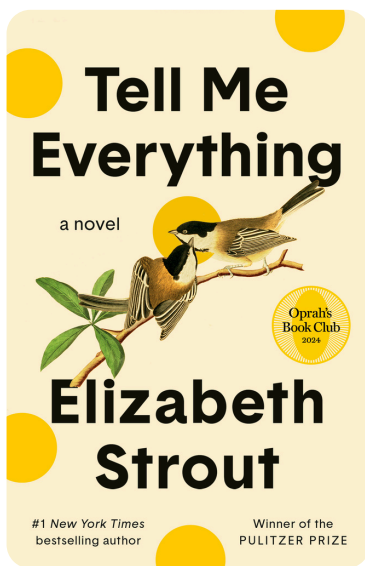




TELL ME EVERYTHING



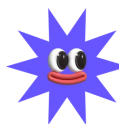
*Book Club
Discussion Guide*



Questions

1. The title *Tell Me Everything* suggests a need to be truly known. Which characters are able to share their full truth, and which remain guarded? What do you think is at stake for them in revealing—or refusing to reveal—their story?
2. Lucy is often the emotional anchor for others. Do you see her as a passive recipient of stories or as someone shaping them? Is listening an act of power, compassion, or both?
3. In Bob's legal case, do you believe justice is the same as truth? How did your moral perception of the accused evolve as the story unfolded? What does Strout want us to question about fairness and empathy?
4. Several characters are at the end of their lives and reflecting on their past. Do you think it's possible to find peace late in life even if there was hardship or regret? Which character embodies this most powerfully?
5. Loneliness is a recurring theme. How does Strout portray the difference between being alone and feeling alone? Which moments in the novel capture this distinction most powerfully?
6. Strout's characters reappear across different books and intersect in surprising ways here. What message is she sending about how people influence each other's lives—even when they aren't aware of it?
7. When characters share painful memories, do you feel it liberates them, or deepens their sorrow? Is telling your story always healing, or can it reopen wounds?
8. Many characters are not extraordinary in a traditional sense—they are teachers, neighbors, small-town residents. Do you think Strout is redefining what a significant life looks like?

9. Romantic love, familial devotion, and quiet companionship all appear in different forms. Which relationship in the book felt most “true” to you—even if it wasn’t perfect or traditional?
10. Do characters tell the truth as it happened, or as they need to believe it happened? How does storytelling become a way to control one’s own narrative and identity?
11. Silence is just as present in this novel as spoken confession. Which character’s silence spoke the loudest to you, and what do you think it represented—fear, dignity, protection, or resignation?
12. How do the choices of older characters affect younger ones, even if indirectly? What does the book suggest about emotional inheritance and the stories passed down (or withheld) across generations?
13. Bob Burgess is deeply empathetic—but does his compassion ever cross the line into enabling certain behaviors or denying reality? Where is the line between kindness and naivety?
14. Strout often highlights mundane details—routine conversations, small gestures, quiet moments. Why do you think she chooses to focus on these instead of big plot twists? What truth is she revealing about where meaning is found?
15. Characters are aging, dealing with illness, fragility, and time. How does the novel explore the idea that the body holds memory—even when the mind doesn’t speak it?
16. If “regret” were a person in this novel, how would you describe its relationship to the characters? Do they make peace with it, resist it, or surrender to it?
17. Is Lucy always justified in absorbing others’ stories? Does listening come with an ethical responsibility? What might be the consequences of holding so many secrets?
18. Which character is seeking redemption, and do they find it? What does redemption look like in Strout’s world—public acknowledgment, private peace, or simply being heard?
19. By the end of the book, what do you think Elizabeth Strout ultimately wants us to understand about being human? If you could summarize the emotional thesis of the novel in one sentence, what would it be?
20. By the end of the novel, did you feel hopeful, melancholic, or something in between? What emotional state do you think Strout deliberately leaves the reader in—and why?



Bored to Death
Book club

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.