

THE MEANING OF HOME

Book Club Discussion Questions

The Meaning of Home is author Scott Fegley's debut novel, inspired by his adopted rescue dog, Charlie. In the novel, Charlie, a mixed breed part Pomeranian - part fox, recounts his quest for the peace of a permanent home from his accidental conception through the events that caused his homelessness, his life among human inhabitants of a homeless camp, and his experiences in shelters, veterinary hospitals and a foster home until he is finally adopted and loved by a young girl, Lucy McAllister, and her family. However, Charlie learns that even a permanent home isn't always peaceful. The McAllisters have trouble enough of their own. Ultimately, Charlie's story is about hope and the perseverance to get up and try again.

- In the novel, the author uses Charlie's first-person point of view to tell the story. Do you believe the author effectively conveyed Charlie's world view in a unique way? Why or why not?

- Domestic violence remains a serious and pervasive problem in American society. Do you believe the novel accurately portrays a situation of domestic violence and its impact on humans and pets? Why or why not?

- In the novel, Charlie describes several ways in which canine lives and human lives are similar. Name three and say whether you agree or disagree with the parallel that Charlie draws.

- Which of the major characters in the novel demonstrates the most personal growth and explain your reasoning?

- Through Claire, Al, and Father Paul, the author weaves different perspectives on faith into the story, and especially the power of faith to give hope and inspire one to persevere. What is Charlie's perspective? And what's yours?

- Prejudice and fear are negative human reactions toward people who aren't like us and make us feel uncomfortable. What are some of the prejudices and fears expressed in the novel toward the homeless?

- After reading the novel, have your feelings toward the homeless and the causes of homelessness changed in any way? Explain.

- Several studies have shown the healing power of pet companionship. Do you believe Claire's study on the effect of pets in reducing relapse into addiction and motivating the homeless to improve their situation is based in fact?

- How does Charlie express the author's views on grief after the loss of a loved one?

- What is the meaning of "Home"?