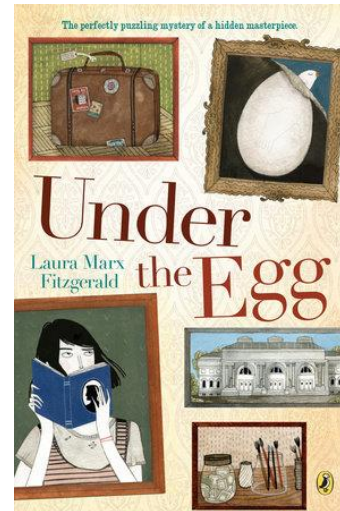


***Under the Egg* by Laura Marx Fitzgerald
(Penguin/Random, 2014)**

Her grandfather's dying words lead 13-year-old Theodora to a valuable, hidden painting she fears may be stolen, but it is her search for answers in her Greenwich Village neighborhood that bring her real treasure.



Book Discussion Questions:

1. The book begins with the death of Theo Tenpenny's beloved grandfather Jack. What mysterious message does he try to get across to her as he is dying? P.4
2. Theo describes herself as an "eccentric outsider" – why do you think she describes herself this way?
3. It's summer in Greenwich Village and Theo meets up with a new neighbor with movie star parents, Bodhi. How does Bodhi lifestyle differ from Theo's?
4. Why does Theo love the New York Public Library so much?
5. There are many people who help solve the mystery of the painting; for example, Eddie the librarian, and Goldie, the researcher at the Center for Jewish History.
6. What role does Bodhi play in helping Theo solve the mystery of the painting?
7. This book is a mystery that focuses on the discovered painting, how it came to be painted over, and why it is now sitting on the mantle in Theodora's house. But there are really two mysteries here. Theo's Grandfather has told her that he sat out World War II because he had asthma, but she gets a letter saying that as a result of his death his pension would be terminated. And she realizes he must have been on active duty in order to get a military pension. Why do you think Grandpa Jack lied to Theo?
8. How do the two mysteries come together – the mystery of the painting and the mystery of Theo's grandfather's wartime experience?
9. When Theo accidentally rubs the top coat of paint away from the painting that has hung on her grandfather's mantle piece "above the egg" she uncovers a dove (symbolizing the Holy Spirit). In Grandfather Jack's last letter to Theo he says

- “Your mother is a song bird, but you are a chicken.” Why does he call her mother a songbird?
10. What about Theo’s mother –what role does she play in the story? Do you think she will ever change?
 11. When Theo realizes that the painting has a rightful owner for a short time she resents that she has to give it up saying that, “I have lost my Grandfather, I’ve lost the painting that I looked at every morning of my life, if I give this painting away, I’ll lose the last thingmy grandfather left me. Bodhi replies, “Yeah, you’ve lost some things, but you have found so much more. What do you think she meant by this?
 12. P.233 Theo describes herself as being “barricaded with her Grandfather in our little fortress of self-reliance, scavenging the city for crumbs. But since Jack’s death, the city had changed. I had changed.” How do you think Theo had changed?
 13. There are allot of true facts interwoven into the story; for example, the research on Renaissance painters, the Monument Men, etc. On the author’s web site she discusses what she made up as fiction and what was true. What did you think of this mixing facts with fiction?
 14. Why is the book called *Under the Egg*? What does the title mean literally? How about figuratively – what does it mean figuratively?
 15. On the last page of the book, Jack, Theo’s grandfather, writes her one final letter. In it he states, “Now I know you are the one I was waiting for.” What do you think this statement means? Why is she the one her grandfather is waiting for?

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