



Book Club Questions

A Time of Witches by Madeline Martin

Ice Breaker Question

If you were a witch in Sybil's world, what everyday object would you turn into your magical charm, and what animal would you choose as your familiar?

1. How does Lilith's gradual disappearance in the story symbolize the broader themes of women's voices being silenced in history?
2. In 1645, Sybil's status as an educated and wealthy widow makes her a target. Why is her independence so threatening to men like Magistrate Robert Walsingham?
3. Sybil protects her younger sister but also fears her power. How does their relationship evolve throughout the novel? Did you understand Sybil's fears?
4. How did you feel about Anne's betrayal of Sybil? Did her circumstances make her actions understandable, even if you couldn't excuse them?
5. What choices, fears, or societal pressures do Lilith and Sybil share, despite living nearly 400 years apart? Which character did you connect with more?
6. How did the prison scenes change your understanding of the witch trials and the treatment of accused women? Were you surprised by the methods used to force confessions?
7. The novel draws on real historical events, including the 1645 witch trials in Bury St Edmunds. How did knowing that parts of the story were based on actual events affect your reading experience?
8. How did alternating between present-day Savannah and 1645 Suffolk affect the suspense? Did the three-day deadline add urgency? Which timeline held your attention more?
9. The novel explores the consequences of women challenging the expectations of their time. What do you think is its most important message about power, fear, and the treatment of women? Does that message still resonate today?

Book club questions by Princeton Book Review