

# Skokie Public Library's Book Discussion Guide

## The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie

By Muriel Spark

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- Miss Brodie displays liberal views for her time. Given her progressive attitudes on some subjects, how do you explain her attraction to fascism and people like Mussolini, Hitler, and Franco?
- Why does Sandy betray Miss Brodie? Do you think there's any truth to Sandy's belief that Miss Brodie betrayed her girls before she herself was betrayed by one of them?
- It's possible to have sharply opposed views of Miss Brodie. In what ways is she a positive influence on her set and other people? In what ways is she harmful? In what ways is Sandy an admirable or reproachable character?
- *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* does not follow a conventional chronological structure. Instead, the book jumps around in time and the narrator frequently reveals events before they occur. Why do you think Spark chose to structure her novel in this odd way?
- Miss Brodie makes a distinction between "instinct" and "insight." How do these qualities differ? Which of these qualities does Brodie exhibit most clearly? What about Sandy?
- Miss Brodie is a spinster. How does her lack of a husband affect her life? Why doesn't she marry when she has a chance?
- Groups are important in this novel: Miss Brodie's set, the Girl Guides, the house teams of the Senior school, and the Fascisti. Why does Spark emphasize groups so much?
- We see a great deal of Miss Brodie through the eyes of other people, especially Sandy. How do these different points of view reflect the perspectives of the persons viewing Miss Brodie? How do they affect our own view of her?



**Skokie Public Library**

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