

Lady Tan's Circle of Women: participant questions

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Whole-book spoilers. Optional prompts for adult discussion. Pass on any item without explaining why.

Book: Lady Tan's Circle of Women by Lisa See. Reference ISBN 9781982117085. Your edition / chapter notes:

Before full-book spoilers

Which early description made the limits around Yunxian's future feel most concrete? | How did the opening frame the difference between being useful and being allowed to act?

Q01. How does Yunxian learn to observe before she is free to make decisions? What does the novel suggest about the relation between attention and authority?

Chapter or letter cue in my edition: _____ Notes: _____

Q02. Which form of knowledge depends on an intimate conversation that an outsider cannot easily enter? Who is able to hear it?

Chapter or letter cue in my edition: _____ Notes: _____

Q03. Where do class and gender place different limits on two women in the same situation? Avoid treating all restrictions as interchangeable.

Chapter or letter cue in my edition: _____ Notes: _____

Q04. How does a friendship carry knowledge across a social boundary? What risk or misunderstanding travels with it?

Chapter or letter cue in my edition: _____ Notes: _____

Q05. What does a family expect a skilled woman to do with that skill? Compare a stated expectation with an action that resists it.

Chapter or letter cue in my edition: _____ Notes: _____

Q06. Which encounter makes care and obedience pull apart? What choices are actually available to the person being asked to comply?

Chapter or letter cue in my edition: _____ Notes: _____

Q07. How do domestic spaces become places of learning or constraint? Choose one room or threshold and follow its role across chapters.

Chapter or letter cue in my edition: _____ Notes: _____

Q08. Where does the narration ask readers to recognize a historical limit without accepting it as natural? What detail makes that distinction visible?

Chapter or letter cue in my edition: _____ Notes: _____

Q09. How does the circle of women include disagreement as well as support? Discuss a conflict that cannot be reduced to a failure of kindness.

Chapter or letter cue in my edition: _____ Notes: _____

Q10. At the ending, what kind of authority has Yunxian gained? Which barriers remain beyond an individual achievement?

Chapter or letter cue in my edition: _____ Notes: _____

Q11. What would be lost if the novel were described only as the story of an exceptional woman? Consider the less celebrated work around her.

Chapter or letter cue in my edition: _____ Notes: _____

Q12. How does preserving an account of women's knowledge differ from proving every fictional scene as history? What sources would each task need?

Chapter or letter cue in my edition: _____ Notes: _____

Source record: <https://lisasee.com/books/lady-tans-circle-of-women/>. Original prompts; no affiliate links. Version 1.0, 15 October 2026.