

Discussion Questions for Sarah's Patchwork  
By Stephanie Grace Whitson

1. In Chapter 2, Mrs. Hurd tells Sarah that her father's love led him to surrender her and Tom to the Children's Aid Society. Do you agree with her? Was it love?
2. Have you ever known someone like August Hathaway -- "prickles & quills" on the outside, but kind and generous on the inside? Tell us about him/her.
3. In Chapter 6, Augusta tells Sarah that "no woman should build her life waiting for a man to come along and save her. It's a terrible waste of brains and talent." Is that good advice? Why or why not?
4. In Chapter 6, LisBeth tells Sarah that every woman should have "company quilt" for special visitors. Do you have a "company quilt" or something like it that you get out just for company? Share what it is and tell about a happy memory associated with using it.
5. In Chapter 7, Abigail Braddock educates Sarah by having Sarah read aloud. Do you have a read-aloud story that brings back happy memories? Share it. What's your favorite read-aloud book or poem?
6. In Chapter 7, Abigail Braddock admits to being overwhelmed by the needs around her. She knows she cannot help everyone, but she has made it her goal to help Sarah and Tom. Do you ever feel overwhelmed by the needs in the world? How do you deal with it?
7. Have you ever known a Rebecca Braxton? What would you say to her/him if you had the opportunity to try to get them to change? (Chapter 10)
8. Why do you think Abigail Braddock kept her illness from her son? Do you agree with her decision? Why or why not? (Chapter 11)
9. In Chapter 14, when Sarah sorts through the trunk David left her, she comes across a sampler with the line "Christ is my salvation." Sarah doesn't think she knows what that phrase means. What do you think it means?
10. How would you counsel someone like Sarah -- someone dealing with a profound loss? What would you do or say to try and encourage them?
11. In Chapter 18, Dr. Gilbert tells Sarah that for him, the overwhelming responsibility a doctor accepts is worth it because of the overwhelming joy that results when things work out well. Share a time when you were terrified to try something. . . and then glad you did because the results were so rewarding.
12. Does the book need Dr. Maude Allbright's character? If yes, what does she add? (Chapter 19)
13. Have you ever known anyone who had the same kind of religion as Loula Kemp talks about in Chapter 22? What would be the advantages of having such a faith? Disadvantages?
14. Why do you think Sarah finally came to share the Kemp's faith?
15. In Chapter 25 Loula tells Sarah that the Bible is only a "general outline" of His plans, and that "the particulars usually come as quite a surprise to us mortals." Can you think of a time when you were pleasantly surprised by "the particulars" of how something worked out?
16. Have you ever used the tears from the past to create a treasure for tomorrow? If not, have you known someone who did? Talk about the treasure. (Epilog)