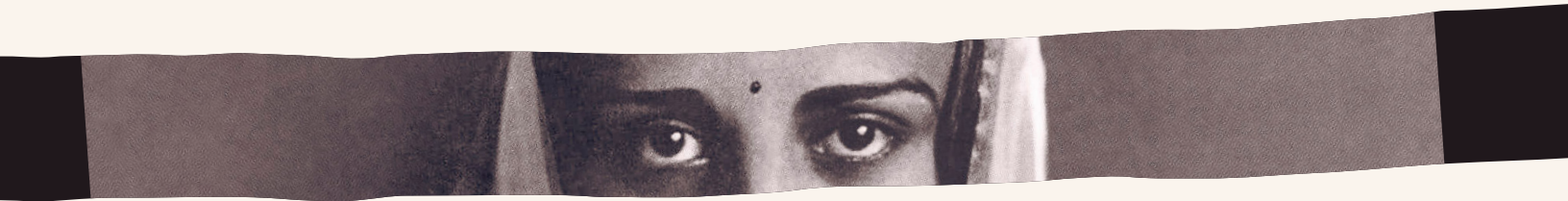


READING GROUP GUIDE



SALMAN
RUSHDIE



LANGUAGES OF TRUTH



ESSAYS 2003–2020



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What do you believe the title of the collection means?
2. Do you have a favorite essay from *Languages of Truth*? Which one and why?
3. What do you think is the thread or common theme that connects these pieces? Why do you think the collection is organized the way it is? How does the length of time covered in the collection reflect societal changes globally?
4. What did you make of Rushdie's examination of free speech in "The Liberty Instinct"? How did it make you reflect on contemporary concerns over censorship and cancel culture? Do you agree with Rushdie that "unpleasant" opinions must be allowed uncensored in order for us to live in an open society?
5. How does the fact that Rushdie was raised abroad and in a different culture than the one he's living in now impact his writing? What do you make of the fact that Rushdie has lived in so many different countries in his life and writes from all those experiences, and, in a book called *Languages of Truth*, writes in English?
6. Rushdie writes about art in many different forms, from written works to paintings and films. How do you see these mediums intersect in Rushdie's own work? How do you think the medium affects the way a piece of art is received? In your view, what is the core function of art, and do you think any one type of art performs this function best?
7. A number of these essays are about artists Rushdie admires. Do you have a favorite artist? How do you think meeting or learning about an artist impacts what you think about their work?
8. How do the stories Rushdie hears as a child affect the way he views the world? Are there stories in your life that have had a similar impact on you?
9. Rushdie reflects on the line in his 1990 book *Haroun in the Sea of Stories*, "What's the use of stories that aren't even true?" How would you answer this question?
10. What does Rushdie mean when he discusses "the unrealism of the world"?
11. What advantages does Rushdie believe fiction has over nonfiction? Do you have a preference between the two genres? If so, why?
12. How does Rushdie reflect on the media's "assumption that all novels are really autobiographies in disguise"? Why do you think the public finds writers so fascinating? Do you think it's fair to assume that most fiction is inspired to some extent by real-life events?
13. What does Rushdie mean when he contends that film and stage adaptations of written work must retain their essence? How does he reflect on this idea with regard to human beings and society? What do you consider essential?
14. How might these essays change the way you read Rushdie's fiction?