



More by Austin Clarke

About the author:

Austin Clarke is one of Canada's foremost authors, whose work includes ten novels, six short-story collections, three memoirs, and two collections of poetry. His novel *The Polished Hoe* won the 2002 Giller Prize. Clarke is a member of the Order of Canada, holds four honorary doctorates, and has been awarded the Commonwealth Writers' Prize, the W.O. Mitchell Prize, and the Casa de las Américas Prize, among others. In his fifty-year career, he has worked as a journalist, a professor, and a cultural attaché in Washington D.C., while publishing acclaimed fiction, non-fiction, and poetry. He lives in Toronto.

Source: Dundurn Publishers (<https://www.dundurn.com/authors/Austin-Clarke>)

About this book:

Winner of the 2009 Toronto Book Award.

From the winner of the 2002 Giller Prize comes Austin Clarke's much anticipated new novel, *More*. At the news of her son's involvement in gang crime, Idora Morrison collapses in her rented basement apartment. For four days and nights, she retreats into a vortex of memory, pain, and disappointment that unravels a riveting dissection of her life as a black immigrant to Toronto. Idora has lived in Canada for 25 years. She has struggled to make ends meet and her deadbeat husband Bertram has abandoned her for a better life in America. Left alone to raise her son BJ, Idora does her best to survive against very difficult odds. Now that BJ has disappeared into a life of crime and gang warfare, she recoils from this loss and tries to understand how her life has spiraled into this tragic place.

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In spite of her circumstances, Idora finds her way back into the light with a courage that is both remarkable and unforgettable.

Perhaps the most political of all of Austin Clarke's novels, *More* is a powerful indictment of the iniquities of racial discrimination and the crime of poverty. It is in many ways a companion volume to the award-winning *The Polished Hoe*. While his previous novel was a metaphorical history of slavery, *More* is an allegorical story about the complexities of race in modern western culture. *More* is an extraordinary story about oppression and redemption and hope. From one of our masters of the novel form, this is very much a book for our times.

Source: Dundurn Publishers (<https://www.dundurn.com/books/More>)

Discussion Questions:

1. How did you experience the book? Were you engaged immediately, or did it take you a while to "get into it"? How did you feel reading it—amused, sad, disturbed, confused, bored...?

2. Describe the main characters—personality traits, motivations, and inner qualities.

- Why do characters do what they do?
- Are their actions justified?
- Describe the dynamics between characters (in a marriage, family, or friendship).
- How has the past shaped their lives?
- Do you admire or disapprove of them?

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- Do they remind you of people you know?
3. Are the main characters dynamic—changing or maturing by the end of the book? Do they learn about themselves, how the world works and their role in it?
4. Discuss the plot:
- Is it engaging—do you find the story interesting?
 - Is this a plot-driven book—a fast-paced page-turner?
 - Does the plot unfold slowly with a focus on character?
 - Were you surprised by complications, twists & turns?
 - Did you find the plot predictable, even formulaic?
5. Talk about the book's structure.
- Is it a continuous story...or interlocking short stories?
 - Does the time-line move forward chronologically?
 - Does time shift back & forth from past to present?
 - Is there a single viewpoint or shifting viewpoints?
 - Why might the author have chosen to tell the story the way he or she did?
 - What difference does the structure make in the way you read or understand the book?
6. What main ideas—themes—does the author explore? (Consider the title, often a clue to a theme.) Does the author use symbols to reinforce the main ideas?



7. What passages strike you as insightful, even profound? Perhaps a bit of dialog that's funny or poignant or that encapsulates a character? Maybe there's a particular comment that states the book's thematic concerns?

8. Is the ending satisfying? If so, why? If not, why not...and how would you change it?

9. If you could ask the author a question, what would you ask? Have you read other books by the same author? If so how does this book compare. If not, does this book inspire you to read others?

10. Has this novel changed you—broadened your perspective? Have you learned something new or been exposed to different ideas about people or a certain part of the world?

Source: Litlovers.com (<http://www.litlovers.com/run-a-book-club/questions-for-fiction>)

Other formats available at Halifax Public Libraries:

No other formats available at this time.