

QUICK CARD: *LITTLE WOMEN*



Reference	<i>Little Women</i> , Louisa May Alcott. (1868) ISBN: 978-0553212754
Plot	Meg, Jo, Beth, and Amy March form permanent family bonds and friendships that transcend the changes and hardships the Civil War and impending adulthood bring.
Setting	The story is set in Concord, Massachusetts in the early 1800s, during the Civil War. It spans the childhood of the March girls and depicts their transition to adulthood, underscoring the changes in their immediate family as sisters marry and the family composition shifts.
Characters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jo March, or Josephine, the protagonist of the story. The spunky and intelligent tom-boy in the bunch. Imaginative and outspoken, frank and honest, her ability to own her own shortfalls makes her a sympathetic character. • Meg March, Jo's eldest sister. She is sensible and mature, already transitioning into adulthood. She is the first to disturb the intimacy of the family circle with a beau. • Beth, the middle sister. She is a homebody, sweet, quiet, and content with domesticity. She interests herself in her sister's antics, but has no interest in adventure herself. She excels at the piano. • Amy, the youngest March girl, she is supercilious, silly, young, and immature. Her pretension adds a note of comedy to the story. • Mother, the girls' favorite and the stability of the family in father's absence. She teaches the girls charity and Christian service. • Laurie, the wealthy neighbor boy who becomes both Jo's best friend and, much to her chagrin, suitor. His energy and mischief entertain and delight the sisters. • Elder Mr. Laurence, Laurie's grandfather and guardian. He becomes the patron of the March family and Beth's special benefactor • Father March, the girls' beloved patriarch, his presence is most felt by his absence throughout the bulk of the book as he is away fighting in the Civil War. He is a teacher/philosopher • Mr. Behr, the gruff, German teacher whom Jo meets while acting as a governess. His criticism helps Jo develop into a serious author and develop a moral philosophy of literature and writing • John, Meg's husband, a teacher • Demi and Daisy, Meg and John's rebellious, charming, and smart children • Aunt March, the girls' crochety and opinionated wealthy aunt

<p style="text-align: center;">Conflict</p>	<p>Man vs. Nature – Jo wants her family to stay as it has always been. She resists the natural changes associated with growing up and the unexpected tragedies in the household (Meg’s marriage, Beth’s illness, etc.)</p> <p>Man vs. Self – Jo wants to be a respectable and successful author. She can’t write mature literature until she becomes a mature person and adopts a mature standard for her own work.</p> <p>Man vs. Man – Jo is upset when her best friend, Laurie, pursues her romantically.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Theme</p>	<p>A bildungsroman or coming of age story. The journey from childhood to adulthood.</p> <p>Living with shadows</p> <p>Finding rest</p> <p>Navigating change, in particular within a family. The nature of change.</p> <p>The nature of love and family – In the beginning of the story, Jo is a miser with her love, stingy with her family. She grows to discover that love multiplies as it is given away and that the family is not broken as the girls mature and the intimacy of their circle is broken, but broadened.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Literary Devices</p>	<p>Journey motif – mirroring the journey from childhood to adulthood</p> <p>Epigraph – a quote or poem that functions as the author’s thematic salvo in the opening pages of the story</p>