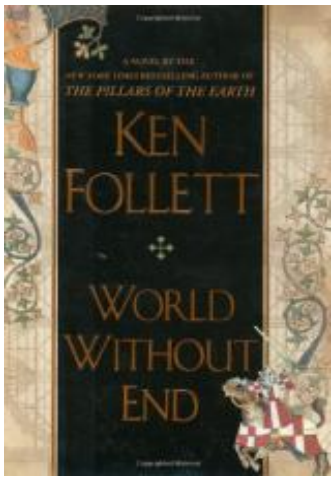
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World Without End

by Ken Follett



About the Book

Ken Follett has 90 million readers worldwide. **The Pillars of the Earth** is his bestselling book of all time. Now, eighteen years after the publication of **The Pillars of the Earth**, Ken Follett has written the most-anticipated sequel of the year?**World Without End**.

Discussion Guide

1. Ken Follett fills **World Without End** with vivid descriptions of England in the fourteenth century. Which images or scenes stood out for you?

2. Family and familial duty are at the center of the book. Talk about the important, and sometimes detrimental, role that family plays in the lives of the main characters.

3. Discuss Caris and her vocation to heal. If she wasn?t forced into the convent, do you think her life would have taken a different path?

4. The book features dozens of colorful and intriguing characters, both at the heart of the story and at its edges. Which are some that come to mind? What made them memorable?

5. Why do you think Caris and Merthin?s love endured for as long as it did? Did their eventual marriage seem like it was well deserved? Why or why not?

6. ?Caris was thinking . . . about the passage of time, and how it can change an innocent, beloved baby into a man who commits murder,? (page 922). Who are some characters who lost their innocence during the course of the book? How did they change?

7. What does the building of the tower and the bridge represent in the novel?

8. ?Merthin said to Ralph: ?When I grow up, I want to be like that knight?always courteous, never frightened, deadly in a fight.? ?Me, too,? said Ralph. ?Deadly.?? (page 27). Talk about Merthin and Ralph, and the men they eventually became. Did Merthin?s words come true? Did Ralph?s fate come as a surprise?

9. Rumor and innuendo have enormous influence over the lives of many characters in **World Without End**. Why does rumor hold so much power?

10. Discuss the role of religion in the book, specifically Christianity. Name some characters whose spirituality is genuine, as well as those who use religion for exploitative or ill reasons.

11. The women in the novel endure great hardship, yet exhibit strength and fortitude. Discuss some of the notable female characters. How do they persevere?

12. Talk about the impact of the plague on the main characters. Is there significance behind who lives and who dies?

13. Have you read **The Pillars of the Earth**, the author?s prequel to **World Without End**? If so, did it enhance your experience of the latter? How? If not, will you read **The Pillars of the Earth**?

14. Before you started reading **World Without End**, what did you know about medieval Europe? What are some of the things you?ve learned? Could you have lived in the Middle Ages?

15. What does the book?s title mean?

Author Bio

Ken Follett is one of the world?s most successful authors. More than 198 million copies of the 38 books he has written have been sold in over 80 countries and in 40 languages.

He started his career as a reporter, first with his hometown newspaper the *South Wales Echo* and then with the London *Evening News*. Ken?s first major success came with the publication of EYE OF THE NEEDLE in 1978, which earned him the 1979 Edgar Award for Best Novel from the Mystery Writers of America.

In 1989, THE PILLARS OF THE EARTH, Ken?s epic novel about the building of a medieval cathedral, reached #1 on bestseller lists everywhere. It was turned into a major television series produced by Ridley Scott, which aired in 2010.

Ken has been active in numerous literacy charities and was president of Dyslexia Action for 10 years. He is also a past

chair of the National Year of Reading, a joint initiative between government and business. He lives in Hertfordshire, England, with his wife Barbara. Between them they have five children, six grandchildren and three Labradors.

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