



Betsy-Tacy Reading Guide

INTRODUCTION

The world in which Betsy Ray and her friends grew up differed greatly from the world as we know it today. The stories begin just before the turn of the 20th century and are set in the Minnesota town of Mankato (Deep Valley). Author Maud Hart Lovelace (Betsy Ray) and her friends Bick Kenney (Tacy Kelly) and Midge Gerlach (Tib Muller) form the center of the stories, which began as bedtime amusements for Maud's daughter Merian and evolved into the popular series of ten books.

Loosely autobiographical, the novels trace the friendship that began between Betsy and Tacy and soon expanded to include Tib and, later, a host of other girls and boys. The characters grew from childhood into young adulthood, from a trio of best friends into a fun-loving high school Crowd, from the innocence of children into the complex situations of the grown-up world. As their world widens and grows more challenging, so do the characters' personalities emerge and mature.

Written between 1940 and 1955, these books have proved to be timeless. Themes of family, friendship, faith, love, and the need for standards in life show us how these ideals shaped our past, influence our present, and hold promise for our future. This guide is intended to stimulate discussions and activities relating to these delightful stories.

READING SKILLS & STRATEGIES

Decision-Making
Problem-Solving
Comparison
Contrast
Descriptive Language
Writing About Life
Summarizing
Drawing Conclusions
Making Inferences

THEMES

Friendship
Family
Love
Faith
Growing Up
Morality/Standards
Facing Problems
Responsibility
Memories

INTERDISCIPLINARY CONNECTIONS

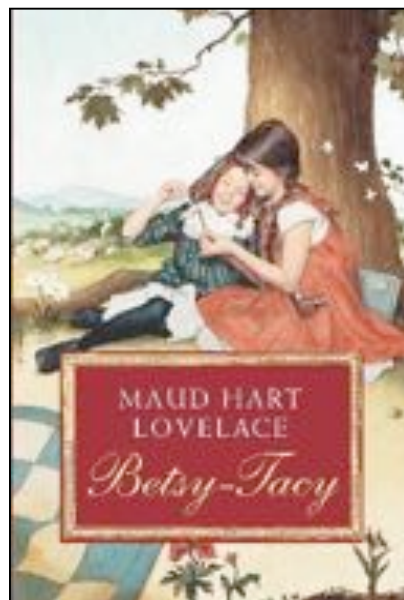
World History: Historical Events and People
Art
Music: Popular and Classical Foreign
Language: French, German, Latin
Writing
Literature and Poetry
Basic Philosophical Ideas



Betsy-Tacy

By Maud Hart Lovelace

“It was difficult, later, to think of a time when Betsy and Tacy had not been friends. Hill Street came to regard them almost as one person” (*Betsy-Tacy*, p. 1). As the series begins, though, the girls are strangers, and an unfortunate misunderstanding at their first meeting threatens to keep them apart. But fate intervenes in the person of Betsy’s mother, and the two five-year-olds become inseparable. The girls have many adventures in this first book, and it is here that Betsy’s storytelling gets its start. Then Tib moves into her “chocolate-colored house” and becomes the third person in the “immortal trio.” Published first in 1940, *Betsy-Tacy* is a gentle introduction to the warmth and timeless nature of this series.



Chapter 1.

Why did Tacy run away?

How did Betsy react to this?

Chapter 2.

How did Betsy feel when she learned Tacy’s name?

What is unusual about the Rays’ bathtub?

What is Tacy’s problem?

Chapter 3.

The “cloud story” is our first introduction to Betsy’s storytelling gift. Do you ever tell stories like this?

Can you share a fantasy story that you have made up or have been told by someone else?

Chapter 4.

Betsy’s mother was a firm believer in people having “private places.” Do you have one? Can you tell us about it?

How do Betsy’s and Tacy’s “treasures” (stones and moss) differ from our childhood treasures today?

What “loose end” does the author leave us with regarding the chicken story?

Chapter 5.

Compare and contrast Betsy and Tacy on the first day of school.

How does their recess compare with your recess time?

Have you ever had a “queer frightened lump” inside when you did something wrong?

Compare and contrast the causes of Betsy’s crying with those of Tacy’s crying.

Chapter 6.

Describe Mrs. Ray and Mrs. Kelly.

Discuss the idea of a milkman delivering milk. (This comes up later when we read about the baker's boy delivering baked goods to people's homes.)

How is the Milkman Story magical?

Chapter 7.

Do/did you play with dolls? Paper dolls?

Are/were your dolls similar to Betsy's and Tacy's? Or different? How?

How do you think Betsy and Tacy feel when they mystify their older sisters?

Chapter 8.

Do you color Easter eggs? Do you "play" with them the way Betsy and Tacy did?

How could anyone "play" with hard-boiled colored eggs?

Was it unusual for Baby Bee to be so sick and die? What might have been her illness?

How does Betsy help Tacy deal with Bee's death?

Chapter 9.

What is the "foreshadowing" at the beginning of this chapter?

What is "dinner time" for the girls? What is the evening meal called?

How does George react to the girls' plan to buy the house?

Chapter 10.

Describe some differences between "playing" today and "playing" as Betsy and Tacy played.

How does one "go calling"? What are "calling cards"?

Who are Mrs. Vanderbilt and Mrs. Astor?

Who seems to be the decision-maker between the girls? Why do you think this is?

Chapter 11.

Describe the girls' fascination with Milwaukee. Why do you think they are so entranced with the name? What, if anything, does it make *you* think of?

How does Tom's arrival change the dynamics of the girls' game? Why is this?

Chapter 12.

What do you think Mr. Ray's surprise is?

Why is Betsy so disgusted with Julia?

Why did Betsy want to get away by herself?

How does Tacy comfort Betsy? Why does this surprise Betsy?

Chapter 13.

Two important things happen in this chapter. Why is climbing the Big Hill so important? Describe the other important event. Why is it important?

Chapter 14.

What is Tib doing when the girls first catch sight of her?

What is rather unusual about Betsy's and Tacy's first meeting with Tib?

How do friendships usually begin today? How is it different with Betsy, Tacy and Tib?

What astounding remark does Tib make about Milwaukee?

GENERAL QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS BOOK

Describe how family is an important theme in this book.

How is friendship another important theme?

What ideas do you get about life in the late 1800s in Minnesota?

Does the last page leave you wanting to read more? Why or why not?

Do you have a best friend? Two best friends? How are your friendships similar to that of Betsy, Tacy, and Tib? How are they different?

WRITING ACTIVITY

Write a short story in which you tell an incident that involved you and a best friend.

Write a paragraph in which you describe some new idea you found in this book.

DRAMA

Choose a scene or chapter from the book to act out with a partner.

Your group may contain up to four members if needed. You may use simple props and costumes if you like. Your presentation should not exceed five minutes.

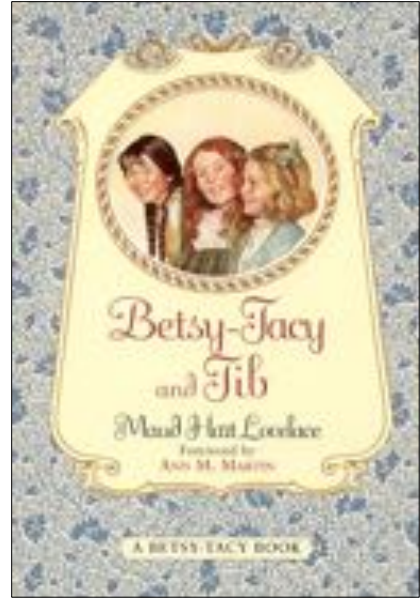


Betsy-Tacy and Tib

By Maud Hart Lovelace

“Betsy and Tacy were friends first. They were good friends, and they never quarreled. When Tib moved into the neighborhood . . . [although] many people expected it, no trouble began . . . The three of them didn’t quarrel, any more than the two of them had” (*Betsy-Tacy and Tib*, pp. 1–2). They didn’t always behave themselves, they sometimes quarreled with their older sisters, but they always had good times.

The three friends find themselves in some hilarious predicaments in this second volume of the series. Betsy’s fertile imagination provides the stimulus for most of these situations. While Tacy follows Betsy unquestioningly, Tib provides a tentative voice of reason that is usually overruled by the others. But, as we come to see, that’s “just like Tib.”



Chapter 1.

How does “two’s company, three’s a crowd” apply in this chapter?

Why did Betsy and Tacy have to wait for Tib each morning?

Chapter 2.

How did Tacy and Tib “fly” differently from the maple tree?

What was the purpose of Betsy’s story about flying?

What was the “joke” Tib knew about Betsy, and how did Betsy respond? What do you think Betsy was feeling?

Chapter 3.

The girls poke each other often. What are some of the reasons for this?

Describe some differences between what the girls wore to the carnival and what you would wear to one.

How does Betsy turn Tib’s “terrible news” into fun?

Why do you think the girls gave up trying to fly?

Chapter 4.

Name some differences between a cellar and a basement.

What does the “Three Little Pigs” reenactment accomplish?

Chapter 5.

How did Betsy’s, Tacy’s, and Tib’s “playing over” differ from what children do after school today?

What is “keeping house”?

Have you ever been home alone? How did you feel?

Do you think anyone suspected what the girls had cooked up? Why or why not?

What would you have named the Everything Pudding?

Chapter 6.

Look upside-down into a mirror and walk around in some familiar rooms or outside. How does this make you feel?

When the author says that Tib “was beginning to get used to Betsy” after playing with her for two years, what does she mean?

How does Freddie complicate the “Mirror Palace” game?

Matilda scolded the girls and said she had heard that Mrs. Ray’s kitchen looked nice after the girls had kept house for her. What was she inferring by this?

Chapter 7.

What is diphtheria?

Have you ever been separated from a friend for a long time How did you feel during and after the separation?

How does Tacy’s return to health lead to mischief?

What seems to be Julia’s and Katie’s favorite exclamation?

Chapter 8.

What does “being good” mean to you?

Have you ever formed a club? Tell us about it: who was in it, what did you do, was it secret, did you have rules, etc.?

What do you think is the real reason the girls form clubs?

Discuss “hair shirts.”

What was the problem with the TCKC?

Can you explain the irony in the last sentence in this chapter: “In silence the three of them looked at the sunset and thought about God”?

Chapter 9.

What exciting news does Tib treat so nonchalantly?

Why are Betsy and Tacy so excited? Why so scared?

Besides the TCKC, what do the girls think up to puzzle their sisters? Do you ever do this to siblings or friends?

What “secrets” are revealed in this chapter?

How do the girls react to Mrs. Ray’s club suggestion? Why?

Chapter 10.

Why do you think the girls feel “queer” when they see Aunt Dolly for the first time?

How does Aunt Dolly entertain the girls? Would this be entertaining for you and your friends?

Do you remember wanting to be ten? What is so important and magical about that number?

GENERAL QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS BOOK

Compare and contrast Tib with Betsy and Tacy.

Describe the ways in which the girls relate to adults. Is it similar to how you interact with grown ups today? Or different? How?

Have you ever done something that resulted in your being in big trouble, the way the girls did in this book? What were the consequences?

What was your favorite chapter in this book? Why?

RESEARCH/WRITING ACTIVITIES

Do some research on diphtheria, and share your findings with the class.

Choose one of the following chapters—1, 5, 6, 7, or 8—and write a different ending or a sequel that takes the story farther.

Start a list or graphic organizer with ideas you get about your own life by reading these books. You might include differences you see between your life and Betsy's, lessons that Betsy and her friends learn, ways that the girls' lives are similar to yours, new words you learn (or new meanings for familiar words), historical facts you discover, or some other idea that appeals to you. Check this out with your teacher once you have decided what you want to do.

DRAMA

With a group, choose one of the girls' activities from this book to pantomime for the class. See how long you can keep your classmates puzzled and guessing.

Make up a tune for the "Everything Pudding" song, and sing it for the class with your group.



Betsy and Tacy Go Over the Big Hill

By Maud Hart Lovelace



“You have two numbers in your age when you are ten. It’s the beginning of growing up,” Betsy would say . . . It was strange that Betsy and Tacy and Tib were in such a hurry to grow up, for they had so much fun being children . . . But just the same [they] wanted to be ten years old” (*Betsy and Tacy Go Over the Big Hill*, pp. 1–2). And these important birthdays do come—first Tacy, then Tib, and finally Betsy—and with “growing up” comes a new set of adventures for the three friends.

Crowning a Queen of Summer in the neighborhood is at the core of the events in this third book. Problems arise immediately, which lead to some unwise choices and hurt feelings. Romance is in the air as well when the girls fall in love for the first time. Maud Hart Lovelace continues her sensitively written coming-of-age saga and shows us that ten is, indeed, the right age for having fun.

Chapter 1.

What are “pugs” (a hair style)?

What is the “grippe”?

What is Little Syria? Describe it. What is surprising about it to the girls?

What are some of the things the girls expect to do once they are ten?

What makes Betsy secretly fear that growing up might not be as wonderful as she and her friends anticipate?

Chapter 2.

Do you get birthday spankings and pinches? Tell us about special ways you celebrate your birthday.

How do the girls act grown up? What do you notice about Tib’s actions and attitude as compared to the others? Can you explain it?

Do you get any idea of what is going to happen when the girls play at Tib’s house after school? How does Betsy try to explain to herself the awkwardness they all feel?

Do you begin to suspect what is going on when Mrs. Ray sends Betsy on an errand before supper?

Discuss the way Maud Hart Lovelace ends this chapter.

Chapter 3.

Do some research on Alfonso XIII of Spain. See if you can find pictures of him as a boy. Is he as handsome as the girls think? Share your findings with the class.

How do the girls decide who should marry King Alfonso?
What are some of the ways they show their love for him?
What is a “lodge”? Do any of your fathers belong to one? What can you tell us about it (some are secret)?
What is the difference between the “blood royal” and “commoners”?
What do you think happened to the picnic basket?

Chapter 4.

Why are the girls so happy to see the goat with their picnic lunch?
What else do they discover almost immediately?
Describe the little girl.
What makes the ensuing picnic so strange?
Where is Syria? What do you learn about it in this chapter?

Chapter 5.

What is an accordion? What are “accordion pleats”? Why are they called that?
The “Cat Duet” is an actual song by Gioacchino Rossini. See if you can find a recording of it to play for the class.
Contrast Julia’s Entertainment performance with Katie’s.
Why are the boys teasing Naifi? Have you ever been teased (or seen someone else being teased) like that? Can you share your feelings about it with the class?
Does the teasing incident end satisfactorily? Why or why not?

Chapter 6.

How does the big quarrel get its start? Who do you think was right (or wrong)?
What does Maud Hart Lovelace mean when she wrote (p. 83), “Their dismay was mixed with chagrin”?
Describe how the quarrel escalates. Have you ever been involved in something like this with a friend or sibling?
How do you think Mr. Ray felt when he drove up in the middle of the quarrel?
What does Mrs. Ray mean when she calls Mr. Ray a “perfect Solomon”?

Chapter 7.

Before reading this chapter, predict what you think is going to happen.
What is “deaf and dumb”? What do we call that sort of disability today?
Why do you think the baker’s boy signed Julia’s list?
What is an ice cream social? Have you ever been to one?
Why are the girls so excited and nervous about seeing the insides of unfamiliar houses? Do you like to look into strangers’ homes? Why or why not?
Explain the girls’ reactions to finding Julia and Katie at the ice cream social. Do they have a valid reason for being angry? Explain your reasoning.

Chapter 8.

Katie and Julia suspect something. Why don’t they follow the three younger girls?
Notice how Maud Hart Lovelace uses a metaphor to compare the valley to a “wide

green hammock.” Listen for other uses the author makes of figurative language and share them (or others you may recall from the earlier books) with the class.

What does Mr. Ray mean when he observes that “it’s wonderful how the Syrians get ahead”?

Tib observes that Mr. Meecham “doesn’t seem to take much interest in anything but his fence.” What ideas about Mr. Meecham’s character does that give you?

Tib differentiates between “trespassing” and “calling.” Is there a difference? Explain your answer.

Explain how the clanging of the gate as it shuts behind the girls is foreshadowing. What do you expect?

Have you ever been threatened/chased by a dog? Is the girls’ reaction (running) a good one? Why or why not?

“The place where they stood in the road was warm with smiles.” Can you explain this lovely idea?

A charming endearment that Naifi’s father uses is to call her his “eyes.” Another expression that dates back to the Old Testament in the Bible says “the eyes are the windows of the soul.” Can you relate these ideas?

What is unusual about the way Naifi’s father writes? Do you know of another language that does this?

Chapter 9.

At the beginning of this chapter, can you think of a good way to end the quarrel before it gets worse?

Why do you think Tib wants to give in?

What is “gibberish”?

Ignoring someone is a cruel thing to do. How does it affect Betsy when Julia ignores her? Have you ever ignored (or been ignored by) someone else? Would you share your experience with the class?

How does the quarrel end? How is this ironic?

Chapter 10.

When Mr. and Mrs. Ray talk about the “fine weather” lasting, what are they really talking about?

What are Mohammedans? What do we call them today?

Were you surprised when you met Old Bushara? Explain.

How does Tib almost ruin the plans to crown an American queen? She doesn’t mean to do so. What does this incident show you about Tib?

Chapter 11.

See if you can find a recording of “Pomp and Circumstance” (by Edward Elgar) and play it for the class. Do you recognize it? Why is this a good choice of music for the coronation?

Why does the letter from Spain frighten the girls?

What makes this book’s ending so perfect?

GENERAL QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS BOOK

- What was your favorite chapter in this book? Why?
- Do any of the characters in this book remind you of any of the people in your life? How?
- Family is an important theme in this book. What does Maud Hart Lovelace think about the value of family and the way family members should behave toward each other?
- Is family life different today? How or why do you think so?
- Another important theme is friendship. When you look at Betsy, Tacy, and Tib, can you understand why they are such good friends, even with all the differences among the three of them? Do you have any friends that are totally unlike you? Totally like you? Does it matter?
- Do you think Ethel Roosevelt ever received the girls' letter?
- Why do you think they never heard back from her?
- What are some of the unwise choices made by both sets of girls in this book? Do you think the girls learned any lessons as the result of these choices and the ensuing consequences?

WRITING ACTIVITIES

Little Syria is based on a small community that was once called Tinkcomville in Mankato, Minnesota. Choose one of the characters from Little Syria that you met in this story and write an event from that person's point of view. For example, you could choose Mr. Meecham's daughter and write a little story in which she has an adventure. Or you could write the teasing story from Naifi's point of view.

Choose either Naifi, her father, or her grandfather and write a description of that person. Include both physical traits and personality traits.

DRAMA

Many games are mentioned in this book: Going to Jerusalem (we call it Musical Chairs), Blind Man's Bluff, Pom-Pom Pull-Away, Run Sheep Run, Prisoners' Base. With a group, choose one of the games and find out how it is played. Then lead the class in playing the game. Each group should choose a different game, so be certain to check with the teacher before you begin.

With a group, make up a short play that involves teasing, the way Naifi was being teased by the boys. It should have a conclusion that is satisfactory but realistic. Perform your play for the class.

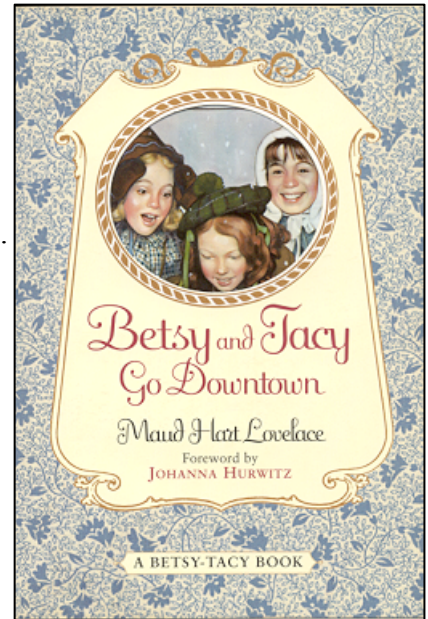


Betsy and Tacy Go Downtown

By Maud Hart Lovelace

“Papa said he was amazed and astounded,” [said Tacy]. “He said he thought he had brought us up to appreciate good literature. He said there was a set of Dickens in the house, and Shakespeare . . . and how did a child of his happen to be reading trash? Then he went out to the kitchen range and lifted the lid and threw it in . . .”

Tacy’s troubles with “trash” literature open the fourth book of this delightful series. And that’s just the beginning of the girls’ varied adventures. From Winona’s tickets to a wonderful new invention, from stories and parties to the theater and Christmas, the three friends never lack for excitement. As their world expands to include new friends, Maud Hart Lovelace guides her twelve-year-old heroines through yet another volume of their growing-up journey, and “going downtown” alone is only the beginning.



Chapter 1.

What kind of stories has Betsy been writing?

What was the problem with Rena’s books?

Why do the girls keep Rena’s books a secret from their parents?

See what you can find out about “dime novels.”

Why do Betsy and Tacy make fun of Julia and Jerry? How is Tib’s attitude different?

What are knickerbockers?

The girls hatch a plot to “earn” the money to replace Rena’s book. Describe their plan.

Chapter 2.

What do you think is the cause for the excitement that the girls find downtown?

What impression do you get of Winona Root? Describe her.

Tacy is afraid of the horseless carriage. Is Betsy afraid? Is Tib? How do you know?

How does Tib wangle the first ride privilege away from Winona?

Describe Betsy’s and Tacy’s reactions. What about Winona’s?

What is Winona’s newest brag? How does that affect the three girls?

What is “flogging”?

Chapter 3.

Describe the girls' ploy to get Winona to take them to see *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Do you think it will work? Why or why not?
What do you notice about the way class is begun? Why does this seem unusual to us?
What ends the attempt at hypnotizing Winona?
Are the girls helping their cause by their actions? Explain.

Chapter 4.

Explain Betsy's reluctance to ask her father to take her to the play (there are at least two reasons).
Have you added any ideas to your impression (from Chapter 2) of Winona?
Describe the girls' next strategy. Does Winona catch on?
What is "passe-partout"?
Do you think giving up is the right thing to do?
How does Betsy's plan help the girls cope with their disappointment?
What new character "appears" in this chapter? What do we learn about him?
How does Mrs. Ray feel about him?
What is "camphor"?
What is the unexpected result of Betsy's play-writing?
Trace the "highs" and "lows" of Winona's tickets and the girls' hopes.

Chapter 5.

Have you ever been to a theater as grand as the Opera House is described? Where? What for? Does a fancy theater make a difference in your enjoyment of the show? Explain.
Have you read *Uncle Tom's Cabin*? Can you share your thoughts about it with the class?
Give some examples of how Winona is showing off.

Chapter 6.

Discuss the information about Uncle Keith we get in this chapter.
Betsy's mother is a great believer in people having private places (p. 70).
Do you have a private place? Can you tell us about it?
What does it mean to "not let any grass grow under [your] feet"?
Can you think of any other figures of speech like this one? For example, "A rolling stone gathers no moss." Explain your examples.
Why is Betsy's excitement over her new desk dimmed?
How does Mrs. Ray react when she sees the novels Betsy has written? Why does she not want Betsy to read the dime novels like Rena's?
What is Mrs. Ray's secret plan? How does she think it will benefit Betsy?
How does the plan immediately affect Betsy?

Chapter 7.

Betsy is excited to be going to the library. Why is she also a bit unhappy about it? What reasons are behind Maud Hart Lovelace's calling the library a "small white marble temple"?

How does Miss Sparrow react to Betsy? Why?

Do you ever get as caught up in your reading as Betsy does? Can you tell us about it – either generally or with a specific instance?

Why does Betsy feel like crying after she is rescued by Mrs. Poppy?
Why won't she let herself cry?

Look again at the last sentence of this chapter. What is the literary device Maud Hart Lovelace uses here?

Chapter 8.

The statue of "Winged Victory" is a copy of a real statue that is on display in the Louvre in Paris. See what you can find out about it.

What would be the pros and cons of living in a hotel?

What are portieres? Gibson Girls? Remington cowboys?

How does Mrs. Poppy personify the river? What river is it?

What two reasons to be sad does Betsy discover about Mrs. Poppy?

Why is Mrs. Ray doubtful about going to visit Mrs. Poppy?

Chapter 9.

What is the significance of going out bobsledding at night?

What is the meaning of Jerry's slang expression, "Go way back and sit down"?

Why don't the mothers like bobsledding parties?

How does Betsy amuse herself when she stays home from school? How do *you* amuse yourself when you have to stay home?

What things does Betsy call on to incorporate into her story, "Flossie's Accident"?

Does this give you any tips or ideas about your own writing?

Discuss Betsy's story and Tib's copy of it. What do you see that is wrong with it?

Will it be published? Why or why not?

Chapter 10.

What is the fun of "going shopping to shop"? Do you ever do this?

Is the ornament each girl buys a good purchase? Why?

The girls are very clever about having an ice cream treat after shopping. How do they manage it? Do you ever maneuver a parent like this? Does it work?

Read again the last sentence from this chapter. What does it mean? How can you hold Christmas in your hands?

Chapter 11.

What makes the days before Christmas so exciting at the Ray house? Do we experience this sort of excitement today? Explain your answer (why or why not).

Compare and contrast the Rays' Christmas tree with your own.

Margaret's doll is the peak of the Christmas excitement for the entire Ray family. What does this tell you about them?

Many children today know what they will receive for Christmas (or any gift-giving day). How does this make those holidays different for us?

Why do you think Mrs. Ray continues to have misgivings about Mrs. Poppy? (Hint: Think of what Mrs. Poppy's career was before she married Mr. Poppy.)

Why do you think Betsy has such serious thoughts while she is looking out Mrs. Poppy's window?

What "secret" does Mrs. Poppy tell Betsy? Why does she want to keep it a secret?

Why does Betsy's hug and kiss mean so much to Mrs. Poppy?

Chapter 12.

Why are the Ray girls so excited about seeing *Rip Van Winkle*?

Have you ever been as excited about something as Betsy, Tacy, and Tib are about the play? Can you share your story with the class?

Do you know how to play the game of "Authors"? To what other card game is it similar? If you have the game, bring it in to share with the class.

Explain how the girls are invited to act in the play.

Chapter 13.

What is a "quick study"?

What do the girls mean by being "painted"?

What does Tib mean when she says, "Thank goodness I'm up in my part"?

Find out what "supernumeraries" (or "supes") are.

Rip Van Winkle slept for 20 years. The sign on the Inn changed from King George III of England to George Washington. Can you infer what happened while Rip was sleeping?

Were you surprised to find out that Mr. Kee is actually Betsy's Uncle Keith?

Why does Mrs. Poppy smile but look like she is ready to cry as she watches the Rays go off with Uncle Keith?

Chapter 14.

What are the "attacks" that Rena is afraid of?

Why do you think Mr. Ray makes jokes while everyone else is crying?

(There are at least two reasons.)

How has Mrs. Poppy played an important role in Uncle Keith's return?

How does Mrs. Ray react?
What last surprise happens to the Ray family?

GENERAL QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS BOOK

- Whom does Betsy “thank” for the success of her poem? Is this a good ending for this book? Explain your answer.
- What themes can you find in this book? Explain.
- Can you relate Tacy, Tib, or Winona to anyone in your life? Explain.
- Who is your favorite character in this book? Why?
- Is there any character you do NOT like? Why?
- What do you learn about “trash” literature from this book?
What makes a book “trash”? How is our definition of “trash” different today?
- Uncle Keith was involved in “Santiago” in the Spanish-American War. Find out about this, and share your findings with the class.

WRITING ACTIVITIES

- Write a short chapter to show how the rest of the weekend with Uncle Keith goes.
- Write a paragraph to explain the title of this book.
- Now that you “know” Winona better, write a paragraph in which you describe how (and why) she changed over the course of this book.
- Do some research on Andrew Carnegie to share with the class.
- Find a copy of Whittier’s poem, “Snowbound,” to share with your classmates. Julia has obviously learned it nearly by heart, as she quotes from it. Perhaps you can find a poem that “speaks” to you to memorize.

DRAMA

Find the story of Rip Van Winkle and read it. With a group, write a short scene from the story and act it out for the class.

With your group, take an imaginary shopping trip to choose your Christmas (or birthday or other holiday) gifts. As the girls did, visit a bookstore, a drugstore, a department store, a car store, a horse or pet store, and a toy store. Come up with both an individual list and a list that the group decides on as a whole. Share your lists with the class—perhaps in a skit.

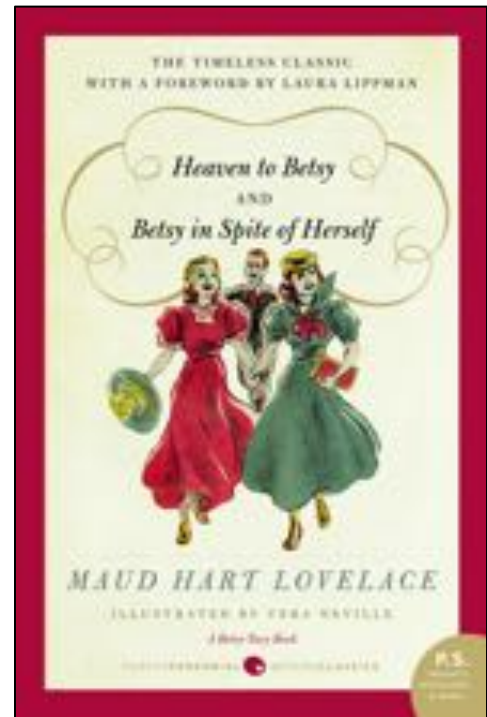


Heaven to Betsy

By Maud Hart Lovelace

“Shep was not fooled by Betsy’s vivacity. And in spite of laughing denials, Betsy was . . . to put it mildly . . . wretchedly, desperately, nightmarishly homesick, and had been ever since she came to visit the Taggarts.” It is the summer before Betsy’s freshman year in high school, and change is in the air. The terrible homesickness, the surprise that calls her home early from the visit to the farm, and her initial encounter with Joe Willard shape the prelude to this important year.

Old and new friends, difficult school subjects, the coming together of “the Crowd,” and the mysterious Tall Dark Stranger await Betsy in the fifth volume of the series. Betsy and her widening circle of friends engage in plenty of highjinks on their journey to adulthood, but the story’s solid core remains the friendship between Betsy and Tacy.



Chapter 1.

1. Why do you think Betsy is so devastated by homesickness? Have you ever been homesick like this? How did you handle it?
2. What does it mean to say (page 6) “the rye was in shock”?
3. Why did children have to be “old enough to be told” if a baby was expected? What does this show you about life in 1906?
4. What are “victuals” (pronounced “vittles”)?
5. What changes Betsy’s outlook drastically?
6. What do you think the surprise is? Why?

Chapter 2.

1. Why do you think the boy in Willard’s Emporium is so amused by the Ray family customs? Do you have any customs in your own family (not related to holidays – just “everyday” customs?) What are some of these?
2. Describe some of the things Betsy does in this chapter to try to appear grown up.

Chapter 3.

1. Compare and contrast the three Ray sisters
2. What keeps Betsy from asking about the surprise?
3. Do you have any special “coming home” activities after you’ve been away on a trip? Can you share them with the class?
4. What are some of the “improvements” in the new house?
5. Can you sympathize with Betsy’s feelings about the new house? Have you ever had a similar experience? How did you react? Why does Betsy act so giddy and happy?

Chapter 4.

1. What is a moving “dray” (page 31)?
2. Who is Ethel Barrymore? What is a “droop”?
3. What does Betsy mean when she refers to Caroline Sibley as a “stick” (page 34)?
Why does she criticize Mr. Sibley for being a banker?
4. What is Betsy’s problem in this chapter?
5. What finally cheers her up?

Chapter 5.

1. Why is Mrs. Ray talking “in a choked voice”?
2. Describe Anna.
3. What does Anna’s use of the word “puny” mean? What does it really mean? What does “tony” mean?
4. What do you notice about Anna’s possessions?
5. How does Anna help Betsy with her woes?
6. Describe Miss Mix’s effect on the Ray household.

Chapter 6.

1. How do the McCloskeys influence life in the Ray house?
2. What are some of the “lessons” Julia and Katie have been teaching the girls about high school behavior?
3. What fights do the girls encounter on the opening day of school?

Chapter 7.

1. Why does Betsy change her mind (from Chapter 4) about going to the Sibleys’ side lawn?
2. What is the significance or purpose of the two school societies?

Chapter 8.

1. Compare and contrast Carney and Bonnie. If you could be friends with only one of them, which would you pick? Explain your choice.
2. What is a “triumvirate”?
3. Describe the changes in Betsy’s attitude and behavior as compared to that in Chapter 4.
What are the reasons for the change?

Chapter 9.

1. Why is Betsy so shocked to find that Julia wants to join the Episcopal Church?
2. Compare and contrast Betsy and Julia.
3. Explain Betsy’s feelings about Julia.

Chapter 10.

1. What is the purpose for Betsy’s pinning starched ruffles inside her blouse?
2. See what you can find out about Anna Held, the actress.
3. What makes Betsy’s attendance at Bonnie’s party perfect? Why?
4. What is “romantic” about Bonnie’s house? Explain the meaning of “romance” as it is used here.
5. What is “Christian Endeavor”? Do you belong to any group like it at your place of worship?
What are its purposes?

Chapter 11.

1. Most people turn up their noses at onion sandwiches. Follow Mr. Ray's recipe and make some to share with the class. (You might want to add some mayonnaise.)
2. What is ironic about Mr. Ray's insisting that Julia play "Everybody Works But Father" at Sunday Night Lunch?
3. Do you agree with Betsy's "recipe" for how to act with boys? Why or why not?
4. See if you can find a recording of "My Wild Irish Rose" being sung by Chauncey Olcott (or another tenor) to share with the class.
5. Why do the two triumvirates disband?

Chapter 12.

1. What are "religious exercises"?
2. Why are the young people sitting so quietly in the Sunday School room? Is this how teens behave in similar situations today? Explain your answer.
3. Describe Betsy's encounter with the Tall Dark Stranger.
4. What is Tony's evaluation of Bonnie? Do you agree? Why or why not?
5. What is your impression of Bonnie?

Chapter 13.

1. How does Tacy help Betsy with her self-image?
2. How does Betsy offend Joe Willard after their initial social success during the "Pass the Ring" game? What would have been a better way for her to respond to his suggestion?
3. Explain the animosity between Cab and Herbert vs. Tony in the refreshment room. How does it change?
4. What is "banter"?
5. Betsy hopes Tony will come for Sunday Night Lunch. What things does she *not* do to prepare for his coming? What is her reasoning here?

Chapter 14.

1. Describe the differences between the Rays' Baptist Church and the Episcopal Church that Julia and Betsy love.
2. Why do you think Cab and Tony do not like the Rays' anniversary plans?
3. Why do the Ray girls like to hear the story of their parents' courtship over and over? Are there stories in your family that are repeated at family gatherings? Do you love to hear them often? Why is this?
4. What does Julia mean when she tells Betsy that "being married" and "being in love" are not the same thing?
5. What is an atheist?
6. How do Cab, Tony, and Herbert end the chapter satisfactorily? How do you think they came up with the idea?

Chapter 15.

1. What is a "hen party"? Why is it called that?
2. Compare Betsy's idea of marriage with that of Carney and Bonnie.
3. What methods do the boys use to try to gain admittance to the girls' party?
4. How do the others discover Betsy's feelings for Tony?
5. How did the boys get into the shed to steal the ice cream?

Chapter 16.

1. What does “Hic, haec, hoc” mean?
2. Explain why Miss Clarke’s history class is so easy for the students. When Miss Clarke drops her cards and does not reassemble them alphabetically, the students recite badly. To what does she attribute this?
3. What does it mean to have a “case” on someone?
4. Explain Betsy’s feelings on her solitary walk home from Tacy’s house.
5. How can life be “painfully sweet” (page 146)?

Chapter 17.

1. Maud Hart Lovelace calls the McCloskeys a “legendary family.”
What is a legend? What does this term tell you about the McCloskeys?
2. Why do you think Mr. Ray resists buying the brass bowl?
3. Mrs. Ray refers to “those new poinsettias.” See what you can find out about the history of these plants. Would they be new at this time in history (c. 1906)?
4. How does Mrs. Ray live up to Mrs. McCloskey in Anna’s opinion?
Are you surprised at Mrs. Ray?

Chapter 18.

1. What is a Ouija Board? How does it worry Betsy?
2. What motive lies behind the kisses Betsy receives? How does she react? How does she romanticize Tony’s kiss? What makes his kiss different from the others?
3. Read the last paragraph of this chapter again. Then predict whether Betsy’s scorn for “trouble” is a good attitude for her to take.

Chapter 19.

1. How do the girls react when the Ouija Board predicts trouble for Betsy a second time?
2. Was it a good idea for Betsy to tell Bonnie that she didn’t feel romantic about anyone?
Explain your answer.
3. Why do you think Betsy worries about Bonnie and Tony?
4. Why does Betsy nearly cry at supper? Give at least two reasons.
5. How is Julia able to guess at Betsy’s feelings of worry?

Chapter 20.

1. Describe Bonnie’s behavior at Christian Endeavor. How does Tony react? To what does his reaction lead? How does the situation come to an end?
2. Evaluate Bonnie’s motives.
3. Have you ever experienced feelings similar to Betsy’s (on page 183)? Can you share them with the class?

Chapter 21.

1. Why do you think Betsy has “qualms” on the walk to the pond, despite the attention she receives from Tony?
2. Describe Betsy’s woes at the pond.
3. Why do you think Tony is smoking and being so obvious about it?
4. Describe the differences in Bonnie at the pond as compared with Bonnie at Christian Endeavor.
5. How does Tacy come to Betsy’s aid?
6. What does Herbert mean when he asks Betsy if she “paints”?
7. Explain the “reforming line” that Julia talks about.

Chapter 22.

1. How does Betsy deal with Tony's affections for Bonnie?
2. How does she manage to flirt while her heart is breaking? Have you ever had to cover your feelings like this? Can you share this with the class?
3. Describe the reason for Herbert's "abstracted silence." Is it the same as Tony's? Explain your answer.

Chapter 23.

1. What are some New Year's Resolutions that you have made in the past? Do you keep them? Explain.
2. Why are Betsy and Julia so nervous about discussing their wish to become Episcopalians with their father?
3. What does it mean to "keep Lent"? Do you do this?
4. What is one of Mr. Ray's chief objections about the Episcopal Church?
5. How does Mr. Ray deal with the girls' fear of disappointing him?
6. What is the "important thing" about church, according to Mr. Ray? What does he think is the most important thing about any religion?
7. Describe and explain Margaret's actions in this chapter.

Chapter 24.

1. How does Julia manage to break up with Fred? Is this a fair thing to do? Can you think of a better way?
2. Why do Miss Clarke's history students do so poorly on the exam?
3. Do some research on Puget Sound. Share your findings with the class.
4. Do some research on Enrico Caruso. Share your findings with the class. Perhaps you can find a recording of his singing to share.
5. Why do you think Miss Clark coughed and "changed color two or three times" while reading Betsy's essay? Why was her compliment so strange?
6. Why do the other students suddenly become quiet when Betsy reads her essay? What can you infer about the Rhetoricals from this?
7. Explain "the Mediterranean of America."

Chapter 25.

1. What is a "C.F."? Do you have one? What does "confidential" mean?
2. How does Betsy feel about the Essay Contest and her Philomathian rival, Joe Willard?
3. What is Bonnie's "tragic news"?
4. What foreshadowing occurs at the end of this chapter?

Chapter 26.

1. What is "the vain pomp and glory of the world"?
2. How does her baptism change Betsy?
3. Mr. Ray mentions the Mormons again in this chapter (also in Chapter 23). See what you can find out about this group of people and their church.
4. Why is Joe so worried about Betsy? What does this concern lead her to believe?
5. What is the effect of Tony's actions?
6. How does the foreshadowing of Chapter 25 deepen in this chapter?

Chapter 27.

1. What new “blow” happens? How does it affect Betsy?
2. Compare and contrast Herbert and Betsy’s reactions to the news with that of Larry and Carney.
3. What does “spoony” mean?
4. What are “qualms”?
5. Why does Betsy walk home “slower than usual and considerably more subdued”?

Chapter 28.

1. What (or who) helps Betsy feel better about her chances of winning the Essay Contest?
2. What is an “indignation meeting”?
3. Betsy is “stunned” when she loses to Joe. Should she have been? Were you? Explain.
4. Why is Betsy so ashamed of herself? Have you ever felt like this? How did you handle it?
5. Explain the symbolism of Uncle Keith’s trunk and its being moved back into Betsy’s room.

Chapter 29.

1. Discuss Betsy’s final grades. Would you be happy with similar final marks?
2. What does Betsy discover about her feelings for Tony?
3. Explain how the Humphreys’ departure “closes a chapter” in the lives of Betsy and her friends.
4. What are some things that make Betsy feel older?

GENERAL QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS BOOK

- Identify and explain some of the ways Betsy changes throughout the course of this book.
- Compare and contrast Betsy’s “yellow cottage” on Hill Street with the Rays’ new house on High Street.
- Choose a character (other than the Rays or Tacy) that you really liked or really disliked. Tell the class whom you chose, describe that person and give the reasons for your like or dislike.

WRITING ACTIVITIES

- Write a paragraph describing Anna.
- Think about Joe’s encounter with Betsy in the library. Write an alternative ending to the meeting that would lead to a different result: a better response from Betsy at Tony’s interrupting could lead to her leaving with Tony but with Joe’s feelings unhurt or it could lead to her leaving with Joe.
- Write a paragraph in which you describe what Joe might have been thinking during this encounter in the library.

DRAMA

- Divide into groups of three. Think about the Triumvirate of Lady Bugs and the Triumvirate of Potato Bugs. Think of a “triumvirate” name for your group. Be ready to explain the name to the class.
- With a partner, act out for the class a short scene that might have occurred between Betsy and her father after the Essay Contest. Then act out a similar scene between Betsy and her mother.



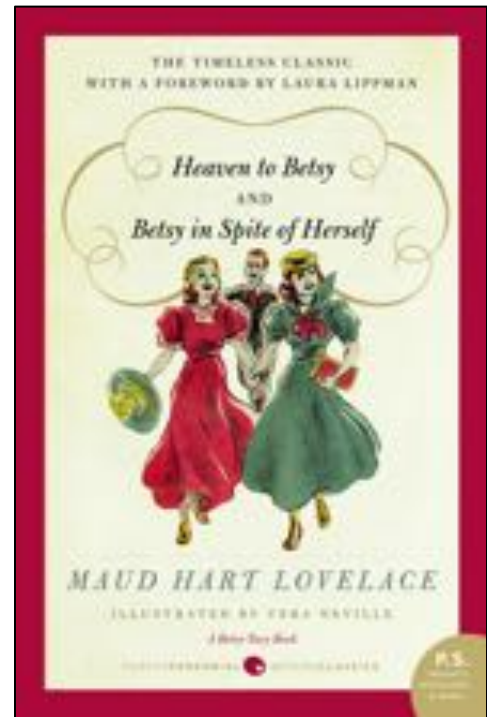
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Betsy in Spite of Herself

By Maud Hart Lovelace

“Tomorrow,” thought Betsy, “I start down the Winding Hall of Fate.” In that Winding Hall, each day’s destiny is just around the corner, hidden from view but beckoning mysteriously. *Ivanhoe*, Joe Willard, Phil Brandish, a disagreement with a teacher, an unexpected trip, and an effort to change herself are all parts of Betsy’s journey through this Hall of Fate.

Having come through their freshman year in fine fettle, Betsy and her Crowd are in the center of the action within the sophomore class. It would seem that life should smooth out for Betsy, but it doesn’t happen that way. In her desire to become “new and improved,” she finds the task to be nearly impossible—she remains Betsy in spite of her efforts to change. In this sixth installment of the series, Betsy finds that being herself is not only easier but better.



Chapter 1.

1. What is the author’s purpose in chapter 1?

Chapter 2.

1. Why are the sophomores so upset with Mr. Gaston’s summer reading assignment?
2. Why do you think Betsy and Joe “hadn’t hit it off at school somehow”?
3. What does it mean to “toe the mark” (page 17)?

Chapter 3.

1. Why does Cab call *Ivanhoe* “the noble work”?
2. How is Cab reacting to the assignment? Predict whether or not he will finish the book.
3. What differences do you notice about Deep Valley High School’s first day of school as compared with yours?
4. What do you think of Mr. Gaston?

Chapter 4.

1. How do Cab and Tony propose to pass the quiz without having read the book? Do you think it will work?
2. Predict the outcome of the quiz.
3. How does Mr. Gaston embarrass Betsy?
4. Were you surprised at how the chapter ends? Explain.

Chapter 5.

1. Explain Julia’s opinion of Chauncey Olcott.
2. What did Maud Hart Lovelace mean when she wrote that Betsy’s “new life . . . usually didn’t last very long” (page 50)?
3. Why do you think the Rays and their guests did so much singing around the fire or the piano?

4. Describe the mock wedding. Why is the cake so important?
5. How is Betsy “stranded” by Fate at the chapter’s end?

Chapter 6.

1. Does your family have any “nonsense words” (like Mr. Ray’s “snoggestion”) that outsiders might not understand? Would you share some of them with the class?
2. Describe the family’s reaction to Mr. Ray’s idea.
3. What is the effect of biting your lips (page 60)? Why is this necessary?
4. Do you ever wonder who you would be if your parents had not married each other? Can you share your ideas?
5. Can you find out what “hoochy koochy” means?
6. Explain why Julia was so amused at Margaret and the dollar Mr. Ray left on the table.

Chapter 7.

1. Describe Joe Willard. Why does Betsy refer to him as a “Man of Mystery”? Why isn’t he out for football?
2. Why do you think Joe’s friendly behavior changes when Betsy mentions her party? Why do you think he tells her it would bore him?
3. Does Julia’s idea sound as though it would have worked for Betsy? How do you think Julia gets her ideas?

Chapter 8.

1. Look at the title of this chapter. Predict what you think the chapter will be about.
2. Why doesn’t Mr. Gaston appreciate Betsy as a writer?
3. How does the family react to Mr. Gaston’s criticisms?
4. Julia and Betsy score a huge success at the November Rhetoricals with the song that Betsy writes and Julia sings. Explain Mr. Gaston’s reaction to this.
5. How does Joe surprise Mr. Gaston and the entire class? Did this surprise you?
6. Think back to question 1 (above). Was your prediction anywhere close to what actually happened?
7. Joe reverts to his cold behavior after class. Why do you think he defended Betsy? How do you think he feels about her? Explain your answer.

Chapter 9.

1. Describe Julia’s new beau. How does Hugh react?
2. What does Mr. Ray mean when he talks about Jefferson?
3. How does Julia let Hugh and Harry know which of them has won her heart? What is her final act in dumping Hugh for Harry? Is she being fair?
4. What do you think a “Persian Princess” is? Is this a good description of Margaret? Explain your answer.
5. Why does Mr. Ray choke on his cigar (page 94)?
6. Why does Betsy want to change herself?
7. How does Tom explain Phil Brandish to Betsy?

Chapter 10.

1. When you look at this chapter’s title and then read the opening sentence, can you get an idea of what might lie ahead for Betsy? Explain.
2. How does Betsy think that the trip to Milwaukee would be the chance she has been waiting for?

3. How does Mr. Ray view the trip to Milwaukee?
4. Will Phil Brandish's observation of Betsy and Tacy at the toy shop be of any importance? Why or why not?
5. Have you ever taken a trip alone? Do you understand Betsy's mixed feelings about going to Milwaukee?

Chapter 11.

1. What does Maud Hart Lovelace mean (page 115) when Betsy thinks "frosting has to be spread thinly over a large cake"? (Think of Tacy's family.)
2. With partner or a small group, list some of the things you learned about Milwaukee and its people.
3. Why do Betsy and Tib find it difficult to talk with each other at first?

Chapter 12.

1. With your partner or group, compare and contrast Tib's grandparents—the Mullers and the Horniks.
2. Why is Betsy so astounded to find that she and Tib will be attending a play on Sunday night?
3. See what you can find out about Paderewski.

Chapter 13.

1. Compare and contrast the "Christkindel" with Santa Claus.
2. What is a porte-cochere? Have you ever seen one? Can you tell the class about it?
3. Why do you think that Tib's mother is the only "stylish looking" woman among the Muller family?
4. Why do all the Mullers talk only about Grosspapa and not about Grossmama?
5. Explain the symbolism you see in the Seven Dwarfs.

Chapter 14.

1. Find the story of "The Brave Little Tailor" and share it with the class.
2. Do you resemble any of your ancestors? Tell us about it.
3. How do you "click your tongue"? What are some of the meanings for this?
4. Compare Grosspapa and Grossmama Hornik with Grosspapa and Grossmama Muller.
5. Reread the description of Aunt Dolly's bedroom (page 152). What can you infer about her from this?
6. Why is Betsy so astonished when Aunt Dolly uses makeup?
7. See if you can find a recording of "The Merry Widow Waltz," and play it for the class.

Chapter 15.

1. Do you think a "week of Christmases" is a good idea? Why or why not?
2. Tib says that "schools are like people. They have to have standards and live up to them or they don't amount to much" (page 159). Do you agree? Why or why not?
3. What does Leap Year have to do with getting married?
4. What is a "rat" (page 165)?
5. Make a list of the ways Betsy plans to change herself. Is this a good idea? Do you think it will work? Have you ever tried to change yourself? How?

Chapter 16.

1. Why would Betsy think that "bridal couples are not sociable at all"?

2. When Maud Hart Lovelace says that “Wisconsin hurried past” the train windows, what literary device is she using?
3. Why does Betsy’s new personality have hard going at first?
4. What is Julia’s romantic problem?
5. Why is Betsy so disappointed in herself? What does she want? How does Julia help?
6. How does Betsy “spread the word” concerning her dream about Phil Brandish?
7. Betsy’s “dream” leads to a rendition of her and Tacy’s new words to the song “Dreaming.” How does this help fuel curiosity about her dream?
8. What strategy does Betsy use to encourage the class officers to take her suggestion for the class party? What *is* her brainstorm?

Chapter 17.

1. See what you can find out about Leap Year history and traditions.
2. Can you explain the reactions from Betsy’s family when she announces her date for the Leap Year Dance?
3. What does “spoony” mean (page 194)?
4. What is the highlight of the dance for Betsy? Why?
5. Why couldn’t Julia and Betsy go to the Moorish Cafe after the dance?

Chapter 18.

1. How does Betsy’s relationship with the Crowd change as a result of her dating Phil Brandish? Why?
2. Why wouldn’t Mrs. Ray let Betsy accept an automobile veil as a gift from Phil?
3. What is the problem with Betsy’s “love affair” with Phil? What are some of the things she gives up for him? Why does she *not* give up the Essay Contest?
4. Reread the last paragraph in this chapter. What feeling do you get?

Chapter 19.

1. What does Maud Hart Lovelace mean when she says that Phil’s moods were “Aprilish” and “April at its worst”?
2. How does Betsy handle Phil’s unexpected appearance in the midst of coloring Easter eggs?
3. Describe your feelings about Betsy’s and Phil’s romance.

Chapter 20.

1. When do you first start to suspect what Mr. Ray has up his sleeve? What do you think of his manner of “announcing” it to the family?
2. What do you think Harry’s fate will be? Why?

Chapter 21.

1. Compare and contrast Julia and Tacy at the Rhetoricals.
2. Why is Julia’s newest romantic conquest ironic? How does it affect Betsy?
3. How does Phil’s red auto impact Betsy’s life?
4. What are some of the results of Phil’s and Betsy’s quarrel? Are you surprised?

Chapter 22.

1. How does Betsy deal with her broken romance?
2. How does Shakespeare comfort Betsy?
3. How does Tacy help?
4. How does Julia support Shakespeare and Tacy?

Chapter 23.

1. How does Miss Sparrow help Betsy to better understand Joe Willard?

GENERAL QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS BOOK

- Explain the title of this book.
- How does the trip to Milwaukee affect Betsy?
- “This above all; to thine own self be true,
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.”
 - What does this quotation from Shakespeare mean to you?
 - Can you see any evidence of it in your own life? How?
- *Ivanhoe* is a large part of the early chapters of this book. Do some research on the novel. There is a “student” version of this book that you might find to read and share with the class.
- An old movie called *My Wild Irish Rose* is based on Chauncey Olcott’s life. Perhaps you can find a copy of it to share with the class. It shows the fashions of the era as well as telling his story.

WRITING ACTIVITIES

- Describe Phil Brandish’s appearance and personality.
- Mr. Ray is usually a background character, but he is important for many reasons. Write a paragraph in which you discuss this importance.
- Choose a character from Tib’s Milwaukee family. Write a short story involving that character and Betsy.

DRAMA

- With a group, choose a scene from this book and act it out for the class. You may have up to four people in your group and have up to five minutes for your skit.
- Find the movie of *Ivanhoe*, starring Robert Taylor and Elizabeth Taylor, and share it with the class. Be prepared for sword fighting, jousting, a bit of blood, and some lovely romantic scenes!!

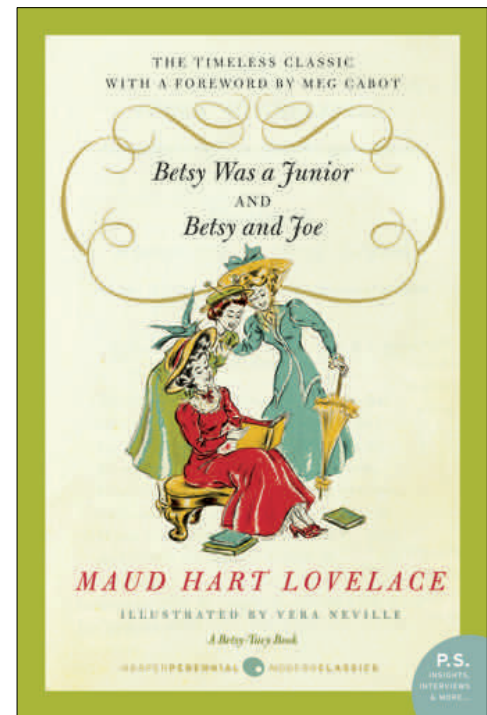


Betsy Was a Junior

By Maud Hart Lovelace

Betsy roused herself, reached for her journal . . . “I’m going to make my junior year just perfect,” she wrote. “In the first place, I’m going to stay around home a lot . . . I resolve next to learn to play the piano . . . In school, I want my year to be completely wonderful. I hope I’ll be elected a class officer again. And I’d like to head up a committee for the junior-senior banquet . . . I want another try at the Essay Contest . . . And I’m going to study. As for boys, I think I’ll go with Joe Willard!”

Betsy has set some lofty goals for her junior year. With Tib Muller back from Milwaukee, she expects more fun than ever, and the Okto Delta sorority they organize promises big things. But the best-laid plans often go awry, and Betsy finds this to be all too true. Volume seven of this enchanting series continues the twists and turns of the Winding Hall of Fate, with surprises, delights, and disappointments along the way.



Chapter 1.

1. What does it mean to “take stock” of something? See if you can find anything about the origin of this phrase.
2. Do you ever take stock of your life the way Betsy does?

Chapter 2.

1. Compare and contrast Betsy’s bathing suit with yours.
2. What is a “hop” (page 21)?
3. Based on the events and conversations of this chapter, predict some things you think might happen in this book.

Chapter 3.

1. What tidbit of information do you get about the McCloskeys?
2. Why can’t Tib be a dancer as she had planned? What is her “shame” (page 33)? Is it really shameful?

Chapter 4.

1. Notice the unusual events of the opening of school assembly.
2. Why do you think Joe acts embarrassed when Betsy confronts him in the Social Room? Do you have any predictions here?
3. What is a “Cicero class” (page 41)?
4. Can you finish Tib’s sentence at the bottom of page 44?
5. Explain Betsy’s reaction to seeing Joe with Phyllis.

Chapter 5.

1. What is a jabot (page 49)?
2. How does Betsy rationalize Joe's friendship/romance/similarities with Phyllis?

Chapter 6.

1. Betsy has trouble saying goodbye to Julia as Julia leaves for the University. Have you ever had to bid someone goodbye and find yourself unable to express your real feelings to that person? Can you tell us about it?
2. Describe Miss Cobb. What are your reactions to her?
3. Explain what Betsy means when she says that "new things are easier to do than familiar things when there's going to be a change" (page 64)?
4. Describe how Julia feels when she is leaving home.

Chapter 7.

1. Dave Hunt is a new character who promises to be important in this book. Describe him. How does he appear to communicate with the other students?
2. What does it mean to be "mad as a wet hen" (page 73)?
3. We find out more about Miss Cobb in this chapter. What details can you add to your description of her in the last chapter?
4. What is "the continuity of life" (page 78)? Can you share some things that give your life continuity?
5. Does Julia's homesickness surprise you? Explain.

Chapter 8.

1. What do you know about sororities?
2. Explain Mr. Ray's reaction to Julia's sorority information.
3. Discuss "barbs."

Chapter 9.

1. What do you think of the girls' plans for Okto Delta?
2. Finish Betsy's statement (page 96) that "Miss Bangeter... might not ..."
What is Betsy afraid of?

Chapter 10.

1. How does Okto Delta immediately get Betsy into trouble?
2. Do you think Miss Erickson's punishment was fair and appropriate? Explain your answer.
3. Have you ever been in trouble at school the way Betsy is in this chapter?
Can you share the experience with the class?
4. Discuss Mr. and Mrs. Ray's reactions to the note "event."

Chapter 11.

1. What impact does Okto Delta have on Deep Valley High?
2. Explain Betsy's feelings of depression (page 128).

Chapter 12.

1. How is Okto Delta affecting Betsy's life?

Chapter 13.

1. What explanation does Maud Hart Lovelace give for life's speeding up in the winter season? Do you agree? Why?
2. Why should Dave Hunt's note have been "illuminated on parchment"? What does this mean?
3. Have you ever had a "hair accident" like Betsy's? Can you share it with the class?
4. What is "skylarking" (page 151)?
5. Why do you think Betsy's thoughts keep returning to Joe?

Chapter 14.

1. What is a "combing jacket" (page 157)?
2. Do you always know what your Christmas (or other holiday) gifts will be ahead of time? Do you like it that way? Explain.
3. When Julia says (page 161), "We ought to do a lot of thinking about what we want to fill [our lives] with," what is her message? It is sort of "taking stock," isn't it? Do you do any of this? Would you share your thoughts?
4. Try to find a recording of "The Toreador Song" (from the opera *Carmen* by Georges Bizet) to play for the class. How would you feel if someone sang the song over and over in your family gatherings over a vacation? Is Mr. Ray overreacting?
5. What do you think is the first real "crack" in the structure of Okto Delta? What will its effect be?

Chapter 15.

1. What are the "pros" and "cons" of Dave Hunt?
2. What does "O tempore! O mores!" mean? What about Tib's addition, "O Himmel"?
3. What effect does Okto Delta have on Tony? Why?

Chapter 16.

1. What further characteristics of Margaret can you find or infer in this chapter?
2. When do you begin to feel uneasy about Margaret's party for the animals?
3. Find out about older gas stoves and their pilot lights and how one could "explode."

Chapter 17.

1. What is meant by "a bolt from the blue"?
2. Notice how Betsy (and Mrs. Ray) do not question Mr. Ray's decision about Julia and college.
3. Why are the Okto Deltas not named to head up any of the committees for the junior-senior banquet? How do the Okto Deltas react?
4. The committee selection is a bolt from the blue, but what is the *real* one? Did you see it coming? Did Betsy?

Chapter 18.

1. How are the Rays surprised at dinner?
2. What is Julia's "bolt from the blue"? What makes it even worse for her?
3. How does going to church help Julia?
4. Why is the second "bolt from the blue" in this chapter kept a secret from Julia?

Chapter 19.

1. What is a “hair shirt” (page 215)?
2. What is the final “bolt,” and how could it happen?
3. What is the purpose of having a hot water bottle in your bed?
4. How does Julia’s decision show you the true importance of sororities in her life?

Chapter 20.

1. How does Julia’s decision have repercussions in Betsy’s life?
2. Betsy has serious thoughts about friendship. What are some of these? Do you agree with her?
3. What are some of the girls’ new thoughts about Okto Delta and the boys?
What causes these thoughts?
4. What is the final “straw” that breaks up Okto Delta?
5. What does “sic transit gloria” mean? How does it apply in this case?

Chapter 21.

1. What is “folly”? What does it particularly mean in this context?
2. How do the girls propose to deal with the consequences of their folly? Do you think it will work?
3. What sort of grade do you think the girls will receive for their herbariums?
If you were their teacher, what grade would you give them?
4. Compare and contrast Tib’s attitude with Betsy’s and Tacy’s.

Chapter 22.

1. What are some of the positive effects of the breaking up of the Okto and Omega Deltas?
2. How does Joe surprise Betsy? How does Phyllis react?
Take note of the gossip!

Chapter 23.

1. Describe the Philomathian “revenge” for the blue Zetamathian pennant on the opening day of school.

Chapter 24.

1. How is Cab forced to grow up quickly?
2. How does Mr. Edward’s death affect Betsy?
3. Leonard is growing sicker with tuberculosis. See what you can find out about this disease, which had also killed his mother and two siblings.
4. Describe the feeling you get at the end of this book.

GENERAL QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS BOOK

- What feelings about the next book do you get from the last chapter in this one?
- How do you see Betsy grow up in this book?
- Do you know anyone who belongs to a sorority? See what that person thinks about what happened to Julia. Has Julia’s experience influenced your own ideas about sororities? How?
- Share with the class a “growing up” experience that you have had.
- What do you think lies ahead for Betsy and her friends?

WRITING ACTIVITIES

- Choose an idea or situation from this book and write a poem about it—your reactions, feelings, alternate ways to handle a situation, etc.

DRAMA

- With a group of no more than four people, choose an incident from this book to dramatize. Limit your presentation to no more than seven minutes.



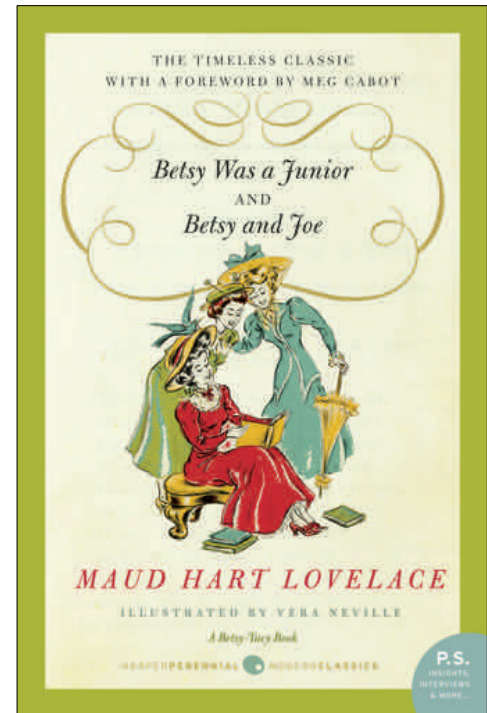
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Betsy and Joe

By Maud Hart Lovelace

“The letter . . . had come from North Dakota. She knew that Joe was working his way north with the harvest. But harvest . . . hadn’t even reached Minnesota. Joe’s letter was typewritten, and . . . he plunged immediately into a surprising piece of news. Joe Willard had written to her. He wanted to correspond. And what wonderful news he had to tell!”

And with that letter, Betsy’s senior year in high school appears full of promise, for it looks as if she and Joe will finally be a couple. Add Tony Markham to the mix, however, and the situation may not be entirely as she expects it to be. In this eighth volume of the series, Betsy finds that life may be sweet, life may be painful, but life can *never* be predictable!



Chapter 1.

1. What are Maud Hart Lovelace’s purposes in Chapter 1?
2. Have you ever received a letter that promised to change the course of your life? Can you share it with the class?

Chapter 2.

1. Why are letters so special? Why are Julia’s letters so special for the Rays?
2. What details of Joe’s life does Betsy learn from his letters?
3. Note the care she takes with her letters to him. How does this compare with what we call “writing process”?
4. Why does Joe want to keep his *Tribune* stories secret?
5. What is Tony doing that worries the Ray family?
6. Betsy’s stories do not sell to the magazines. Tony makes an observation about them (page 22) that may help explain why. What is it? Do you agree with him?
7. How does Tony’s getting “sweet” on Betsy make you feel? Do you agree with Mrs. Ray’s thoughts? Why?

Chapter 3.

1. Why does everything in the Hill Street neighborhood seem different (and smaller) to Betsy?
2. Reread the last sentence in this chapter. What does it mean?

Chapter 4.

1. Describe Leonard. Do we learn anything new about him in this chapter?
2. Do you like “things to go on as they had gone before” (page 44)? Why or why not?
3. How does the Rev. Mr. Lewis’s visit affect the Rays?
4. How would you feel if your family reacted to one of your beaux the way the Rays react to Joe?
5. Why do you think Joe changes the subject so abruptly (page 51)?
6. What feeling do you get at the end of this chapter? Predict what you think is going to happen.

Chapter 5.

1. What is “prinking” (page 54)?
2. What does “behoove” mean (page 56)?
3. Why is Betsy being so nonchalant about Joe’s visit to her house?
4. What is “pulchritude” (page 59)?
5. Describe Ralph Maddox.
6. Why do you think Betsy is so struck by the words from I Corinthians: “I put away childish things”?

Chapter 6.

1. See what you can find out about the card game of “500.”
2. Why do people make such a fuss over Carney’s leaving?
3. What brings Joe and Mr. Ray together at Sunday Night Lunch after a rather “guarded” start?
4. Describe Julia’s problem with her trunk. Why is it such a problem?
5. How does Tib help the Zetamathian cause?
6. How does Tony challenge the senior class? How do you think Joe feels at the reaction to his nomination?

Chapter 7.

1. Find the poem by Alfred Lord Tennyson from which this chapter takes its title. Share those few lines with the class. What does it seem to portend?
2. What do “my sweet Coz” and “dearest Chuck” mean (page 79)?
3. What “pattern” is broken this fall? How does Betsy interpret this?
4. How does Julia’s trunk misfortune turn into a stroke of good luck for her?
5. How does Tony put Betsy in a difficult situation? Explain her reasoning when she accepts his invitation. What is she afraid of?
6. Why can’t Betsy accept Joe’s “blanket invitation”?
7. Explain the last line of the chapter.

Chapter 8.

1. What does Stewie mean with his remark about Ralph’s nose? Why does it surprise Betsy?
2. What is Maddox’s problem?

Chapter 9.

1. Have you ever “crashed” a party the way Betsy, Tib, Joe and Dennie do? What happened?
2. Why does Mrs. Ray “cough from the top of the stairs” (page 108)?
3. Can you predict what the boys (and Winona) are up to?
4. What do you think of the skit that makes fun of Ralph?

Chapter 10.

1. How do you think the St. John game will turn out? Why?
2. “Richard is himself again” is a quote from Shakespeare. What is the source of Tib’s quote, “An eye for an eye”?
3. See if you can find out how to “cakewalk” (page 126).
4. What do you think made Maddox change?

Chapter 11.

1. See if you can find the origin of Tom's newest slang expression, "Curses, Jack Dalton."
2. How can Betsy and Joe "fleet the time carelessly, as they did in the golden world"? Explain this.

Chapter 12.

1. How does Joe perceive Mr. Ray's character and philosophy?
2. How does Mr. Ray "get in the way" sometimes?
3. What do you think would be the right way for Betsy to handle Tony and the holiday dance?
4. How do the couples in the Crowd end up paired off for the dance? What does Joe tell Betsy?
5. Describe the ironies in the Christmas gifts that Joe and Betsy exchange with each other.

Chapter 13.

1. What keeps Betsy going on Christmas Eve? On Christmas Day?
2. What do you think the "mystery present" will be?
3. What is an opera cape?

Chapter 14.

1. Have you ever participated in a "progressive dinner"? Can you share your experience with the class? What are the pros and cons of such a party?
2. What is a "hoo-doo" (page 167)? Why does Betsy think this of her new opera cape?
3. Can you think of a way for Joe and Betsy to make up their quarrel?

Chapter 15.

1. What does Betsy think she has to do to grow up?
2. What are some of the effects that are caused by her trying to grow up?
3. What do you think the last sentence means in this chapter?

Chapter 16.

1. Describe Mr. Kerr.
2. Why do you think Mr. Ray admires Mr. Kerr so much?
3. Why is Betsy so dumbfounded at the results of the Sunday Night Lunch with Mr. Kerr in attendance? How does she think Tacy will react? How do you think Tacy will react?
4. What does Tacy's response make you think?

Chapter 17.

1. Describe Mr. Maxwell.
2. Why do you think Joe is growing "stiffer and stiffer" in the classroom?
3. Tacy receives "dozens of long-stemmed yellow roses" from Mr. Kerr. See if you can find the significance or meaning of yellow roses.

Chapter 18.

1. What does Margaret do in the coat closet?
2. What do you think is wrong with Betsy?
3. What is an "oration"?
4. How does the Betsy-Tony quarrel happen? Why? What is the result of their disagreement?

Chapter 19.

1. Describe the inhabitants of the Beidwinkle farm. Does it sound like a place you would like to visit? Why?
2. What does “voraciously” (page 221) mean?
3. How do the farm and the organ help Betsy?
4. How do you feel at the end of this chapter?

Chapter 20.

1. What literary device does Maud Hart Lovelace use when she writes (page 229) “The east was a river of crimson”?
2. What is finally the “ice breaker” between Betsy and Joe?
3. See what you can find out about Rocinante and *Don Quixote*.
4. Why do you think Joe opens up to Betsy in the buggy?
5. What does Joe want Betsy to say when he asks her (page 238) what she likes?
6. What is a “stereopticon” (page 239)?

Chapter 21.

1. Where do you think Tony has gone? Will he return?

Chapter 22.

1. How does Betsy’s senior year seem to be ending?
2. What are the “bounding billows” (page 258)?
3. Name two ways Julia surprises the Rays.
4. What do we learn about Tony?

Chapter 23.

1. See if you can find out what a Psyche knot is.
2. Have you ever experienced a sense of “momentousness” at any point in your life? Can you share it?
3. What does the word “commencement” mean? Why is it used in connection with graduation, the end of the high school (or college) years?
4. Compare and contrast Betsy’s and Joe’s plans for their lives. Do you think they will carry through with them?

GENERAL QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS BOOK

- How did the events in this book compare with what you expected from the title?
- How could Betsy have avoided some of the difficulties she encountered with Joe? With Tony?
- How did the book’s ending make you feel?
- What was your favorite part of this book?
- Can you predict what might happen next?

WRITING ACTIVITIES

- Choose a character (other than Betsy, Joe, Tib, and Tacy) and write a paper telling one of the events in the book from that character's point of view.
- Write a paragraph predicting what the next book might be about. Include the reasons for your prediction.
- Write a short speech you might give at a memorial service for Leonard.

DRAMA ACTIVITIES

- Write a short scene, either from the book or one you make up using familiar characters, and perform it for the class. Your group may have up to four people, and your scene might be a "better way" for the characters to handle a situation.
- With a group, prepare and perform a choral reading of the poem by Tennyson. (The poem has no title, but the first line begins, "In love, if love be love." You can also hunt for the line quoted by Maud Hart Lovelace, "the rift within the lute.")



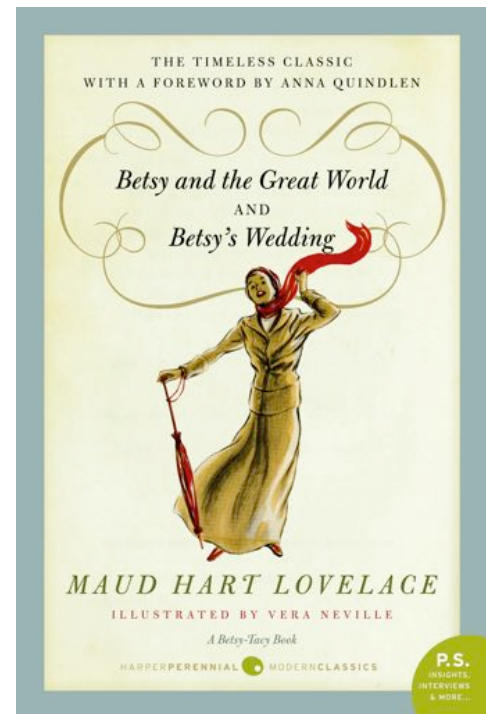
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Betsy and the Great World

By Maud Hart Lovelace

“Down to Gehenna or up to the Throne . . .” Her teeth were almost chattering. Not from cold . . . She shivered because she was shaky inside, fearful and bewildered. It is January 1914, and Betsy finds herself embarking on an adventure similar to those she and Tacy used to imagine—but it is also quite different.

In previous books, Betsy discovered that “the best laid plans” often go astray. This volume, number eight in the series, again proves that to be the case, in more ways than one. Betsy is indeed seeing the “Great World,” but the circumstances are not at all what she had imagined and the journey, like her life to this point, is full of surprising twists and turns and leads to some momentous decisions about her future.



Chapter 1.

1. Chapter One is very confusing. Make a list of all the things about which you have questions.
2. Why do you think Maud Hart Lovelace chooses to begin this book in this fashion?

Chapter 2.

1. What literary device is used in this chapter?
2. Make a list of the things that befell Betsy since she graduated from high school in the previous volume.
3. What has become of Joe Willard?
4. What has happened to Tacy? Are you surprised?
5. What are Tib and Carney doing now?
6. See what you can find out about Paragot, the quixotic hero of *Beloved Vagabond*, by William J. Locke.
7. What has happened with Julia?

Chapter 3.

1. Describe Mrs. Sims and Mrs. Cheney.
2. Why are the ladies “amused” and “startled” when they are talking with Betsy? What makes them think that she is “charming” and “naive”?
3. Describe Mr. O’Farrell. What effect does he have on Betsy? Why do you think this is? What does Betsy mean when she calls him “cosmopolitan”?
4. See if you can find a copy of “The Song of Hiawatha” by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow to share (parts of) with the class. What is it about?
5. What is it that Betsy is “haply” forgetting?
6. What does Mr. O’Farrell mean when he says, “You leave your family behind when you start out to travel” (page 39)?
7. How does Betsy come to meet Maida? What are some of the things they have in common? What are some of their differences?

Chapter 4.

1. See what you can find out about the Azores.
2. What are panniers (page 54)?
3. Describe the *capote e capelo*. Why is Betsy so delighted to see it?
4. Notice Maud Hart Lovelace's use of sentence fragments when she describes the public garden (page 56). What effect does this have on the reader?
5. What are the pros and cons of Maida's invitation?
6. Do you agree with Betsy's decision about Madeira? Why?

Chapter 5.

1. How is Maida feeling when she leaves the ship at Madeira? Is she right about Mr. Chandler?
2. What reminds Betsy of Joe? How does she deal with this?
3. What is a toboggan? How do ours today differ from the one Betsy rides in Madeira?
4. What does Betsy discover about Mr. Chandler?
5. What is happening between Betsy and Mr. O'Farrell?
6. What is "women's suffrage" (page 73)?
7. What is the worst part of the flood in Betsy's stateroom (in her eyes)?

Chapter 6.

1. Describe some of Betsy's fantasies. How and why does Mr. Chandler annoy her?
2. What do you know (or what can you find out) about the Rock of Gibraltar?
3. What were the Twelve Labors of Hercules?
4. What are "fussers" (page 89)?
5. How does Mr. Chandler shock Betsy?

Chapter 7.

1. See what you can find out about Carrie Nation.
2. Compare and contrast the two impressions Betsy gets of Algiers.
3. What is the "Kasbah" (page 100)? Would you like to visit it? Why or why not?
4. What are "infidels" (page 101)?
5. What are some of the things Betsy learned from Mr. O'Farrell?

Chapter 8.

1. How can you account for the wide swing of Betsy's mood—from depressed and homesick to happy and eager to see more of the Great World?
2. Do you think Betsy is naive? Why or why not?
3. Betsy is being quite rude to Mr. Brown. Why is she behaving so? How do you feel about this? What changes her behavior?

Chapter 9.

1. What is a "pension" (page 123)?
2. What is Miss Surprise's surprise for Betsy? How would you react if this happened to you?
3. Most of this chapter describes things that happened before the chapter began. What do we call this literary device?
4. Describe the dining room at the Pension Geiger. Would you feel welcome there? Explain Betsy's reaction.
5. How does Hanni help?

Chapter 10.

1. What are the two mysteries Betsy encounters in the Pension Geiger?
2. What do you think lies at the root of Betsy's feeling so homesick?
3. What finally breaks the ice at meals for Betsy?
4. How does Munich "change" with Tilda's presence?

Chapter 11.

1. What do you think is preventing Betsy from having a bath?
2. What do we learn about the "arrogant girl at the small table"? Are you surprised? Why do you think Helena stiffens up at the mention of Tilda?
3. Describe Tilda's reactions to Helena. Can you infer anything about Helena from Tilda's remarks?
4. Describe Betsy's bath and the reactions to it from the various inhabitants of the pension (including those of the German officers).

Chapter 12.

1. What is the difference between three making a "crowd" and three making a "Crowd"?
2. Why does Betsy not like Helena's mother?
3. How does Helena finally explain her refusal to spend time with Tilda?
4. What does Betsy see behind Helena's pride?
5. What is it that Betsy discovers about Helena's father, the Baron? Does this help explain Helena's lack of money? Why do you think Helena and her family move soon after Betsy's visit (try to think of more than one reason for this)?
6. Betsy comes to love Munich, but what are some things about it that trouble her?
7. Look at the last sentence of this chapter. Do you think this is what will happen? Why or why not?

Chapter 13.

1. What great surprise begins this chapter? What "extra" will it allow Betsy to do?
2. What does Betsy discover about Helena's romantic situation? What is the big problem?
3. Explain Helena's family history.
4. Why can't Hanni marry "her" soldier? What plans do Betsy and Hanni make?
5. Why is Betsy so overwhelmed by Helena's parting gift?
6. How do you think Betsy helped Helena?

Chapter 14.

1. Why is Krug's Hotel such a (welcome) shock to Betsy?
2. Why do you think Betsy was "cool and unresponsive" to the other Americans she meets in Sonneberg?
3. What does it mean (page 211) to "bony" something?
4. What impulse made Betsy buy the doll? At the end of the chapter, do you want to revise your idea?

Chapter 15.

1. Can you find the meaning (translation) of the name of this town, Oberammergau?
2. What does it mean to say (page 224) that "every man [has] his price"?
3. Why do you think Anton Lang reacted as he did when he was chosen to play Christ in the play?
4. What does Ettal explain about Oberammergau?

5. Explain Betsy's reaction to the American visitor to Oberammergau and Anton Lang's shop.
6. Knowing what you know of world history, do you think Betsy is right about returning to Germany in future?

Chapter 16.

1. What does "impecunious" mean (page 236)?
2. What things does Betsy learn at breakfast the first morning in Venice?
3. How is Betsy rescued from an uncomfortable situation?
4. How do you think the Englishman feels when he meets Betsy and Marco at San Giorgio Maggiore?
5. Why does Betsy worry over being out with Marco all day? What makes it "improper"?
6. Why does Betsy put her hair up on Magic Wavers?

Chapter 17.

1. What is your reaction to the opening paragraph of this chapter?
2. How do you think Betsy feels about Marco?
3. Do you like "Betta," Marco's nickname for Betsy?
4. See if you can find a recording of "Funiculi, Funicula" to play for the class.

Chapter 18.

1. What do you think is happening to Betsy?
2. Name at least two reasons Marco has his serious talk with Betsy.
3. Why is Betsy so panic-stricken when Marco talks of marriage?
4. What part does Joe Willard play in Betsy's dilemma?
5. Are you happy with the decision Betsy makes? Why?

Chapter 19.

1. While suffering from homesickness in Switzerland, Betsy finally admits a truth about Joe to herself. What is it, and how does she figure it out?
2. What do you know about the "murder of an Austrian archduke in . . . Sarajevo"? Why do you think Maud Hart Lovelace mentions this event?
3. Why does Betsy visit the statue of Henry IV?
4. Why is the chance meeting with Mrs. Main-Whittaker such a stroke of luck for Betsy and Miss Wilson?
5. What are some of the "shocking" things Betsy observes on the "bat" with Mrs. Main-Whittaker?
6. Describe the Agony Column from the London *Times*. Where/how does it get its name? Do we have anything similar in our newspapers today?
7. How does Mrs. Main-Whittaker help Betsy with Joe? What actions does she take as a result of this?
8. What very important "detail" does Betsy omit from her letter to Joe?

Chapter 20.

1. Betsy stays at a boarding house in London run by Mrs. Heaton. Describe some of the other boarders there.
2. What is going on with world events that worries Betsy and her new friends?
3. This is the second time on her trip that Betsy declares that war is unthinkable. Is it?
4. Why are so many Americans coming to England from the continent (Europe)?
5. How is the prospect of war affecting the people at Mrs. Heaton's?
6. Why does Mrs. Heaton suggest that Betsy go home? Why is Betsy reluctant to do so?

7. What are some of the signs indicating that England will be entering the war?
8. Why does Mrs. Heaton believe that women will never be allowed to enlist in the armed services?
9. See if you can find a recording of “Rule, Britannia” to play for the class.

Chapter 21.

1. Do you think Betsy is giving her situation the serious consideration it demands?
Why or why not?
2. Who is “Uncle Sam” (page 312)?
3. How is luck with Betsy in the American Express office?
4. Who does Mr. Brown turn out to be? Can you find any information about him and/or his family?
5. Does the Agony Column live up to its name where Betsy is concerned? Why or why not?

GENERAL QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS BOOK

- Why is the trip to Europe a good thing for Betsy?
- What are some things you learned about history or other countries while reading this book?
- Have you visited any of the places Betsy visits in this book? What can you tell us about your experiences?
- Does Betsy’s visit to any place in this book make you want to visit there someday?
- Even though Joe Willard appears only briefly in this book, how does Maud Hart Lovelace keep him in our minds?
- What do you think will happen in the next book?

WRITING ACTIVITIES

- Choose one of the many topics listed below that are mentioned in *Betsy and the Great World*. Do some research on your topic and then write a short paper (1–5 paragraphs; 1–2 pages) giving the important information you find.

Hans Holbein	Albrecht Durer
Anthony van Dyck	Franz von Lenbach
Richard Wagner	King Ludwig II
Knight Errantry	Guilds
Reformation	“Lohengrin”
“Carmen”	“Madame Butterfly”
“Barber of Seville”	Nuremberg
Bayreuth	Sonneberg
Oberammergau	Passion Play
Johann W. von Goethe	Lillian Russell
Black Death	Ettal
Robert Browning	Lord Byron
San Giorgio Maggiore	Shylock
Doges’ Palace	St. Mark’s Cathedral, Venice
Campanile	Andrea Palladio
Tintoretto (Jacopo Comin)	Baroque
Bridge of Sighs (Venice)	The Lido
The Lily Maid of Astolat	John Ruskin
Sarajevo	Archduke Ferdinand

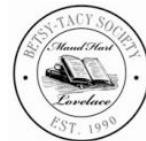
Madame Defarge
Victor Hugo
Empress Eugenie
Westminster Abbey
“Pygmalion”
King George V and Queen Mary
Earl Kitchener

Venus de Milo
Marie Antoinette
Alfred Noyes “Lilac Time”
Number 10 Downing Street
Mary Pickford
Carrier pigeons in ancient Italy against the Greeks

- Choose one of the people Betsy meets and write a *short* story with that person as the main character. Betsy may or may not be a part of the story.

DRAMA ACTIVITIES

- With a group, act out one of the stories written under the “Writing Activities” above.
- In a group or alone, give a dramatic reading of one of the poems mentioned in this book. You may do the entire poem if it is short or a part of one of the longer poems.



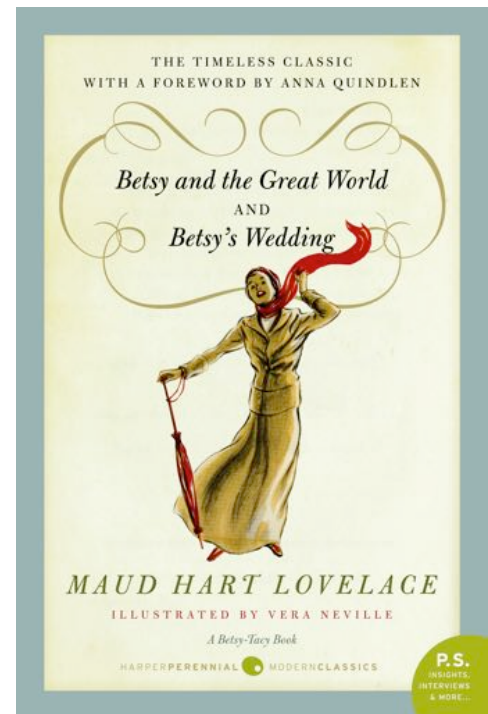
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Betsy's Wedding

By Maud Hart Lovelace

Joe held her off at arm's length. Under his blond pompadour and tufted golden brows, his eyes were blazingly bright. Blushing, Betsy rescued her hat, and Joe picked up her umbrella. He took hold of her arm in a strong and purposeful grasp. "Let's get this Customs business out of the way quick," he said. "And then we'll go to Tiffany's and get you a ring. And then"—he turned swiftly to look into her face—"when can we get married?"

After spending almost a year in Europe to gather background for her writing and to perk up her spirits after quarreling with and drifting apart from Joe, Betsy is finally reunited with her longtime on-again-off-again beau—and this time it looks as though it will be the real thing. Mr. and Mrs. Ray are quite naturally upset with the request for a speedy marriage, Joe's job hunt proves to be much more discouraging than he had anticipated, and—once wedding and job matters are settled—married life presents its own set of problems. And over all hangs the grim specter of the Great War. In the final installment of this delightful series, Betsy and her friends and family continue to love and laugh as before and, of course, leave us readers wanting more!



Chapter 1.

1. What are Maud Hart Lovelace's purposes in Chapter One?

Chapter 2.

1. What is "Joe's plan"?
2. What is a "hurdy-gurdy" (page 17)? Can you find a copy or recording of "The Sidewalks of New York" to share with the class?
3. Why is Joe so confident about finding a job in Minneapolis?
4. What are some of the reasons Joe gives for why he loves Betsy?

Chapter 3.

1. How do the Rays welcome Betsy home?
2. What does "Kismet" mean? Is it a good name for a cat? Why or why not?
3. How does Tacy react to the doll? What do you think about her baby's gender?
4. Why is the friendship between Margaret and Louisa ironic?
5. What do we learn about Tib in this chapter?
6. Why does Betsy worry about her engagement?
7. Describe the Rays' reactions to the announcement of the engagement. How would you have felt about this if you were in Betsy's place?
8. What are Mr. Ray's two biggest concerns?
9. How does Julia once again come to Betsy's rescue?

Chapter 4.

1. What is Joe's reaction to Mr. Ray's objections?
2. How does Betsy feel about Joe's actions?
3. Describe the taxi driver. What kind of person do you think he is? What makes you think this?
4. Who is (was) Ty Cobb?
5. When Joe "topples Betsy's French roll," what is he really doing?
6. Who are the Belgians? Why is the Hawthorne Publicity Bureau raising money for them?
7. What were Joe and Mr. Ray doing in the study?
8. Describe the change in Mr. Ray at the end of the chapter.

Chapter 5.

1. Why could Tacy not be a bridesmaid?
2. How does Cab surprise Betsy?
3. How does Anna keep the Rays out of her way?
4. How does Tib describe Betsy?
5. Does Betsy's wedding sound like something you would like for your own? Why or why not?
6. Describe the "escape plot" that Joe and Betsy use to make their getaway from the wedding. Why is it necessary?

Chapter 6.

1. What example of personification can you find in Betsy's description of the weather at the honeymoon cottage (page 72)? And again (page 75) describing the trees?
2. Note the metaphors that Maud Hart Lovelace uses (page 74) to describe the lake.
3. See if you can find the Alfred Noyes poems about the forty singing seamen, the highwayman, and "Silk o'the Kine" to share.
4. What made the honeymoon so perfect for Joe and Betsy?

Chapter 7.

1. Who is Judy?
2. Describe Louisa.
3. See what you can find out about Maxfield Parrish and the pictures the Kerrs gave the Willards.
4. Note the verb Maud Hart Lovelace uses to describe the manner in which Louisa starts speaking (page 86).
5. Who is Hetty Green (page 71)?
6. Why are Joe and Betsy so amused by the visit from Margaret and Louisa?
7. Were you surprised at Margaret's news (page 95)?

Chapter 8.

1. See if you can find out what English monkey is (page 99).
2. What is Betsy's biggest problem as a newlywed?
3. Why do Tib and her family not support the German Kaiser in the war?
4. Why does Joe want to leave his job?

Chapter 9.

1. What are "tidies" (page 111)?
2. Describe Jimmy Cliff.
3. What is Joe's big problem at work? How is it solved?
4. What is a newspaper's "morgue" (page 115)? What do you know about a real morgue? How are the two similar? Different?

5. Why do you think Joe has his “low moods”?
6. Who is Mrs. Vernon (Irene) Castle? Can you find any information about her and her husband?
7. Contrast Tib’s physical appearance with her abilities. Is this surprising? Why or why not?
8. What are Tacy’s and Betsy’s worries about Tib? What do they decide to do? Is it realistic?

Chapter 10.

1. Describe Mr. Bagshaw. Does he sound “right” for Tib?
2. Mr. Bagshaw wears a watch on his wrist. What is unusual about this?
Where did men usually wear their watches?
3. What is the irony in the way this chapter ends?

Chapter 11.

1. See if you can find a recording of “Pack Up Your Troubles” to share with the class.
2. What are some of the positive signs regarding the Tib-Rick romance?
3. Who is John Drew (Barrymore)?
4. Has Cab changed much? How or how not?
5. Do you agree with Jean’s assessment of Mr. Bagshaw?
Why or why not?
6. Do you think Tib will marry Mr. Bagshaw? Explain.

Chapter 12.

1. What are Betsy’s true objections to having Joe’s Aunt Ruth come to stay with them?
2. What do you think Mr. Bagshaw’s real attraction was for Tib?
Does her answer to his proposal surprise you?
3. How does church help Betsy?
4. Do you think there is a connection between Betsy’s change in attitude and their finding a house?
Explain.

Chapter 13.

1. What is your impression of Sally Day Hawthorne?
2. Joe comes home to the new house with good and bad news. Explain this.
3. What does Betsy mean (page 177) when she says, “Good things come, but they’re never perfect . . .”? Do you agree with this? Why or why not?
4. How do Joe’s new working hours help with having Aunt Ruth coming to live with them?
5. How do Aunt Ruth’s stories help both Betsy and Joe?
6. What is strange about Margaret’s dating?
7. See if you can find out anything about Henry Ford and his Peace Ship to share with the class.
8. Explain the humor in the “Violent Study Club.”

Chapter 14.

1. What is a “vamp” (page 188), and who is Theda Bara?
2. Describe the Violent Study Club: what are the rules, who are the members, and what do they do at meetings?
3. What is the “gloaming” (page 189)?
4. What is the “Naughty Chair”? Is it really what its name implies? Why is it called that?
5. Who is Rocky? Describe him. How does he get into a spat with Tib?
Do you get any ideas about what his role will be in upcoming chapters?
6. What is Joe’s concern?

Chapter 15.

1. How does Rocky change the Violent Study Club?
2. What does “effete” mean (page 200)?
3. Does Rocky sound like a good match for Tib? Why or why not?
4. What hint(s) do we get about Margaret’s beaux?
5. What do you think the John Burroughs quote (page 206) means?
6. See what you can find out about the Overland automobile.
7. At the end of this chapter, what feeling do you get about Tib and Rocky’s future?

Chapter 16.

1. What do you think will happen with “Wheat”?
2. Are you surprised at the news of “Wheat”?
3. What other news does Betsy get that same evening?
4. What happens when Rocky finds Tib at Betsy’s?
5. Do you think Tib acts wisely?
6. How does Rocky react?
7. Explain the title of this chapter. How, at the end, is “everything almost right”?

Chapter 17.

1. Who is Clay Dawson, and why is he important?
2. Who is Jack Dunhill? How does he impress you? What do we learn about him?
3. Do you think people can truly fall in love “at first sight”? Why or why not?

Chapter 18.

1. What are the “Ninety-Day Wonders” (page 240)?
2. Why do Joe and Betsy rent out their house?
3. What does it mean to “feather your nest”?
4. Describe the Rays’ conflicting emotions about the war.
5. How does Eleanor Hawthorne help Betsy?
6. Can you find information to explain the service flags with stars on them that people hung in their windows?

Chapter 19.

1. Why is this chapter a good ending for both this book and the entire series?

GENERAL QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS BOOK

- See what you can find out about the *Lutsitania* and her relevance to World War I. Share your findings with the class.
- Do some research about Fort Snelling, and share your findings with the class.
- This is the second book where Minnehaha Falls appears. See what you can find out about the Falls, and share your information with the class.
- Find the poem by James Russell Lowell that begins “The snow had begun in the gloaming,” and share part or all of it with the class.
- Do some research on President Wilson’s “Preparedness tour.” Share your findings with the class.
- See what you can find out about Pancho Villa. Share your findings with the class.
- Who was General John J. Pershing, and why was he an important person in the war?

- What are “Marcel waves”? See if you can find a picture of them to show the class. Do you think they make an attractive hair style? Why or why not?
- Find a recording of Beethoven’s *Sixth Symphony*. Play the fourth movement for the class. Do you think it is like a storm? Why or why not?

WRITING ACTIVITIES

- In a paragraph, describe your feelings at the end of this book.
- Write an “epilogue” to the book in which you jump ahead five years (to about 1920). Choose two or three main characters, and describe what they are like then.
- Write a paragraph in which you compare and contrast Margaret and Louisa.

DRAMA ACTIVITIES

- With a group, choose a scene from the book to act out for the class.
- With a group, create a scene in which Joe comes back from the war and must find a job. Perform your skit for the class.

GENERAL QUESTIONS ABOUT THE ENTIRE SERIES (for discussion or writing)

- Think back over the ten books in this series. Choose your favorite event from among all of them, and share with the class why it was your favorite.
- Was there any event that you did not like in the series? Why do you think Maud Hart Lovelace included it in the stories?
- Why do you think Maud Hart Lovelace did not write any more books to include in this series?
- Maud Hart Lovelace has written several other books about Deep Valley (*Winona’s Pony Cart*, *Emily of Deep Valley*, and *Carney’s House Party*). Read one of them and share it with the class. (You may also/alternatively choose to read and report on any other books that Maud Hart Lovelace wrote.)
- Choose one of the many main characters from the series, and describe how that character “evolved” or “developed” into a distinct personality over the span of the series. Include some of the ways Maud Hart Lovelace shows us this development.

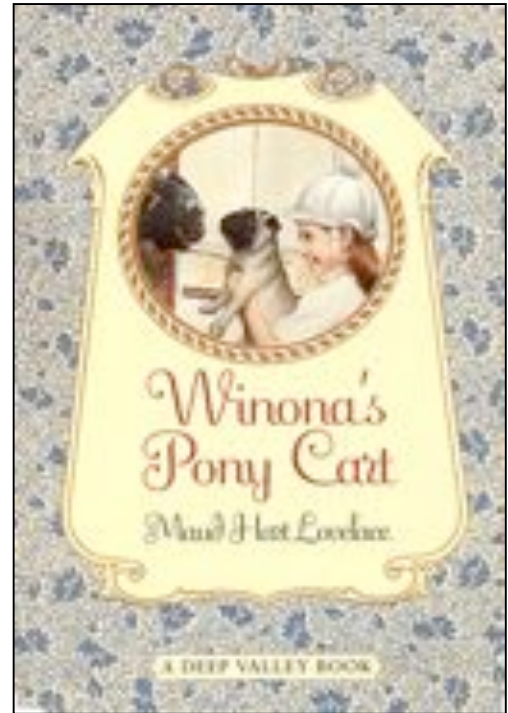


Winona's Pony Cart

By Maud Hart Lovelace

Beginning with the fourth volume of the Betsy-Tacy books (*Betsy and Tacy Go Downtown*), Winona Root emerges as one of the girls' friends. She is quite a tomboy—in skirts, of course—and begins her friendship with the others on a rather adversarial note. As the girls grow older, Winona's playful nature and wicked sense of humor mature and allow her to keep her place in the Crowd secure.

In this book, we get to know the younger Winona better. We see something of her family life and can witness some of the circumstances that help shape the character she becomes later. *Winona's Pony Cart* is a gentle introduction to the impish tomboy and a revealing peek at what makes her "tick."



Chapter 1.

1. What are pug dogs? See if you can find a picture and some information about them to share with the class.
2. What are some adjectives you would use to describe Winona?
Is "dignified" one of them?
Why does Mrs. Root tell Winona she should be dignified?
3. Compare and contrast Winona with her sisters.
4. Is Winona spoiled? Give reasons for your answer.

Chapter 2.

1. Where is Syria? What can you find out about the country and its people?
2. The Roots have a "hired girl" and a woman to do their laundry.
What can you infer about the family from this?
3. What is the nature of Winona's friendship with Betsy, Ray, Tacy Kelly, and Tib Muller?
4. See what you can find out about Buffalo Bill.
Winona brags about being kissed by him, but should she? What really happened?
5. What do you think Winona will get for her birthday?

Chapter 3.

1. How do Mr. and Mrs. Root differ on the way they would like Winona to behave?
2. You know that Winona is spoiled by her father and is stubborn. What do you think she will do about the pony and about the party invitations?

Chapter 4.

1. How does Dennie "help" Winona with her invitation dilemma?
How does Winona react to his idea?
2. How does Mrs. Root deal with Winona's hints about a pony for her birthday?

What different implications can you draw from her actions?

Chapter 5.

1. Why do you think Maud Hart Lovelace uses the word “dignified” so often in this chapter?
2. Can you recall reading about another accordion-pleated dress?
What details do you remember?
3. Can you think of any sayings that we use that are similar to Marium’s saying “if we live” (page 52)?
4. How does the pony become more and more real to Winona and the other children?
What do you think?
5. Do you believe the pony stories that Ole tells Winona? Why or why not?
6. What does it mean to “borrow trouble” (page 57)?
How would telling someone about the extra children she had invited be “borrowing trouble” for Winona?
7. See if you can find a recording of “Won’t You Come Home Bill Bailey?” to play for the class.
Why do you think Mrs. Root objected to the song?
8. How does Winona convince herself that she will get a pony?
Have you ever done a similar thing?

Chapter 6.

1. What do you notice about how Winona receives the birthday gifts from her guests?
2. What is your impression of Percy?
3. Why are Lottie and Lettie dressed in summery clothes for the party?
What does this tell you about their family?
4. Marium is described as having “something black” around her eyes.
This would be “kohl.” See what you can find about about this early cosmetic.
5. Why does Mrs. Root remove all the place cards from the table?
How does she react to all the extra children?
Have you ever surprised a parent in a similar fashion?
Can you share that experience with the class?
6. What is “baklawa” (page 72)?

Chapter 7.

1. Are you surprised when the pony appears?
Why does Winona feel like crying?
2. How does Jingle react to Percy?
Why do you think he does this?
Does Percy’s response surprise you?
Explain your answer. Does it change your opinion of Percy?
3. How do you feel at the end of this chapter?

Chapter 8.

1. What shocking discovery does Winona make?
2. How is her crying different from other times?
3. Why would the minister’s opinion of Winona’s having a pony to ride be important?
4. What do you think finally changed Mrs. Root’s mind?
5. What are some of Jingles’ bad habits? Have you ever had a pet with bad habits?
Can you tell us about it?
6. Is this a satisfactory ending to the book? Explain.

GENERAL QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS BOOK

- Compare and contrast the young Winona in this book with the older Winona we meet in the Betsy-Tacy series.
- How would you describe Mrs. Root?
- How would you describe Mr. Root?
- How does “dignity” play an important role in this book?
- Compare and contrast the presents Winona receives from her guests to those you might receive from guests at your birthday party.
- Why does Mr. Root think that Jingles may have had a hard life? Is that important in choosing a pet? Explain.
- See what you can discover about the comics that Tib offers to draw: “Buster Brown,” “Happy Hooligan,” or “The Katzenjammer Kids.”

WRITING ACTIVITIES

- Write an alternate ending for the book in which Mrs. Root does NOT change her mind and Winona does NOT get to keep Jingles.
- Write a story about the mouse that appears in the painting of the *Deep Valley Sun*, the cigar, and the violin.

DRAMA ACTIVITIES

- With a group, demonstrate one of the games the children played at the party: “Prisoner’s Base,” “London Bridge,” “Go In and Out the Window,” or “Pin the Tail on the Donkey.”
- Prepare a monologue of the thoughts that may have gone through Mrs. Root’s mind as more and more children arrived at the party. You may incorporate some of her actual words as Maud Hart Lovelace wrote them if you wish. Present your monologue to the class.

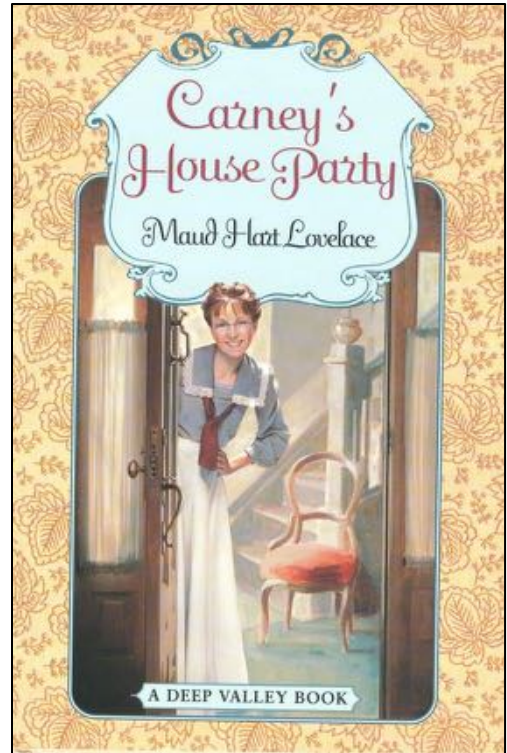


Carney's House Party

by Maud Hart Lovelace

Devotees of the Betsy-Tacy books will enjoy this “between” story, which chronicles Carney Sibley’s life during the summer after her sophomore year at Vassar. When Betsy-Tacy fans last saw Carney, she was aboard the 4:45 train that would take her away from Deep Valley, Minnesota. Larry Humphreys, her Deep Valley beau, was in California, where his family had moved four years earlier. Carney’s unresolved feelings for Larry have troubled her during those years and have prevented her from becoming serious about anyone else.

Carney’s “house party,” a month-long gathering of old and new friends, provides the backdrop for this “other” Deep Valley book. Betsy Ray is a secondary character in this story, but familiar names and places will draw Betsy-Tacy fans back into the fictional Minnesota town of Deep Valley and will provide answers to a few questions that remained at the conclusion of the Betsy-Tacy series.



Chapter 1.

1. If you have read the Betsy-Tacy books, start a list of “old familiars” you encounter while reading *Carney's House Party*.
2. What is Carney doing as this chapter begins? Why?
3. What is a “fillet” (page 4)?
4. What is Carney’s big problem/concern as a girl from Minnesota attending an Eastern college?
5. Who was Matthew Lang?
6. What does Carney find is unusual about boys and dating at Vassar?
7. How does the house party get started? Why is Carney so reluctant to invite Isobel to Deep Valley?

Chapter 2.

1. What does it mean to be “entertaining a man” (page 14)?
2. What is the Tuileries (page 9)? See if you can find a picture of it to share with the class. Can you find any pictures of the Vassar campus and the old Main building to compare with the Tuileries?
3. List some things that you find unusual about Vassar and its rules and/or traditions.
4. What is a “cynosure” (page 24)?

Chapter 3.

1. What is a spread (page 27)?
2. What do the girls finally learn about Isobel’s man?
3. What is “pulchritude” (page 36)?

Chapter 4.

1. Describe Carney's family.
2. Have you ever experienced the "back home" feeling that Carney experiences (page 48)? Can you describe it?
3. What things does Isobel do that annoy Carney? To what does Carney attribute Isobel's actions?
4. Predict what you think will happen next.

Chapter 5.

1. Why do you think that Carney hopes that Sam and Isobel will become a couple?
2. Why do you think Carney disapproves of Sam's attitude toward money?
3. What do we learn about the various members of the old Crowd (from the Betsy-Tacy books)?

Chapter 6.

1. What more do we learn about the old Crowd?
2. What do you think of the way that Carney scolds Sam and pokes fun at him from time to time?

Chapter 7.

1. What happened at Gettysburg during the Civil War? What about Balaklava?
2. What gives Betsy away to Carney and the others at the masquerade party.

Chapter 8.

1. Why do you think Carney is so hung up on Sam's habit of charging things?
2. What does Carney mean when she thinks that Sam is "in Isobel's train" (page 104)? IS he?
3. What is a porte-cochere (page 104)? Do you remember where we saw one in the Betsy-Tacy books?
4. Why do you think place mats (page 109) are unusual?
5. What does the noon "lunch" tell you about the Hutchinsons? What are some of the differences between the Sibleys and the Hutchinsons?
6. Why do these differences make Carney uneasy?

Chapter 9.

1. Why couldn't the Crowd swim for two hours after lunch? Is this still the case today?
2. What is "mumble-the-peg" (page 113) [often also called "mumblety-peg"]?
3. What do we find out about Carney's social life at Vassar in this chapter?
4. Notice the "bathing suits."
5. See if you can find recordings of the songs Carney plays on Sam's grand piano and share them with the class.
6. What does Carney confide to Sam about her playing for Matthew Lang?

Chapter 10.

1. See what you can find out about *The Little Colonel* books for girls.
2. Who do you think wrote the Rules for the house party?
3. What do Betsy-Tacy fans learn about Uncle Keith in this chapter?
4. What welcome surprise occurs at the end of this chapter?
Why is Mrs. Sibley "not too pleased" about it?

Chapter 11.

1. Who was Lochinvar? See if you can find the poem about him (by Sir Walter Scott) to share with the class. How is it an appropriate poem for this situation?
2. Why do you think Sam teases Carney so much?
3. What are your predictions at the end of this chapter?

Chapter 12.

1. How do you “pump up” on swings (page 159)?
2. What is “tattooing” (page 161)?
3. Why do you think Maud Hart Lovelace constantly compares Larry and Sam? Who do you think is “winning”?

Chapter 13.

1. See if you can find descriptions or photos of the girls’ hat styles—wastebasket, peachbasket, and dishpan—to share with the class.
2. How is Carney mistaken in her assessment of the cause of Sam’s unseemly behavior?
3. Do you think Isobel tells the truth about her long distance phone call? Why or why not?

Chapter 14.

1. What can you infer about Carney and Sam and Carney and Larry after the fishing expedition?
2. What do the girls suspect will happen on Friday when Larry and Carney go to Orono?
Orono is actually based on the real Minnesota town of Rapidan. See what you can find out about Rapidan to share with the class.
3. How does Bobbie misunderstand the idea of eloping?

Chapter 15.

1. How do you explain Carney’s conflicted feelings about Isobel at the beginning of this chapter?
2. What is a “boon companion” (page 206)?
3. What is happening between Carney and Larry as this chapter progresses? What is Carney realizing?

Chapter 16.

1. Who “elopes” in this chapter? What does he think eloping means?
2. What has happened to Bobbie?
3. Why do you think Sam is so angry with Carney?
4. Are you surprised at the way this chapter ends? Why or why not?

Chapter 17.

1. Why is Carney now so angry with Sam?
2. See what you can find out about “hobble skirts” (page 231) to share with the class.
3. Why do you think Carney and Larry get along so well at the dance?
4. Why do you think Sam kisses Carney again?
5. What is the significance of their argument at the end of the chapter?
6. Predict what will happen!

Chapter 18.

1. What bombshell does Isobel drop on the girls?

2. What is a “spooner” (page 246)?
3. Carney’s feelings towards Isobel waver between like and dislike throughout the book. Why?

Chapter 19.

1. What is a “good scout” (page 255)? Why doesn’t Carney think this description fits Isobel?
2. Are you surprised at the results of the advice that Betsy gives and Carney follows?
Why or why not?
3. See if you can find directions for “Duck on a Rock” and play it with the class.
4. What is significant about Sam’s plan to buy a ring for Carney?

Chapter 20.

1. What is Carney doing when she visits the various spots on the Vassar campus?
2. Why doesn’t Carney think she will ever understand Isobel?
3. What does “inscrutable” mean (page 273)?
4. How do you feel at the end of this chapter and the book?

GENERAL QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS BOOK

- Look at the list of “familiar” you found between this book and the Betsy-Tacy series. Share your list with others in the class. Did you add any information to the Betsy-Tacy series after reading *Carney’s House Party*? Can you place *Carney’s House Party* in the sequence of the Betsy-Tacy books?
- What changes can you see in Carney over the course of the summer? Can you explain them?
- What do you learn about life in this book?

WRITING ACTIVITIES

- Write a Chapter 21 for this book in which you bring Carney’s and Sam’s story to a conclusion that leaves us satisfied. Include their wedding and any children you envision for them. If you’ve read the Betsy-Tacy series, you might review *Betsy’s Wedding*, as it drops some important details that might help you.
- Write a conversation that might occur between Carney and Isobel when Isobel arrives back on the Vassar campus.
- Write a short story describing Larry’s thoughts as he travels back to California.
- Choose one of the historical references from this book and write an explanation of it. Be sure to include reasons for its historical significance as well as its significance in this book.
- If you have read the Betsy-Tacy books, compare and contrast Betsy and Carney as they appear in both stories.

- Again, if you have read the Betsy-Tacy books, choose one character who appears in both books and compare and contrast that person as he/she appears in the different story lines.

DRAMA ACTIVITIES

- Choose a scene from the book and act it out for the class.
- Work out the “engagement” conversation between Sam and Mr. Sibley and perform it for the class.



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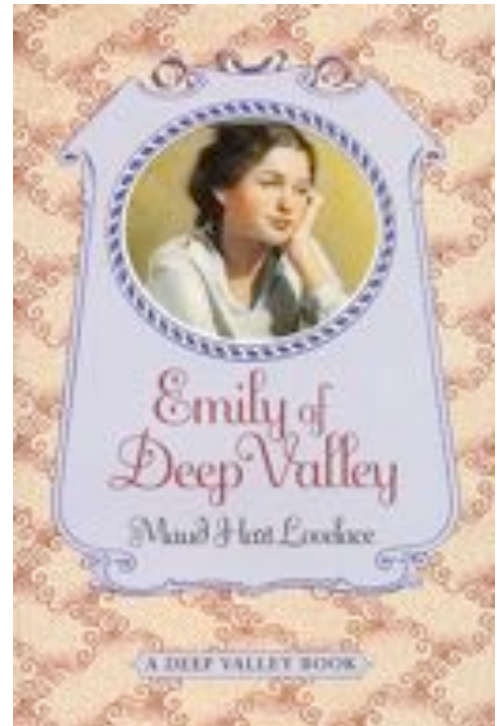
Emily of Deep Valley

By Maud Hart Lovelace

Fans of the Betsy-Tacy books love reading about the adventures that Betsy enjoys with the support of her parents and sisters. However, not everyone in Deep Valley is able to afford many—or—most of these often-expensive endeavors. Emily Webster is one such young lady, an orphan, living with her grandfather in a house set apart from Deep Valley proper by the slough. Emily longs to be like the other girls in her class at school, but caring for her grandfather occupies much of her time, and she feels “different” from the others, set apart by her family situation.

When graduation comes in June 1912, her classmates plan their college careers, but Emily cannot do the same. Her grandfather expects her to stay home and care for him. Emily can do nothing but try to make the best of things.

Readers of the Betsy-Tacy books will welcome familiar places and people and will enjoy meeting Maud Hart Lovelace’s heroine, Emily. Her story gives us a different picture of Deep Valley, Minnesota, and tells a tale quite unlike Betsy’s.



Chapter 1.

1. If you have read the Betsy-Tacy series, start a list of the “old familiars” that you encounter while reading this book.
2. Compare and contrast Emily and her cousin Annette.
3. What do we learn of Emily’s family in this chapter?
4. See if you can find a picture of an old phonograph with a “morning glory” horn and share it with the class.

Chapter 2.

1. Describe Don Walker.
2. What is Decoration Day?

Chapter 3.

1. What additional details do we learn about Emily’s parents and grandparents in this chapter?
2. See what you can find out about the Battle of Gettysburg and share it with the class.
3. What are the “First Minnesota” and the “Fifth Minnesota”?
4. How do the events of this chapter make you feel?

Chapter 4.

1. What was the G.A.R. (page 50)?
2. What was the Women’s Relief Corps (page 52)?

3. See if you can find any information about and a picture of a REO to share with the class.
4. How do Don Walker's words affect Emily?

Chapter 5.

1. How does Emily's grandfather manage to surprise her?
2. Do you agree with Emily that Don is the most wonderful person she knows? Why or why not?
3. Emily believes (page 70) that "when you finish something, you ought always to begin something new." Do you agree? Why or why not?

Chapter 6.

1. Who is Otis Skinner?
2. Find a copy of "The Marshes of Glynn" by Sidney Lanier to share and discuss with the class.
3. What does Maud Hart Lovelace mean (page 81) when she says that Don has "an air of lordly condescension" when he visits Emily? Do you agree?

Chapter 7.

1. See what you can find out about the games the girls play at Emily's party. Share—or play—them with the class.
2. See if you can find a copy of "The Female of the Species" by Rudyard Kipling to share with the class.
3. How do you feel when this chapter ends?

Chapter 8.

1. Have you ever been lonely? Can you tell the class about it? How did your loneliness compare with Emily's?
2. What is the significance of "putting up" one's hair?

Chapter 9.

1. What changes Emily's attitude?
2. Why is Emily "grateful" for Cab's invitation to the dance?
3. What are the Elks? What can you find out about them?

Chapter 10.

1. What do you think it means to "muster your wits"?
2. See if you can find out how to do the Gaby Glide or the Turkey Trot. Teach it to the class.
3. What things does Emily learn over the Thanksgiving weekend?

Chapter 11.

1. What is your impression of the Deep Valley boys at the ice skating pond?
2. Describe Kalil's house and family.
3. Why do you think Maud Hart Lovelace wrote this chapter?

Chapter 12.

1. Who are Mrs. Pankhurst and Christobel (page 155)? Henry George? Ibsen? Tolstoy? G.B. Shaw?
2. Explain the incident between Mr. Wakeman and the "Smart Alec" (page 159). What does this show you about Mr. Wakeman?
3. What do you predict will happen over the Christmas vacation? Why do you think this?

Chapter 13.

1. See what you can find out about “bacon bats” (page 167).
2. Why was the “date” with Jim Baxter a blow to Emily?
3. What do you think Emily could have done to have had a better time at the hay ride?

Chapter 14.

1. What are the effects of all of Emily’s efforts to have a Christmas party for the Syrians?
2. What do you think lies ahead?

Chapter 15.

1. What do we learn about the Syrians and their treatment in this country?
2. If you have read the Betsy-Tacy books, can you place Emily’s story in the sequence of those other books?
3. Why do you think the other girls’ opinions of Emily “went up” after Cab invites her to the New Year’s Eve ball?

Chapter 16.

1. How does the ice get broken at the first meeting of the Boys Club?
2. What do you predict will happen with the Wrestling Champs Club?

Chapter 17.

1. Why do you think Emily is inspired to take on all the projects she has begun?
2. What reasons does Emily think of for the Syrian women’s sudden “blossoming” as a result of learning English?
3. Describe Mr. Jed.

Chapter 18.

1. Why (page 242) does Emily’s heart “sink” when she hears that Jed’s grandfather fought under General Beauregard in the Civil War?
2. What is “distinction” (page 249)? Why does Jed use the word to describe Emily?

Chapter 19.

1. Why do you think Mr. Meechum speaks the way he does at the meeting?
2. Compare Jed’s speech with Mr. Whitlock’s.
3. How would you have voted if you had been on the School Board? Why?
4. Are you surprised at what happens when Jed and Emily arrive at the Webster house? Why or why not?

Chapter 20.

1. How do you feel about Annette’s engagement?
2. Why do you think Emily is irritated when Annette questions her about Little Syria?
3. How has Jed changed Emily’s feelings about her living situation?
4. Have you ever had “baklava” (baklava)? Can you tell us about it?

Chapter 21.

1. Are you surprised by the events of this chapter? Why or why not?
2. What do you predict lies ahead for Emily?

GENERAL QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS BOOK

- How does Emily change over the year covered by this story? What are the reasons for this?
- What are some of the “life lessons” contained in this book?
- How have Decoration Day celebrations changed since 1912?
- Look at the list of “familiar” you found between this book and the Betsy-Tacy series. Share your list with the class. Did you add any information to the Betsy-Tacy stories as a result of reading *Emily of Deep Valley*? Discuss.

WRITING ACTIVITIES

- Write a Chapter 22 for the story and share it with the class.
- Choose one of the historical references from this book and write an explanation of it. Be sure to include reasons for its historical significance as well as its significance in this book.
- Choose one of the members of the Wrestling Champs Club and tell a story from his point of view. It may be based on an incident from the book or one you make up.
- If you have read the Betsy-Tacy books, compare and contrast Betsy and Emily.
- Again, if you have read the Betsy-Tacy books, choose one character who appears in both books and compare and contrast that person as he/she appears in the different story lines.

DRAMA

- With a group, choose one of the scenes from the story and write a dramatization of it to share with the class.
- The Battle of Gettysburg was the occasion for one of Abraham Lincoln’s most famous speeches, the Gettysburg Address. Find a copy of this speech and give a dramatic reading of it for the class.

