

Discussion questions for A Golden Life



- The novel takes the reader into a movie studio in 1938. Which aspects of that world did you find most interesting?
- How is Kitty Ridley similar to Belinda Vail? How are they different?
- Kitty shares many hidden stories from her life with Frances. Which one did you find most compelling?
- At times, Frances and other characters reflect on how the movies have affected their lives. What are some positive effects you think movies have had on our world? Do you think movies could also (as Frances reflects) be responsible for unrealistically raising our expectations?
- “I believe that every woman has the right to tell her own story,” says Frances. What gets in the way of women telling their stories?
- Cyril Flike has a small role in the book, but arguably plays a large role in Frances’s life. Reflect on his importance in the story.
- A defining episode in the history of California was the Gold Rush, which brought thousands of people West in hopes of making their fortune. Think of the place where you live. Which historical events have given it the character it has today ?
- As the cover art indicates, this is a story about journeys. Discuss the different journeys, both physical and emotional, in the novel. Whose journey resonated with you the most?
- Were you surprised by Kitty’s final decision about the movie? Why or why not?
- Which character did you find most intriguing? Most likable?
- Lawrence talks about learning to “rest in the mystery.” Who in the novel has to do this? Have you ever “rested in the mystery” in your own life?
- If the story had continued, what do you think the future would hold for Frances?