



Comfort Discussion Questions

1. How did *Comfort* compare to *Blue*? Did you think it was a good sequel? Do you hope there will be another book in the series, or did Hostetter bring Ann Fay's story to a satisfying conclusion with *Comfort*?
2. What was the biggest obstacle that Ann Fay had to overcome in order to adjust to life after polio and the war? Do you think that she would have learned to walk again if she'd stayed home?
3. What were the obstacles that Ann Fay's father faced when he returned home from the war? How did he cope with his problems?
4. The bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki brought World War II to an end. And yet they left a great scar on the face of the world psyche. How do you think the invention of atomic weapons have contributed to peace or lack of it in our world?
5. Veterans of WWII have been called the Greatest Generation. In general they seem to be revered for their sacrifices in service of their country. Why do you think these veterans have enjoyed more goodwill than vets of some other wars such as Vietnam, or the Gulf Wars?
6. Ann Fay goes to Warm Springs to learn to walk again. How else does her time at Warm Springs change her?
7. In what ways did neighbors and members of the local community support Ann Fay and her family in the course of the story?
8. What do you think of Junior Bledsoe's role in *Comfort*?
9. Otis, who is a bit of a misfit, seemed to be the person able to offer the most concrete help to Ann Fay's father. Why do you think that is?
10. How has going to school, working and life in general changed for people with disabilities since the time that this story took place?
11. Polio victims have contributed significantly to the disability rights movement. Why do you think that is?

About The Author (In Her Own Words)

As a child, I was fascinated with family photos. At our house we had a red album with black pages. The pictures were tucked into little white corner tabs. But we also had a random collection of photos in a gray shoebox. I loved to scrounge through that box.

There were images of me at various younger stages in my life. And some of me with my siblings, all lined up in stairstep formation. (I was the second smallest girl.)

Reading

My brother says when we were growing up I was always always in the bathroom reading a book – especially when it was time to do the dishes!

But honestly, it had nothing to do with getting out of work! I just read every chance I got. And with four brothers and three sisters, I found my privacy wherever I could.

I also read in an apple tree, on a rock by our creek, and on the way home from school. Some days I read while I walked and other times I escaped to an imaginary world by making up my own stories.

Writing

I didn't realize I was good at writing until my 7th & 8th grade language arts teacher was impressed with my written book reports. Then at my elementary school graduation, she announced that I would be a great writer some day.

Okay, so maybe she exaggerated a little. But she got me working for those big red A's at the top of the page. And great writing is something I've been striving for, ever since!

... and History

Many of the photos in my family's album were taken in the 1930's and 40's - times I had not lived through. Some were of people who came before us. Of houses we'd lived in. Of places I'd never seen. From these pictures, I learned my family history.

I felt from the stories and the pictures that I was almost there. Somehow, I think it was those old photos that created my fascination with that time period. It was an era that was almost mine but also just beyond my grasp.

Much of history is like that. The stories of the past belong to us if we make them ours. As a writer, I love scrounging through history's images and finding hidden stories that have been lost in the bottom of the pile. My books are a way of bringing history into my experience. And hopefully, into yours also.

I like history writing because of the connection I feel to the people who came before me. I'm not consciously trying to learn from them. But I know they inspire me to do hard things.

(From www.joycemoyerhostetter.com)

