



## MY BROTHER'S CROWN

*By Mindy Starns Clark and Leslie Gould*

1. *My Brother's Crown* takes place in two different time periods, alternating between Catherine's story in 1685 and Renee's in the modern day. Did you like this format? Why or why not? How did the structure allow these concurrently unfolding narratives to inform and enhance each other?
2. Before reading this book, did you know much about the struggle of the Huguenots in seventeenth-century France? If so, did this story provide new insights? Do you feel that you have a better understanding of that era and the situation now that you've read *My Brother's Crown*?
3. When Renee and her cousins are young, they come upon a grisly scene in the woods that has somehow been cleaned up and rearranged by the time police arrive. Which part of that event do you think would be more damaging: witnessing something that horrific at such a young age or having no one else believe that it was ever actually there?
4. A running theme in the historical portion of *My Brother's Crown* involves the decision of where to relocate if forced to leave France. Catherine longs for city life in London, while her brother and fiancé both seem to be leaning toward the Plateau, one of the most rural parts of France. Which location would you prefer? Why?
5. How did the life of Suzanne de Naivailles as a member of the court of King Louis XIV differ from Grand-Mère's life as a Huguenot living in Lyon? Which lifestyle would you have preferred?
6. As a scientist, Renee has a very unique perspective of the world. Did you find that her various science-related thoughts and dialogue contributed to her characterization? Which did you find to be the most memorable?
7. Grand-Mère was raised Catholic but became Protestant as a young woman. Did the authors handle this dynamic with sensitivity? What were some of the things Grand-Mère appreciated about her Catholic upbringing?
8. Catherine is by nature—and by circumstance—a brave person, while Renee considers herself to be the very opposite. How do you think our experiences in life play into our levels of courage? What impact do our personalities have on our bravery?
9. In what ways was Jules pragmatic? As you were reading the story, did you find yourself agreeing with Catherine's frustration toward him, or did you believe he had a viable plan to save his family and care for his employees? Did you agree with the decisions he made by the end of the story? Could you do the same? Why or why not?
10. Did you empathize with Catherine's helplessness and lack of rights as a woman in the seventeenth century? How do you think you would have dealt with the limits put on women in that era if you were in her shoes?