

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR

THE BULLET SWALLOWER

BY ELIZABETH GONZALEZ JAMES

1. One of the central questions posed in the novel is: Can we be better than our forebears? Do you think we can? What would this look like?
2. In her Author's Note, James says, "Everything in this book is true except for the stuff I made up." What do you think mixing fact and fiction added to the story?
3. One recurring element of the novel is time and how it moves in a spiral. What role did time play in the story? And do you think this could be true? Could time move in a spiral?
4. What do you think the Rio Grande represented in the novel? Did this story change what you thought about the Texas/Mexico border?
5. Do you think Antonio ended up in Heaven or Hell? Or somewhere else?
6. Do you think Remedio was right to refuse to take Antonio when he was a baby?
7. Are there any secrets or legends from your own family that you think would make a good novel?

