

Skokie Public Library's Book Discussion Guide

The Collected Stories of Eudora Welty

- Describe Eudora Welty's writing style. How important is a sense of place in her fiction?
- How are these stories representative of Southern literature and how are they influenced by the oral tradition of storytelling? How does the use of regional dialect affect your reading of the stories?
- What are some of the common themes of her writing? How does Welty use the short story form to convey her themes?
- The stories take place in small, sheltered environments. How are the characters shaped by such a seemingly closed community? "Can the sheltered life also be a daring life?"
- The stories may seem simple on the surface, but are they really?
- Welty has said that early on she felt one of the main subjects of her writing was human relationships. Did you find this to be true?
- Some found her work to be devoid of politics or more worldly concerns. Did you find this to be true?
- Welty worked as a photographer for the WPA during the Depression....how do you think this influenced her writing style?
- Welty is known for the humor in her writing; do you agree? In what ways did you find individual stories humorous or not humorous?
- On the basis of these stories, how do you think Welty view the mother/daughter relationship?
- "Why I Live at the P.O." is one of Welty's best known stories. Why do you think it's been included in so many anthologies of her best work? What are some of the underlying themes in this story? How reliable a narrator is Sister? How long do you think she's going to stay at the P.O.? Is she happy, as she says, at the PO?
- In what ways is "The Wide Net" a story of a quest or a journey?
- Which was your favorite story? Least favorite? Why?



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