

“Boys and Girls”

Alice Munro

Questions for Comprehension and Discussion

1. Complete a plot diagram for “Boys and Girls” including the five elements of plot.
2. Who is the narrator? What perspective does she have on the events in the story?
3. Where and when does the story take place?
4. What roles are assigned to men and to women in the world of this story?
5. What people and things represent freedom in this story? What people and things are not “free”?
6. What do you see as the primary conflict in the story?
7. What do you see as the turning point in the story?
8. What changes occur in the course of the story --to the girl, to her fantasies, to her relationship with Laird and her father?
9. The phrase “only a girl” is used in two different situations. What meaning does the phrase have for the girl in each situation? How does it contribute to the overall meaning of the story?
10. This sort of story is called a “coming of age” or “initiation” story. Why do you think that is? What is the girl “initiated” into? Of what does she become aware?
11. In “Boys and Girls”, what does the girl gain? What does she lose? Do you see these changes and losses as necessary?