

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS
For *Light the Way*

1. Burke Deveaux grew up at her family's inn beside the historic Deveaux Lighthouse. As the book begins, what loss has Burke recently faced? How has this impacted her and her mother and their business? A good neighbor and friend, Hal Jenkins, has been pitching in to help the family but comes to offer a better, more permanent answer. What is that offer? Why does Hal think this is a good solution for all?

2. Lighthouses come in many shapes, sizes, and heights. There are about 700 lighthouses in the United States. All are automated today but you can still visit many lighthouses maintained by individuals, state parks, and other organizations. Where is the Deveaux Lighthouse located? What did you learn about the history of the lighthouse and inn? What color is the Deveaux Lighthouse and most of the buildings around the Lighthouse Station? This distinctive color is called a lighthouse's Day Mark and the distinctive pattern of the lighthouse's beam at night its Light Signature? Do you remember the specific pattern of the Deveaux Lighthouse's nighttime Signature? Have you ever visited a lighthouse?

3. The Deveaux Lighthouse has been in the same family since the lighthouse was built in 1870. After the lighthouse was decommissioned, the old keeper's house was renovated into an inn to provide a business income for the family. Etta and Lloyd Deveaux, are the sixth generation to keep the Light. They have four daughters—Burke, Gwen, Celeste, and Lila, and this book is primarily Burke's story. What did you learn about Burke as the story unfolds? What does Burke look like? What are her strengths? Which of her other sisters has recently returned and why? As the book progresses Burke's other sisters also return. What brings each of them back? Who first called them The Lighthouse Sisters?

4. The Jenkins family live a short distance up the North Edisto River from the lighthouse and operate the Jenkins Boat Landing, offering ferry runs to the lighthouse and other locations, and chartering a variety of different island and fishing tours. Waylon Jenkins left home after high school to go first to college and then into the Navy. How long has he been gone? Why is he returning? Why does Waylon decide to come to work for the Deveaux family? What childhood background do Waylon and Burke share?

5. An attraction flares quickly between Waylon and Burke. You soon learn they've carried hidden feelings for each other for a long time. Why did neither of them acknowledge those feelings before? Do you think Lloyd Deveaux was wrong to discourage Waylon's attraction for Burke? Have you ever had anyone break up or interfere in one of your relationships or in a growing relationship of someone you know? Was the interference good or bad?

6. Watch Island, a fictitious part of Edisto Island, South Carolina, is separated from land on all sides by creeks, marshes, the North Edisto River, and the Atlantic Ocean. On the island are the Deveaux Inn and Lighthouse, a gift shop, a variety of historic structures, an old lodge, five cottages, two homes, a marina and dock, and various outbuildings and pavilions. Two other families live and work on the island besides the Deveaux family. Who are they?

What part do Henry and Rita Jean Bouls play on the island? What roles do Clifford and Novaleigh George carry? What do you remember most about these book characters?

7. Lila is the youngest of the Deveaux girls. She has only recently come back to the island. Where has she been and what has she been doing since she left? Why did she choose to live in the small Inland Cottage near the inn instead of returning to live with the family in the inn? You soon learn Lila is an artist. What type of art and paintings does she create? How has she used her creative gifts to improve the Lighthouse's gift shop? Burke remarks that "Lila has always lived close to God." How do you see this relationship showing in her life in the story?

8. Waylon settles in easily to life at the island and into a sweet, comfortable relationship with Burke. At first Burke and Waylon don't tell anyone they're a couple but their love blossoms quickly and Waylon soon asks Burke to become engaged. Where are they when they get engaged? How does Burke's mother handle this news? Why does it seem especially shocking to her? How do Lila and Novaleigh help Etta to be more understanding and happy about Burke and Waylon's plans to get engaged and be married? Have you ever known anyone who met and got engaged very quickly?

9. A lot of interesting guests stay at the Deveaux Inn. Myron Andric, an ornithologist, is staying for several months at the inn while studying birds for a research project. Why is Myron especially interested in the birds at the Deveaux Bank? The Deveaux Bank is a real place. Why is it special and protected as a bird sanctuary? What does Myron find at the Deveaux Bank that gets him upset and causes Burke and Waylon to call the authorities and head to the island? What unexpected find do they also learn of? Who does Burke think the body on the island might be? Lonnie Culler, with the Edisto police, later informs them the woman found at the Deveaux Bank is a different woman than the one already missing. Why does this cause concern for all? How does this problem grow worse when a third body is found? Why does Lonnie Culler believe there will be more murders until the killer is found?

10. As Burke and Waylon are returning from the Deveaux Bank, Burke's mother tells them Burke's sister Gwen and her three children have just arrived and are waiting at the dock to be picked up. Why has Gwen unexpectedly come to the island from Arkansas? What has happened in her life? How is Gwen determined to resolve her problems? How would you feel if this had happened to you? Would you respond in the same way? How is Waylon a help to Gwen's young son Chase?

11. Many lighthouses around the U.S. and abroad offer guided tours, and Burke gives tours of the Deveaux Lighthouse two days a week. What did you learn about the lighthouse on the tour? What is the lighthouse's interior like? What difficulties and hardships did early lighthouse keepers face in keeping the light and making rescues at sea? What did you learn about old messages in bottles that many lighthouse keepers tossed into the sea? What did Waylon share about sharks and sharks' teeth that you might not have known before? Would you have walked to the top of the lighthouse or stopped with most of the guests at the first gallery?

12. The Deveaux sisters traditionally come home at Easter for a visit when they can. With Burke, Lila, Gwen, and the children already at the island, why is everyone concerned about Celeste as Easter approaches? How long has it been since any of them have heard from her? What do Burke and Gwen decide to do after Easter if they still haven't heard from Celeste? When they travel to Nashville to look for her, what do they learn? Where is Celeste and what has happened to her? What do Burke and Gwen do?

13. Over a month later, with Celeste, Gwen, and the children still at the island, Burke is growing upset that her sisters do so little to help with the work of the inn. What happens to Rita Jean that makes the situation worse? What other difficulties soon follow? Do you ever have those times when everything that could go wrong does go wrong? How do you handle those times? Burke's mother, Maggie Boulds, and Waylon all help Burke feel somewhat better about the situation. What especially wise counsel does Lila also offer?

14. During a big storm, Burke and Waylon look out the high lighthouse window and see a boat in trouble by the Deveaux Bank. What does Burke insist on doing? When Waylon's boat gets near the island, after battling through the storm to get there, he notices the boat looks familiar. Whose boat is it? What does Waylon find when he makes his way to the beached craft? Waylon and Burke eventually get his Uncle Dewey back to safety at the lodge, grumbling and unpleasant the entire way. Ever since he was a boy, Waylon has experienced trouble in his relationship to his Uncle Dewey. What does he learn this night that is behind this old animosity? Do you think Dewey's actions were justified?

15. Life quiets down, as it usually does after a series of stressful times, and Gwen shares a fun day in Beaufort and Port Royal with Gwen and the twins, Leah and Rose, while Waylon and Don Nagel take Gwen's son Chase and Don's three boys deep sea fishing. What new direction is Gwen beginning to plan for her life? How is she handling her relationship with her estranged husband Alex? Do you think her feelings and actions are justified?

16. After a long day, Myron Andric comes to Waylon and Burke with another problem. He's been bird-watching on remote, uninhabited Otter Island and has spotted a dog there. He says, "I think the dog might have been left there and it's been worrying me." After he leaves Burke talks Waylon into boating to the island to take food and look for the dog. They find the dog but also another problem. What do they discover? After contacting the police and starting to leave they run into a man who claims the dog is his. What happens in this encounter? What do you soon learn about this man and the dog? Do you think Waylon handled this situation well?

17. After her scary experience at Otter Island, Burke finds herself in an odd mood, contemplating life more than normal for her. What does she later talk Waylon into doing sooner than they'd planned? What are Burke's reasons for wanting this change? How do Burke's mother and sisters react to the couple's news to move up the wedding again? What compromise idea does Lila offer that smoothes out a tense and awkward situation?

18. For two conventional and practical people, Burke and Waylon's wedding proves to be full of unexpected events. What situations happen with the church music, Rita Jean

sampling the punch, a guest sitting on Chase's toy, and a little green snake slithering into the outdoor pavilion? Who conducts the wedding ceremony and how does he smooth over the unexpected events in the service? Did you enjoy this story and do you think Burke and Waylon will be happy together? ... Who were your favorite characters in the book and what did you like most about it? Are you eager to learn what happens with Gwen, Celeste, and Lila in the next Lighthouse Sisters books?