



FLATIRON
BOOKS
NEW YORK

Oona Out of Order

Reading Group Guide

Welcome to the Reading Group Guide for *Oona Out of Order*. Please note: In order to provide reading groups with the most informed and thought-provoking questions possible, it might be necessary to reveal important aspects of the plot of this novel. If you have not finished reading *Oona Out of Order*, we respectfully suggest that you may want to wait before reviewing this guide.

1. Discuss the novel's epigraph: "Time heals all. But what if time itself is the disease?" How do you interpret that question? How does the novel seek to answer it?
2. In the prologue, Oona reflects that her condition is the closest thing she could imagine to immortality. What do you think she means? Do you agree?
3. Oona has a "no spoiler" approach to time travel and takes precautions to reveal certain things about her future but keep others secret via her annual letters. Do you agree with her approach? If you were to switch places with Oona, how much of your future would you reveal and what would you add/remove from the letters?
4. Family is a major theme in *Oona Out of Order*. How does Oona and Madeleine's relationship change over the course of the novel? What about Oona's ideas about her own family?
5. To counteract living her life out of sequence, Oona spends much of the novel searching for constancy. Who/what are some of the constants she manages to establish throughout her leaps?
6. Oona experiences a variety of romantic connections throughout the course of the novel. How does her perception of her relationship with Dale change over the years? How does her unique marriage affect her views on romantic relationships? What about other men she's involved with? Do you think it will be possible for Oona to have a sustained romance despite her leaping? Why or why not?
7. The time travel in *Oona Out of Order* serves as a way to explore imposter syndrome—her leaps often leave her in situations where she feels unprepared for the role she's in and what's expected of her. Which situations do you think she handles effectively and which could she have handled better?
8. There are moments when Oona laments mistakes she's made in her life and considers trying to fix them. What mistakes do you think she has made? Do you think she was better off trying to prevent them or learn from them?
9. As each leap brings new challengers into her life, Oona often struggles with a desire to return to her younger self. How does she try to combat nostalgia to live more fully in the present?

10. Oona and the people closest to her often describe her life as “bittersweet.” Do you agree that her time travel makes her life feel more bittersweet than it would if she were living “in order”? Why or why not?
11. Discuss the evolving role of music in Oona’s life. How does her relationship to it change from the first chapter to the last, and why?
12. Near the end of the novel, Kenzie tells Oona that he is sometimes jealous of her time traveling. Do you understand his feelings? Are there aspects of Oona’s condition that appeal to you?
13. How much of Oona’s destiny do you think is predetermined? Do you think she’s capable of changing her future? What do you think this book ultimately says about fate vs. free will? Do you agree or disagree?
14. Did you have a favorite section in the novel? Why?
15. Assuming her “time sickness” will persist, what do you imagine the next few years might look like for Oona?