

# Skokie Public Library's Book Discussion Guide

## Ward Number Six and Other Stories, by Anton Chekhov

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### Questions for *Ward Number Six*

- How is Dr. Ragin like or unlike the Professor in *A Dreary Story*?
- Does your impression of Dr. Ragin change in the course of the story? Why?
- In what ways is Dr. Ragin unlike Gromov? Why are their stories alike in some ways?
- Do you see *Ward Number Six* more as the personal tragedy of one man or as a critique of an unjust system?

### Questions for *A Dreary Story*

- The first paragraph of *A Dreary Story* makes an abrupt shift from third to first person narration. Why does Chekhov begin the story this way?
- Why does the Professor bond with Katya more than anyone else in his life?
- What should the Professor have said to Katya at the end of the story? Why doesn't he say this?
- Near the end of the story, the Professor decides his life lacks a "general conception." Do you believe that this is his tragedy?
- Why doesn't the Professor seek medical help when other people urge him to do so?
- The Professor mentions the ancient dictum "Know Thyself." Does he know himself? Does he know the people around him?



**Skokie Public Library**

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