**BROOKLYN Study Guide Questions**

1. *Brooklyn* is both a “coming of age” story and an immigration story. What does the book have to say about coming of age? About the immigrant experience? Did any of the characters or situations remind you of anything from your life?
2. What do you make of Eilis as a character? Did you think she was passive or passionless? If so, do you attribute that to her being an introverted personality type, to the gender roles of the time, to the household and community she grew up in, or did you not find her to be so? How do you think her home life shaped her? How does Eilis grow emotionally?
3. Did the novel and its protagonist Eilis remind you of any other novels you have read? Did she remind you of anyone you know? If so, how?
4. Why do you think Eilis’s sister Rose and Father Flood devise the plan to send Eilis to America?
5. *Brooklyn* is structured through the use of multiple contrasts or dualities. What dualities or pairs did you notice in the book? Make a list as you read. What is the function of each?
6. Did you have difficulty figuring out when the novel takes place? If so, do you think this was a defect in the book? What clues are provided? Why might an author leave it up to the reader to figure out? What did you learn about the time period in which the book takes place? What did you learn about the various places in the book?
7. When Eilis goes to Manhattan she is unimpressed with it. What do you make of her reaction?
8. What reactions do you have to the “sex scene” in the book? Did it surprise you? How typical do you think Eilis’s first experience with sex is?
9. What reactions do you have to Eilis’s confrontations with “diversity” (sex and race) in the workplace and at school? How are the divisions among different groups of European immigrants, as well as those between white and black Americans, beginning to shift in Brooklyn at this time?
10. How do you feel about the decision Eilis makes at the end? Is it the right one? Why or why not?
11. What do you think Eilis’s future holds? How do you think her life would have been different if she had stayed in Ireland and never come to America? Would her story be different if she came here today?
12. What did you like and dislike about the book? What accounts for your responses as a reader? What will you take away from reading it?