

THE UNEVEN ROAD

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Although Josiah's decision to leave home is precipitated by the sale of Innisfree, it is the "missing piece" of his history rather than missing the land that drives his journey. Do you think the conflict he feels between his Irish and Wampanoag heritages is understandable? Was Sadie right when she warned Tobias that Josiah would chose the dominant white culture? Does the outside world view Josiah as a white man?
2. Although *The Uneven Road* is essentially the tale of Josiah's search not only for the Keaney's but for his identity, the story is told from the point of view of each member of the Monroe family. Why do you think the author chose to use multiple points of view? Did that work for you?
3. What impact do you think the turbulence of the 1960s—the Vietnam War, cultural changes, political activism—had on Josiah's journey to manhood?
4. Which character did you identify with or sympathize with or react against? What reasons are there for your reaction?
5. One of the themes recurring in both Book One and Book Two is the strength and support provided by women's friendships. What does Lydia bring to the bond between her and Mae? Why is the friendship so fraught for both of them—not only because of the incident with Tobias but also because of Innisfree?
6. Do you think Mae was justified not only in keeping her distance from her family in Boston but also banishing any mention of them to her children? How did that choice affect not only her, but her siblings and her children? What would you have done?