

Book Club Kits!



About the Author:

Professor Elizabeth Alexander is a poet, essayist, playwright, and teacher. In 2009, she composed and delivered "Praise Song for the Day" for the inauguration of President Barack Obama. She has published six books of poems, two collections of essays, and a play. Her book of poems, *American Sublime* (2005), was one of three finalists for the Pulitzer Prize and was one of the American Library Associations "Notable Books of the Year." Her play, "Diva Studies" (1996), was produced at the Yale School of Drama.

Professor Alexander is currently a Chancellor of the Academy of American Poets and the inaugural Frederick Iseman Professor of Poetry at Yale University. She is the former Chair of the African American Studies Department at Yale University.

<http://www.elizabethalexander.net/new-page-1/>

The Light of the World



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Inside the kit:

- (8) book copies
- (1) book club guide

About the Book:

From the author's website

From Grand Central Publishing: *In **The Light of the World*** (pub. date April 21, 2015), Elizabeth Alexander finds herself at an existential crossroads after the sudden death of her husband. Channeling her poetic sensibilities into a rich, lucid prose, Alexander tells a love story that is, itself, a story of loss. As she reflects on the beauty of her married life, the trauma resulting from her husband's death, and the solace found in caring for her two sons, Alexander universalizes a very personal quest for meaning in the wake of loss.

***The Light of the World** is at once an endlessly compelling memoir and a deeply felt meditation on the blessings of love, family, art and community. It is also a lyrical celebration of a life well-lived and a paean to the enduring gift of human companionship. For those who have loved and lost, or for anyone who cares what matters most, **The Light of the World** is required reading.*

Suggested Reads:

Man, Sally
Hold Still: A Memoir with Photographs

Jefferson, Margo
Negroland: A Memoir

Ptacin, Mira
Poor Your Soul

Smith, Tracy K.
Ordinary Light

1. Alexander asks, “What does it mean to grieve in the absence of religious culture?” How might the secular population grieve and cope with loss in a way that’s different from people of faith? How is writing a memoir a way of coping?
2. How does Alexander characterize religion? What does it mean to her?
3. How does food play a role in Alexander’s relationship with her husband?
4. How do her sons deal with the loss of their father?
5. Loss can cause us to see the deceased more favorably. Is this true for Alexander?
6. How does Alexander define and describe love?
7. We arguably live in a culture preoccupied with happiness. How does this affect how we deal with grief?