

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS | ONCE UPON A WARDROBE

Patti Callahan

1. Was *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* part of your childhood? Your children's childhood? When did you first discover the story?
2. Did you ever wonder, "Where did Narnia come from?"
3. At the start of the novel, Megs Devonshire doesn't care much for made-up stories. She's concerned with math, facts, and figures. Why do you think her heart changed? Have you felt the same? What stories have changed you?
4. Megs Devonshire attempts to make a logical list of Narnia facts, and her friend, Padraig, stops her. Why do you think he does this? What does this mean to you? Would you have stopped her?
5. George Devonshire is looking for more than facts when he asks about the origin of Narnia. What do you think he is really asking? What does he really want to know?
6. If you could ask C.S. Lewis anything about Narnia, what would it be? Did his stories answer any of those questions for you?
7. In Patti's author's note she states, "What I've set out to do is show that an author's life (and reading) might inform a story in some ways, and yet there are also large swaths of story-source that are altogether imaginative, mysterious, and transcendent." Do you believe that to be true about stories? About Narnia?
8. What means the most to you about *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*?
9. Patti deliberately kept this novel in 1950, which is the year that *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* was released, keeping the story to just the first novel in the Narnia series. If you have read all of the books, do you have a favorite?
10. As you read about the seven events in Lewis's life, which one do you think contributed the most to Narnia? Where do you see these events in his life in the pages of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*?

11. Megs, Padraig, and George went on an adventure. What struck you the most in those scenes? Why was it important that they went on this adventure?
12. How did you feel about the ending of the story? Would you change it if you could? Was it what you expected?
13. Megs moves between two family homes in the course of the novel—the Devonshire’s cottage that is her family place, and the Lewis brothers’ home. Both give her a feeling of ease, contentment, safety, and security as she enters from the winter cold outside. What is it that makes these places feel so soft and rounded? What is it that defines home—rather than just a house—for you?
14. Patti opens the novel with a quote from C.S. Lewis: “Sometimes fairy stories may be best what’s to be said.” Have you found that to be true? Why do you think it is or isn’t?
15. When Jack is living with the Kirkpatricks, the thing he most longs to hear from his tutor are the words, “I hear you.” Why does knowing that someone hears you matter? How does it change you?
16. Was there a scene in this story that was particularly meaningful to you? Which one was it?
17. George tells Megs, “I think the lion follows all of us around. We just have to look for him.” Do you agree with George? If so, have you ever seen the lion?
18. C.S. Lewis endured many hardships in his life, as did George and Megs. How did each of them respond? What do you think might have been different in each of their lives if they had different experiences, or if they had responded differently?
19. Padraig tells Megs, “I can’t really understand my life without stories.” Do you agree? What stories have best helped you make sense of your own life?