

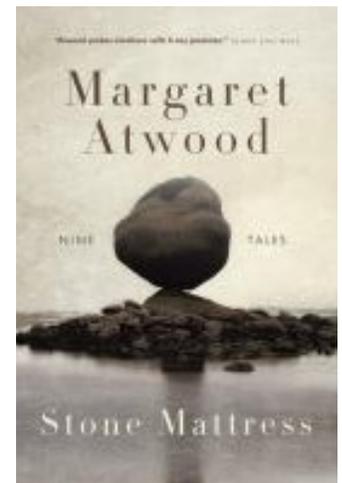


Stone Mattress: Nine Tales

Margaret Atwood

Discussion Questions

1. How did you experience the book? Were you engaged immediately, or did it take you a while to "get into it"? How did you feel reading it?
2. Describe the main characters—personality traits, motivations, and inner qualities. Why do characters do what they do? Are their actions justified?
3. Are the main characters dynamic—changing or maturing by the end of the book? Do they learn about themselves, how the world works and their role in it?
4. Talk about the book's structure. Does the time-line move forward chronologically? Does time shift back & forth from past to present? Why might the author have chosen to tell the story the way she did? What difference does the structure make in the way you read or understand the book?
5. What main ideas and themes does the author explore? (Consider the title, often a clue to a theme.) Does the author use symbols to reinforce the main ideas?
6. What passages strike you as insightful, even profound? Perhaps a bit of dialog that's funny or poignant or that encapsulates a character? Maybe there's a particular comment that states the book's thematic concerns?
7. If you could ask the author a question, what would you ask? Have you read other books by the same author? If so how does this book compare. If not, does this book inspire you to read others?
8. Has this novel changed you—broadened your perspective? Have you learned something new or been exposed to different ideas about people or a certain part of the world?





Stone Mattress: Nine Tales

Margaret Atwood

About the Author

Margaret Atwood was born in 1939 in Ottawa, and grew up in northern Ontario and Quebec, and in Toronto. She received her undergraduate degree from Victoria College at the University of Toronto and her master's degree from Radcliffe College.

Margaret Atwood is the author of more than forty books of fiction, poetry, and critical essays. Her latest book of short stories is *Stone Mattress: Nine Tales* (2014). Her *MaddAddam* trilogy – the Giller and Booker prize-nominated *Oryx and Crake* (2003), *The Year of the Flood* (2009), and *MaddAddam* (2013) – is currently being adapted for HBO. *The Door* is her latest volume of poetry (2007). Her most recent non-fiction books are *Payback: Debt and the Shadow Side of Wealth* (2008) and *In Other Worlds: SF and the Human Imagination* (2011). Her novels include *The Blind Assassin*, winner of the Booker Prize; *Alias Grace*, which won the Giller Prize in Canada and the Premio Mondello in Italy; and *The Robber Bride*, *Cat's Eye*, *The Handmaid's Tale* – coming soon as a TV series with MGM and Hulu – and *The Penelopiad*. Her new novel, *The Heart Goes Last*, was published in September 2015. Forthcoming in 2016 are *Hag-Seed*, a novel revisitation of Shakespeare's play *The Tempest*, for the Hogarth Shakespeare Project, and *Angel Catbird* – with a cat-bird superhero – a graphic novel with co-creator Johnnie Christmas. (Dark Horse.) Margaret Atwood lives in Toronto with writer Graeme Gibson.

This book is available for download as an eBook and an eAudiobook. For more information, please visit lpl.overdrive.com or call 519-661-4600.