

Character & Relationships

1. How does the girl change during her stay with the Kinsellas?
2. What makes the Kinsellas different from the girl's family?
3. Why is silence important in the novella?
4. Which relationship in the story seems most meaningful to you, and why?
5. How does the novella explore the idea of care and kindness?
6. Do you think the adults in the story are good people? Why, or why not?

Themes & Motifs

7. What does the title *Foster* suggest about the story? (*both a verb & a noun*)
8. Did you get a sense of 'timelessness' in the story?
9. What role does poverty play in the story?
10. What does the novella say about childhood?
11. How are love and loss connected in the novella?
12. Why do you think secrets are important in the story?
13. How does light & dark as a motif play a role in the novel?
14. How does Keegan's use of the senses play a part in the novel (*sight; smell; touch; taste; hearing*)?

Setting & Atmosphere

15. How does the rural Irish setting affect the mood of the novella?
16. What emotions does the atmosphere of the story create?
17. How does Keegan create tension in such a quiet story?

Style & Narrative

18. Why do you think Keegan tells the story from a child's perspective?
19. What effect does the simple writing style have on the reader?
20. Why do you think so much is left unsaid in the novella?
21. How does the novella create emotional impact without dramatic events?
22. What moments in the story are especially symbolic or memorable?

Interpretation & Personal Response

23. Did the ending feel hopeful, sad, or both?
24. Which scene stayed with you the most, and why?
25. Do you think the girl feels more "at home" with the Kinsellas than with her own family?
26. What do you think the novella suggests about what children need from adults?
27. Why do you think *Foster* has become such a widely appreciated novella?

Open / Comparative Questions

28. Would the story be different if it were told by an adult narrator?
29. Why do you think Keegan chooses to set the novel in 1981?
30. How universal is the story, even though it is set in rural Ireland?
31. Can quiet stories be as powerful as dramatic ones? Use *Foster* as an example.
32. Does the novella remind you of anything you have read before?
33. How does the novella challenge traditional ideas of family?
34. If you could ask one character a question after the story ends, who would it be and what would you ask?

Extra Personal-response Questions

35. Which character did you sympathise with the most, and why?
36. Did the novella remind you of any real-life experiences or relationships?
37. Would you have liked to stay with the Kinsellas if you were in the girl's position?
38. Which moment in the novella affected you emotionally the most?
39. Did your opinion of any character change while reading the story?
40. What did the novella make you think about family relationships?
41. Did you find the ending satisfying? Why, or why not?
42. Would you recommend *Foster* to others your age?
43. What qualities make the Kinsellas memorable characters?
44. Did the novella change the way you think about childhood or care?
45. Which scene would you choose to discuss in class, and why?
46. If you could change one thing in the story, what would it be?
47. How would you describe the emotional atmosphere of the novella?
48. Which character would you most like to speak to after the story ends?
49. What do you think readers can learn from *Foster* today?