own family dynamics, this coming-of-age story shows how pivotal the relationships in our young lives are in shaping the people we become.

What were the most important relationships in your life growing up? How did they shape who you are today?

11. The concept of "perfect" is a recurring theme throughout the book. The perfect day, the perfect summer, the perfect first love... How does the whole book lean into this last summer before everything changes "perfect"?

12. Out of the many memorable scenes in the book, which stuck with you the most?

13. Did **The Summer I Turned Pretty** make you want to read the next book in the trilogy? Why or why not?