

Discussion Guide: *The Secret Life of Kitty Granger*

1. Kitty is autistic. Her brain works in a particular way, which she knows that some people consider “peculiar.” What are some ways that she uses this to her advantage?
2. What coping mechanisms does Kitty use when she experiences sensory overload or feels otherwise overwhelmed? How do these coping strategies help her manage difficult situations?
3. Why does Kitty want to work for Mr. Pryce and Mrs. Singh instead of continuing to work in her father’s shop?
4. What is Kitty’s relationship like with her father? How do her colleagues at the Orchestra treat her differently than her father does?
5. Why do the Young Bloods at the Orchestra stick together, according to Verity? What do they accomplish that the more senior agents don’t?
6. How does Saul advise Kitty to deal with bullies? How could his advice apply to day-to-day situations at school or in your neighborhood? How do you think it could apply to a political situation?
7. Tommy assumes that most girls aren’t interested in cars. Kitty tells him, “Girls can be interested in all sorts of things, only we don’t talk about ’em ’cause people keep tellin’ us we’re not s’posed to like ’em.” Think of an instance in your life when someone (perhaps you) made an assumption similar to Tommy’s. What do you think Kitty would have said about this?
8. Mr. Pryce believes that the secret fascists within Britain’s Conservative Party could never take over the government by nonviolent means. Do you agree with his assessment? Why or why not?
9. Kitty speaks in an East End accent, but she switches to a posh Canadian accent for her cover. Why do you think she prefers her natural way of speaking, even though she knows how to speak in other ways?
10. What does Kitty come to understand about Diana and the way she treats people? How is Diana’s behavior connected to her father’s social position and worldview?
11. How does killing a man—and seeing several others killed—affect Kitty? What does Verity tell her about this? What is Mrs. Singh’s perspective?
12. How do the Old Man and his fascist accomplices try to undermine the Orchestra? How might a group like theirs do something similar in the present day?
13. What role do racism and xenophobia play in Sir Richard Smythe’s plans for “the purification of Britain”? How do the members of the Orchestra refute his ideas of what “true Englishmen” are?
14. Mrs. Singh asks Mr. Pryce, “What happens if a government’s elected that wants what Smythe wanted? . . . Will you just stand at your post and hope for the best?” Mr. Pryce dodges the question. What do you think his answer should have been?
15. How does the possibility of moving out of her father’s home and becoming Verity’s roommate change Kitty’s ideas about what her future might hold? What do you think the next few years of her life will be like?