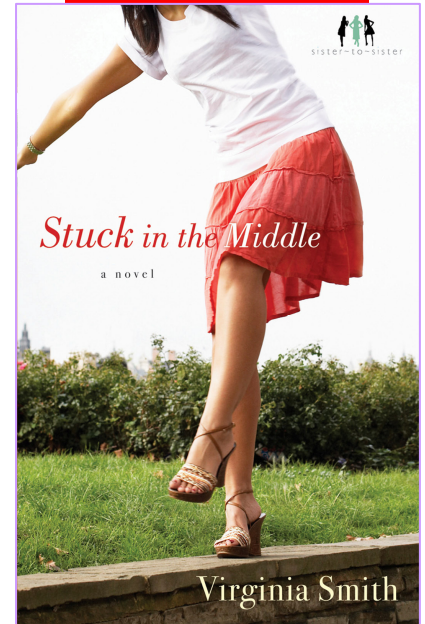


Reading Group Discussion Guide

for *Stuck in the Middle*

- ❖ Joan thinks in terms of newspaper headlines. What does this say about her?
- ❖ Discuss Carla's concerns over Gram's increasingly erratic behavior, along with the solutions Joan proposes as an alternative to a residential care facility. At what point should the family of an aging relative consider alternative care?
- ❖ Joan enjoys a close relationship with Allie and Tori. Identify some of the ways the Sanderson sisters support each other. What important roles do siblings play in each others' lives?
- ❖ Compare Joan's relationship with her sisters to Ken's relationship with Karen. How are they similar and how are they different?
- ❖ Joan proposes that the members of her Sunday School class get together outside of the church setting partly in response to the bulletin she sees at a more active church. Discuss a few other reasons she may have had, consciously or unconsciously, for wanting to get involved with people from her church.
- ❖ Ken admits to Joan that his life was rocky after his parents died. What turned him around? How does his past impact him as an adult?
- ❖ The two churches portrayed in *Stuck in the Middle* are vastly different. Identify the differences. Is one church more effective, or "better," than the other?
- ❖ The young adult Sunday School class decides to fix up the Shadow Ridge playground as a community outreach project. Was their project effective?
- ❖ Adults often have a slanted view of events that took place in their childhood. Identify some of the events from her past that Joan is forced to reevaluate through adult eyes. How did the revelation of the truth behind those events shape her actions? Is such revelation beneficial or are past truths better left uncovered?
- ❖ Rosa reconciles with her husband and decides to move to Las Vegas. Why does the thought Rosa and Tiffany moving far away disturb Joan?



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Book 1 of
The Sister-to-Sister Series

by Virginia Smith

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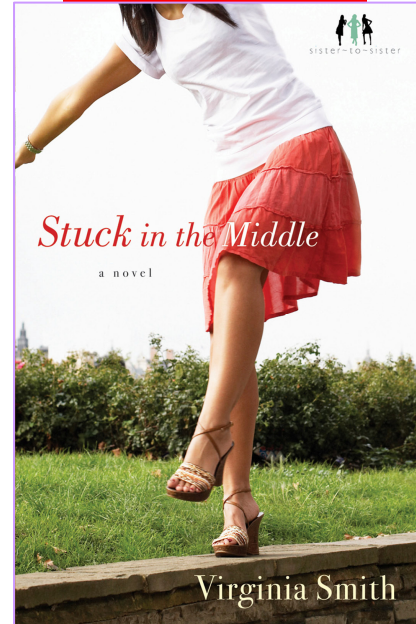
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Reading Group Discussion Guide – *Stuck in the Middle* - Page 2

- ❖ When Joan confesses her “mug rearranging” episode, Allie tells her she’s just bored. What is Joan worried about? Is Allie correct in her assessment?
- ❖ Allie becomes Joan’s flirting coach to aid her in the competition with Tori. Why did Allie chose Joan over Tori?
- ❖ Mary Alice Sachs’ miraculous story of the orphan boy has a profound impact on Joan. Why? Do accounts of that sort set up unrealistic expectations?
- ❖ Joan thinks of several ways she might succeed in getting Ken’s attention. How did she finally manage to impress him in a meaningful way?
- ❖ How does Joan’s childhood relationship with her father impact her as an adult? What about her relationship with her mother?
- ❖ Trigger plays several important roles in *Stuck in the Middle*. Identify the people Trigger impacts, and how. Then discuss your favorite pet story!



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For more information contact:

Virginia Smith

VirginiaSmith@VirginiaSmith.org

www.VirginiaSmith.org