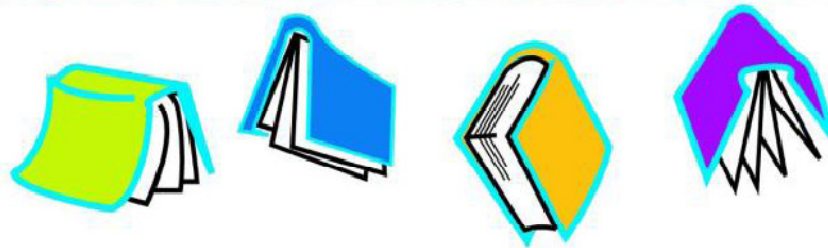


# Midday Book Club

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## ***A TREE GROWS IN BROOKLYN* by Betty Smith** STUDY QUESTIONS

1. How is the book's historical time period significant to the story? Think about Francie's stage of development when America enters the war.
2. Brooklyn is a dreamlike place to Francie. How does the time and place in which Francie grows up shape the person she is? Think about all of her favorite stores and celebrations in her neighborhood.
3. What role does song and singing play in the novel?
4. What is Francie's relationship to reading and writing? Why is it important?
5. How does Johnny's death serve as a structuring device for the book? In what way does it inform what happens after? How do things change?
6. Although people look down on Sissy's promiscuity, Francie adores her, and Katie believes she is good and generous to everyone she meets. What makes Sissy good, and how does her character reflect on the morals of the book in general?
7. Find three instances in which the tree is discussed, and read them carefully. Although the tree always represents hope and perseverance, its use at different points in the novel suggests it also has more specific significations. How is the symbol used differently each time? How does it still represent the same idea?