



32 Candles

By Ernessa T. Carter
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Questions for Discussion

1. Davie's high school experiences affect her for the rest of her life. How influential were your high school years on your adult life?
2. Davie doesn't speak for the first third of the book. How does her chosen muteness serve her? How does it continue to affect her personality after she starts speaking again?
3. Is Davie a trustworthy narrator? Why or why not?
4. Davie ends up becoming best friends with her ex-boyfriend. Do you think that exes can really be friends?
5. Many of Davie's worst qualities are also her best qualities. Do you have any experience with vices actually proving to be talents?
6. Davie isn't able to move on with her own life until she confronts the pain of her past, including her relationship with her mother. Is it necessary to face the people who have hurt you most in order to live a full life? What may or may not happen if we don't?
7. Do you think that Davie's mother loved her? Do you think that Davie loves her mother? Why is it difficult for people to sometimes show love? What holds them back?
8. At one point Davie insists that she couldn't have acted in any other way because of who she is and the life that she has lived. What does she mean by this? Is our history the most important influence on our future? Can we 'will' ourselves into a future markedly different from our pasts?
9. Davie talks a lot about passionate love being an 'Invitation to Crazy.' Do you agree with her? Have you ever been handed an invitation to crazy?
10. Davie loves her deceased grandmother very much and mentions her throughout the book. What do you think about her grandmother? Do your feelings change by the end of the book? How do your feelings toward Davie's grandmother change by the end of the book?
11. The author portrays several substitute-family relationships in this book. Discuss these and explore their dynamics. Is it human nature to form these kinds of relationships when real parent-child ones fail?
12. What do you believe the future holds for Davie and James?
13. Veronica is a complicated bully. Did your feelings toward her change throughout the book?
14. Davie's circumstances change a great deal from the beginning of the story until the end, but one might argue that she herself does not. Discuss.
15. Davie sometimes compares herself to her mother. Is she is anything like her mother? How?
16. Davie falls so in love with the movie, *Sixteen Candles*, that it literally changes her life. Has a movie or other art form such as a play or novel -- ever changed your life in this way? How?
17. Davie mentions her love for the novel, *The Color Purple*, because of the fact that its hero, Celie, is dark-skinned and manages to achieve a happy ending. Does Davie achieve her own happy ending? Are we too caught up in the idea of happiness? How can we appreciate happiness if we don't experience sadness or loss? Have any literary characters inspired you in this way?