

**Discussion Questions for *Hidden Powers: Lise Meitner's Call to Science***  
**by Jeannine Atkins (Atheneum/Simon & Schuster, 2022)**

*Note: Lise Meitner's name is pronounced: Leez Mite-ner*

1. Early in the novel, Lise is shown seeing a rainbow, being introduced to the science of spectrums, and playing with a toy Noah's Ark. How is the Biblical story of the flood and rainbow woven into the novel?
  
2. How did Lise's friendships with Eva and Elisabeth change her? What other friendships were important to her and why?
  
3. What are the best and worst qualities of Lise's scientific partner, Otto Hahn?
  
4. What values would you say are most important to Lise?
  
5. What were the times Lise seemed most joyful?
  
6. What signs of anti-Semitism and Hitler's takeover do you see in the first half of the novel?
  
7. Why did Lise stay in Germany when friends like Leo Szilard and James Franck left the country earlier? How might history have changed if Lise left Germany earlier or later?
  
8. Do you think Lise did the right thing in refusing to work on an atomic bomb? Did her choice have a cost?
  
9. Why did moral scientists like Niels Bohr, Albert Einstein, and Lise's nephew Robert decide to help the Allies by building a bomb?

10. Why is it important to remember stories from the Holocaust? How is Lise's story different from others you've heard?

11. *Hidden Powers* is set mostly in the first half of the twentieth century, but like other historical fiction, some themes are reflected in the world today. What issues from the past seem most alive to you in the present?

12. Today Lise Meitner is known as one of several women who seems unfairly passed over for a Nobel Prize. You might research the names of other women who the committee overlooked. Can you think of ways this injustice could be addressed?