



Pushing the Limits of Tradition Suggested Reading and Discussion Questions

Adults pass along practices to children, and the human body physically benefits from the repetition of motions and routines—two very different types of traditions! Traditions can manifest in many ways—such as beliefs, events, and even repetitions of certain activities. Include in your discussions how our traditions can become springboards to exceeding our current limitations.

The Chimes

Anna Smail, Fiction. Simon is on a mission to find a person in London, and the only information he has is a song. Simon’s goal makes more sense when one understands that the England of *The Chimes* is one controlled by music and memory loss. Every day, the enigmatic elite ruling class known as the Order plays a particular kind of music to wipe society’s memory. To remember certain aspects of their past and daily life, citizens rely on their muscle memory and items they carry with them. Those that can’t make it from the day-to-day or lose their memory items become zombie-like creatures called the *memorylost*. Without the ability to retain any sort of history, collective memory, or even written language, the culture is one that revolves around the preservation of the few memories possible and music. . . . This imaginative novel from poet Smail was longlisted for the 2015 Man Booker Prize. *Emily Whitmore, Booklist*.

- In what ways do you use family objects to promote tradition?
- In this science fiction novel, writing is lost, but music and objects have taken its place as a means to remember the past. How do music and objects successfully preserve history in the characters’ world?
- How does music help you remember events in your life? Why do objects help us remember? Is it the physical touch? smell? look? What role do our senses play in remembering things?

