

***Courier of Caswell Hall* by Melanie Dobson**

Discussion Questions

1. As I began researching the Revolutionary War, I quickly discovered how little I knew about the events that occurred before and during our country's fight for freedom. Did any of the events or ideas discussed in this novel surprise you or change your perspective about the Revolutionary War?
2. During the Revolutionary War, Patriots risked their lives for freedom from tyranny while Loyalists remained patriotic to their mother country as they honored their king. If you were living in 1781, do you think you would you have remained loyal to the Crown or risked your life for freedom?
3. The main characters in this novel each fought for what they valued most. What do you value most in your life and how would you be willing to sacrifice or fight for it?
4. Lady Caswell did everything possible to keep her family together and yet the Caswell family fell apart in the end. Was her fight to mend her broken family in vain?
5. Just as the colonists desired freedom from Great Britain, slaves like Elisha sought freedom from their masters. How did colonists justify enslaving people, and do you see any similarities in our world today?
6. The tyranny of Great Britain was mirrored in the Caswell home when Lord Caswell forced Grayson to whip the man his son admired. How did forgiveness change both Grayson and Elisha, and ultimately how did forgiveness begin the slow process of healing the relationships between neighbors and families in a new country divided by war?

7. Most Patriots were passionate about what they believed to be right, while
 - a. many of the British and Hessian soldiers fought for money or power—or didn't want to fight at all. How did the individual motivation of the soldiers impact the outcome of the war?

8. The main characters in this story used deception in order to uncover the truth about their enemy. When—if ever—do you believe deception is the right moral choice?

9. How did the poor choices of characters such as Hannah, Dalton Reed, and both Lord and Lady Caswell impact not only themselves but the future of their friends and family?

10. In spite of their fears, the ingenuity of Sarah, Nathan, Elisha, Lemuel, and Zadock caused the British army to panic, and ultimately they were able to rescue Grayson and his crew. When you are confronted with a situation that seems impossible, how do you overcome your fears?

11. Sarah regretted cowering in the dovecote while the enemy burned her home, but if she had not hidden, the soldiers probably would have killed her as well. How do you determine when to confront evil and when to flee?

12. What does water symbolize in this story and how does it affect each of the main characters?

13. Sorrow and regret faded away for Lydia when she danced. When you are wounded or grieving, what brings beauty and hope back into your life?

14. Elisha, Sarah and Lady Caswell clung to the hope that those they loved would be returned to them. In your life, what do you hope for most and how do you pursue this desire of your heart?