



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Prior to reading this book, were you familiar with Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, his poetry, or his courtship of Fanny Appleton? If so, were there things about their story that surprised you? If not, what elements of their story touched you the most?
2. Have you ever traveled to Boston or Cambridge? What are your impressions of those two locations? If you could travel to any European country, which one would it be and why?
3. How do you feel about Henry having sent the body of his first wife, Mary Potter, back to Boston unattended after her death? Should he have ended his Grand Tour early to tend to his family?
4. In America, many colleges and universities require two years of foreign language training. How does that factor into Henry's feelings regarding the teaching of language? Do you feel that learning another language is worthwhile? Do you speak a foreign language?
5. Do you enjoy poetry? What is your favorite poem or poet? Do you feel that poetry—as opposed to prose—is more successful in touching our hearts and minds?

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6. Fanny undergoes a substantial change of heart regarding her feelings for Henry. Have you experienced or seen a similar change in modern relationships? What, in your opinion, might change someone's mind regarding how they feel about a person?
7. Henry and Fanny's seven-year courtship is certainly unusual by today's standards, where the average courtship lasts between two to three years. The Longfellows went on to have six children and enjoyed nearly twenty years of a very happy marriage. Do you think that a longer courtship can result in a happier union?
8. Fanny embarks upon a spiritual journey to find God's path for her. Have you had a time in your life when you have undertaken a similar pursuit? What motivated you to do so, and what was the result?
9. Was there a particular scene or sentiment expressed in this book that stood out to you? Why?
10. At the time this story takes place, men tended to form very deep friendships that in today's culture might almost seem romantic. Henry maintained many of these close friendships throughout his life. What do you think has changed in our culture regarding male friendship? Or has it?