

The Trials of Nellie Belle

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What factors early in Nellie Belle's life caused her such unrest?
2. Why do you think she married John?
3. Why was Nellie so unhappy in her marriage? Was it all John's fault?
4. Why was Nellie eager to move West? What were her hopes and expectations?
5. What do you think was the turning point in her marriage? What caused her to leave John?
6. From time to time, Nellie expressed regrets about leaving her marriage. Do you think she ever truly regretted her decision?
7. Nellie was eager to enter the workforce. Why? What did she do to earn the respect of the legal community?
8. What did you admire about Nellie? What were her shortcomings? How did she grow and change in her later years?
9. Considering the differences in their characters (for example, how they handled relationships and the nature of their faith), how did daughter Opal's experiences compare to Nellie's?
10. Every bit as talented as her grandmother and mother, Leone's path is one of disappointment. Why?
11. Are there women or men in your family who left a legacy you want to pass down to your children and grandchildren?