



*'Year of the Sister'*  
**Well-Read Mom Family Supplement**  
*Well-Read Mom's Guide to Bringing the Great Books into Your Home*

**October: Embracing Differences**

Discuss along with *Sense and Sensibility* by Jane Austen

In *Sense and Sensibility*, we discover we are enriched by the gifts of character and talent that our siblings possess. After all, it is unlikely that my sibling has all the gifts and I have none. I, too, have something to offer to my siblings. In fact, it is possible that our roles and our characters may undergo reversal or change over time.

***Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott**

The March sisters--Meg, Jo, Beth, and Amy--are four sisters whose defining characteristics make them memorably distinct, while their common love for one another unites them. We follow the girls in their transition from girlhood to womanhood, witnessing their virtues, lapses, and growth toward maturity. Their mother, Marmee, guides their adventures in character development, patiently helping her daughters to identify faults and integrate wisdom.

**Discussion Questions:**

1. Which March sister do you like best? Why? To which sister are you most similar? Do you ever notice some of the same flaws in yourself?
2. Which sister are you most unlike? Do you find that particular March sister irritating? Why? What are the good dimensions of her character? Does she ever grow/change?
3. The March sisters find themselves longing for a more comfortable life, a life of greater ease. However, they agree that the goal of their lives is to become a woman of deep and generous character. Each sister struggles to remain faithful to this ideal in her own way. How do you see your favorite March sister do this? What do you admire about the way she remains faithful?

**More for older readers:**

- *Betsy-Tacy* by Maud Hart Lovelace
- *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott
- *The Two Princesses of Bamarre* by Gail Carson Levine



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### **For Younger Readers**

#### ***The Frog and Toad Treasury* by Arnold Lobel**

Frog is cheery, generous, and ready for adventure. Toad is melancholic, reluctant, and accident-prone. Together, they are faithful and devoted friends who make us laugh at their escapades and misadventures. More than laugh, they also make us pause: Frog and Toad each have their flaws and their strengths. Frog is very talented, but he needs to be needed. Toad may be emotional, but he is toad-ily lovable.

#### **Discussion Questions:**

1. Who makes you laugh more, Frog or Toad? With your siblings or friends do you act more like Frog or more like Toad? With your mom/dad, do you act more like Frog or more like Toad? (Are you Toad-like sometimes? Are you Frog-like other times?)
2. Do you ever want to test your courage? Is it easier to be brave when you are with someone else? ("Dragons and Giants")
3. How important is it to do today's work, without putting it off until tomorrow? ("Tomorrow")
4. Are you ever satisfied with one cookie? How do you help yourself to be satisfied with a limited treat? ("Cookies")
5. Were you worried, like Toad, when Frog wanted to be alone? Have you ever wanted to be alone to savor what is good in your life? ("Alone")

#### **More for younger readers:**

- *Naughty Toes* by Ann Bonwill
- *Wolfie Bunny* by Ame Dyckman