



## Discussion Questions

### Still Life by Louise Penny

Source: Madison Public Library

1. The murder in *Still Life* takes place in a small Canadian town but the police who are investigating the crime come from Montreal. How would you classify *Still Life*? A cozy mystery or a police procedural or something else altogether? What leads you to your decision?
2. Did you feel like the author played fair with the reader? When you found out who the murderer was, were you able to think back to clues that had been laid out (other than the painting) or did it come completely out of the blue?
3. *Three Pines* initially seems like the ideal community (minus that introduction of a dead body!). What were some of the clues Penny used to make it clear that all was not as it seemed?
4. The newest member of the police team is Yvette Nichol. Since the reader can hear her thoughts it's clear Penny has given her a special role to play. What is her purpose: as an investigator and/or as a part of the narrative?
5. Penny has a 'detective reveals all' scene when Gamache gathers everyone to look at the painting and yet does not reveal all. Why did she choose to keep the mystery going after that scene? Talk about the strengths and weaknesses of the big reveal as a denouement and how it was handled here.
6. It's clear that Jane knew far more about the people of *Three Pines* and about the murderer. Was it realistic she chose the painting as her medium? Why wouldn't she just go to the police herself?