

**Greetings Book Club Members!**

**Thanks so much for supporting my work and for choosing JUMP as a club reading selection. I hope you enjoy reading it as much as I enjoyed writing it, because the story and its characters are really close to my heart. The main character, Helena Hunter, is your basic, everyday woman, except for the fact that she spent nearly ten years of her life in prison and is emotionally scarred because of it. But I think, if you asked her if she would be willing to suffer through the experience all over again, she wouldn't hesitate to say yes. Lena is stronger than most and definitely a survivor, as you will soon discover.**



**I took a lot of risks, or so I've been told, in writing this story, but it's always been my intent as an author to write stories that touch people in some way and inspire thought. So if a story that I've written makes you laugh, cry, scream and cuss, or shake your head, I feel like, in some way, I've done what I set out to do. In writing JUMP, I wanted to put the spotlight on what it's like being a woman, a prison inmate, and a member of a truly dysfunctional family, and, though this is a purely fictional story, I tried to stay as close to reality as possible. For you, that might mean that as you read you'll experience new, uncomfortable, and/or exhilarating emotions. And you might find yourself thinking in ways that you've never thought before, considering scenarios that never before crossed your mind.**

**I hope so.**

**But most of all, I hope that you get to know Lena and come to some kind of understanding with her. I hope that her story grips you and shakes you until it's time to part ways. I hope that her story stays with you long after you're done reading. And I hope that your book club has a lively, fascinating and controversial discussion about Lena, her life and her legacy.**

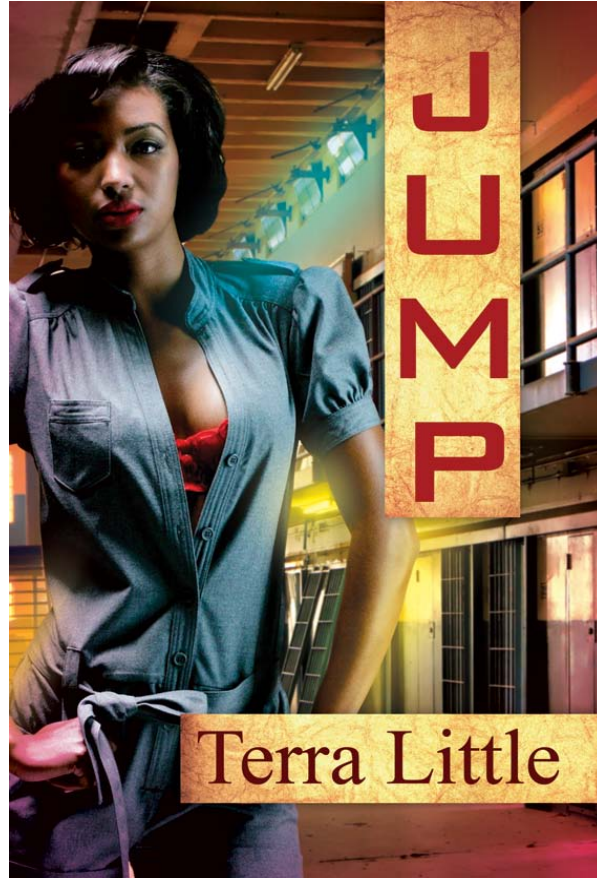
**As always, I love to hear from readers, so please don't hesitate to shoot me an email or post to my website guestbook and share your thoughts and feelings about JUMP. Too, feel free to email me at [writeterralittle\[at\]yahoo.com](mailto:writeterralittle@yahoo.com) and visit me online at [www.terralittle.com](http://www.terralittle.com).**

**Peace & Blessings!**

***Terra Little***

**PS – Scroll to the last page of this toolkit for information about an “Early Bird” book club purchase special and other useful information!**

# JUMP by Terra Little



Lena Hunter is not under the influence of drugs, nor is she out of her mind when she aims a pistol at her grandmother's heart and seals her fate by pulling the trigger. She might very well think about her actions later and wish that she had done things differently, but the fact that the old woman is dead is her one true victory. Through eight mind-numbing years of imprisonment, it is the only thing that makes any sense to her, the only thing that makes it all worthwhile.

Too many years of sharing a tragic past makes Lena and her sister Victoria closer than close, and together they are strong enough to stand up to their grandmother when the time comes. Together, they have the strength to refuse their grandmother's one constant and sickening request, which is for them to be quiet "good girls." They find the courage to move on and carve out lives for themselves. Vicky is a successful nurse practitioner and Lena is a computer geek and the mother of a perfect six-year-old little girl. Carrying family secrets around on her own shoulders is one thing, but the prospect of the load being shifted onto her daughter's innocent shoulders is quite another. The mere thought of it is what ultimately sends Lena rushing over to her grandmother's house with a loaded pistol—an act that changes her life for better, for worse, and forever.

Author Terra Little challenges those brave enough to step inside of Lena's world to answer one burning question. **What would you have done?**

# Reading Group Discussion Questions

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1. When JUMP opens, Lena describes how she is standing over the body, with the gun still smoking in the palm of her hand. What is your first impression of what is happening and why?

2. Lena hasn't seen her daughter in all the time she's been in prison. When they are finally reunited, do you think Beige's reaction to Lena is justified? Is Lena's reaction to Beige justified?

3. Vicky, Lena's sister, cared for Beige while Lena was in prison. Lena discovers that Vicky allowed Beige to tell people that her mother was dead, when she was really in prison. Do you think this was an appropriate thing to do? Why or why not?

4. Consider Isolde, Lena's parole officer. Is the no-nonsense, standoffish manner in which she deals with Lena the norm? Is it justified, given her profession and the population that she works with? At what point does her behavior begin to change and what do you think precipitates it?

5. Lena is the younger of the two sisters, but at times she acts like the oldest. Do you think this is a role that was thrust upon her or did she willingly assume it? Does her behavior in any way foreshadow what is to come?

6. Vicky assumes that sending money to Lena and taking care of Beige while Lena was away were the only ways she could meaningfully support Lena. Do you agree? How else could she have supported Lena in her predicament?

7. Do you think that, deep down, Lena is angry with her sister for not standing up for herself? Why or why not?

8. Lena and Aaron form an unlikely friendship based on common interests. Later, Lena realizes that they have in fact been "going together" right under her nose. Should she have been surprised or do you think she was aware of what was happening all along?

9. Given Lena's experiences in prison and the person she was before going to prison, in what ways does Aaron help her blossom into a person who is at least something like her old self? He is hesitant to take their relationship to the next level. Do you agree with his reasoning?

10. Yo-Yo and Lena become the closest of friends, despite their vast differences. How does each woman help the other survive in prison and, ultimately, heal?

11. Is Lena reluctant to discuss her past with Aaron because of a fierce need to protect her privacy, as she tells him, or is it possible that she is the very thing that she denies being – ashamed? Should she be ashamed of her past? Why or why not?

12. When Lena meets Stella, Stella is immediately able to tell that Lena is an ex-con, just as she is. Do you think encounters like these are really possible? Can you tell that someone has a troubled past simply by looking at them? If so, how? What are the possible indicators?

13. How does knowing Stella help Lena? Later, how does helping Stella help Lena?

14. Lena's grandmother is a central character in JUMP. Openly discuss your thoughts on why she did what she did and how she could've done it.

15. Lena eventually decides to be truthful with Beige. Do you think she should've been or should she have waited until Beige was older? Was her silence hindering or helping their relationship?

16. When Lena decides to see a counselor, Vicky is against it. Why do you think she tries to talk Lena out of seeking professional help?

17. From Kimmick, Lena hears, "You had choices. We always have choices." Do you agree with this assessment where Lena is concerned? If so, what choices did Lena have? If not, why?

18. Kimmick's communication style is gruff and to the point, which seems to be exactly what Lena needs at the time. She finds herself opening up to him a little more each time they meet.

Why does she find it necessary to trail him around the store to see what he is buying? Is this another step in the trust-building process or is she just being nosy? He doesn't seem surprised to discover that she was following him. In fact, he acts as if he was aware of her presence all along. Why isn't he surprised? Why doesn't he mind?

19. Knowing all the facts about Lena's history and the circumstances leading up to her imprisonment, consider this question: What would you have done?

20. Why didn't Lena's mother protect her children? Could she have, given her own past? Why or why not?

# Leenie's Favorite...

## ~Decadent Brownies~

- 1 (19.5 oz.) package classic or traditional fudge brownie mix
- 2 cups of caramels, unwrapped
- 1 (14 oz.) can sweetened condensed milk
- 1/2 cup butter
- 2 cups (12 oz. pkg.) semi-sweet chocolate chips
- 1 & 1/2 cups pecan halves



Heat oven to 350°F. Line 13 x 9-inch baking pan with foil or parchment paper, extending paper over edges of pan. Prepare brownie mix according to package directions. Spread 1 & 1/2 cups of prepared batter in prepared pan. Bake 10 to 15 minutes or until center is set. Combine caramels, sweetened condensed milk and butter in medium saucepan. Cook over medium-low heat until caramels are almost melted. Whisk until smooth. Gently spread caramel mixture over partially baked brownie. Sprinkle caramel with chocolate chips. Spread remaining unbaked brownie batter evenly over chocolate chips. Sprinkle with pecan halves. Bake an additional 20 to 25 minutes. Cool completely. Cover and refrigerate. Lift chilled brownies from pan onto cutting board. Cut into bars. Cover and chill until ready to serve. Note: Brownies are best served when chilled or at room temperature.

Yield: 4 dozen brownies

Prep Time: 15 Minutes

Cook Time: 40 Minutes



## ~Classic Brownies~

- 5 Tb butter
- 2 Tb milk
- 1/4 cup cocoa powder
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1/2 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 3/4 cup flour

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly grease an 8-inch square baking pan. In a small saucepan, melt butter over low heat. Stir in the cocoa and milk until completely smooth. Remove from heat and set aside. In a large mixing bowl, whisk together the sugar, eggs, and vanilla. Mix until smooth. Stir in the chocolate mixture. Add flour, baking powder, and salt. Stir until thoroughly mixed. Pour the batter into prepared pan. Bake for 25 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean. Allow to cool completely on a wire rack, and then cut into squares. To add a little extra zip to your brownies, mix in 1/2 cup of chopped nuts or semi-sweet chocolate chips before baking. Also, you can sprinkle powdered sugar or cocoa powder over the top of brownies just before serving. Note: Makes 9 large or 16 bite-size brownies.

# Vicky's Favorite...



## ~Homemade Caramel Sauce~

- 1/2 cup butter
- 1 & 1/2 cups brown sugar (dark brown sugar, if possible)
- 3/4 cup light corn syrup
- 1 can (14 ounces) sweetened condensed milk

- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon

In a 2-quart saucepan, melt butter on low heat. Add brown sugar, corn syrup, and milk, stirring to combine. Increase heat to medium or just below medium. Stir constantly until mixture comes to a boil. (Use a spoon that won't melt-the caramel gets hot!) Remove from heat and whisk in the vanilla and cinnamon. Serve warm or cold.

Yield: 3-4 Cups

## ~Homemade Caramel Candy~

- 2 cups of sugar
- 1 cup of light corn syrup
- 1/2 cup of unsalted butter
- 1 can of sweetened, condensed milk

Butter an 8 X 8 baking dish. In a heavy saucepan, combine sugar and corn syrup. Bring

to a boil, stirring constantly. Once the mixture starts boiling, add in butter and condensed milk, continuing to stir constantly. Cook for approximately 15 minutes. Pour the prepared mixture into the prepared baking dish. Allow to stand until cool and firm. Cut into squares before serving. Note: Makes approximately two pounds of homemade caramel candy.



## RACE TO THE FINISH!

Which member will complete this JUMP-inspired Word Search first?

# JUMP-Start Book Club Word Search

D I D O C O J H T T I L H I B E Y J R P I B L D E N E H P O W Q S T Q  
H O P X P S Y H D N F O H E I Y V N Y E I V H V Y V C F R G K X E L Z  
J W E T A U D A R G E G E L L O C L N N C N C M Z U I X O S R A I Q N  
U J T Y N H R G K L H M U L T E S R N E X I A N N A P T A U Q C L J Q  
X I B S E B I N F X E J E H F C N O G J D I D Z C R L S C N M P I Y F  
R V P K V O Z R W W L U G G J B C A S L L D H I E S C F T A L K M O R  
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O V P M I T G G I N C A R C E R A T I O N R O S U J S A E G N I X T R  
G P R P B U E K Q I C H E G W K X M E I A T I A V O S M T N Z E N S X  
E C X P H T J F K Y O R N O E B K R R T B T E X B L L S S D A A S E Q  
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T U J P V C H O I C E S P F C Y P P U A M I E E P R X E W M N H J C K  
E H P S N O Z O Z N T F H A X C A Z U C P P S N H X M E L U C K Y F Q  
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I O O M D C J X N K X L T M Q T N U Z J D S K R N M R Y A V F X T F Y  
N T T S T T D X R E H G D F D L T B L T Q G O C J H D V D S E C M G X  
Y C W M H I A M R Y P H Q Z S B M U Y C X E Z O A H H V Y R W E T X L  
U I B Z S O Z V S Q A N P J U U I T C E X H F G Z Q U Z P M I F K T S  
S V F V J N N U B R S C Q T T G K L L A Z M J I X G N O F Q Y Z B U P  
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U U J N H N F X U P S R N O Y R K N K O H L J W H C L O J K Z M R O M  
G D M F T T C P E L V L M F D Y F R A Q B L G U N P Z C C K W U C D Q  
Y N S S Q E S N U U Y A C Z E U J N T S U Y V W J F F M W D H S Y X L  
B L V N S R G M M E Z C O K E B L X S S U C N N D E H I Q B T Z P K B  
E X H K K R U W M K Y P Z F Z F B I U M P X N B P Y S V N Q I D K W H

Anger Management

Anna

Bars

Beige Hunter

Cellblock D

Choices

College Graduate

Court

Crazy Nettie

Dwyer Correctional Center

Families

Fitness

Helena Hunter

Incarceration

Innocence

Lou and Denny

Lucky

Madam Sula

Patty

Peanut Butter Cups

Pigpen

Police

Preparation H

Proactive

Statistics

Stella

Therapy

Victoria Hunter

White Girl Julie

Yo-Yo

Reactive

Regret

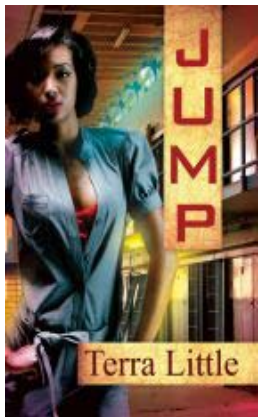
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Guilt

Recidivism

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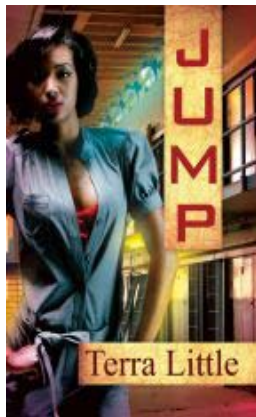


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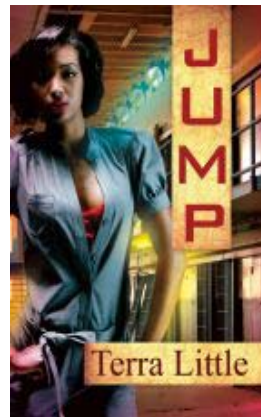


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~ Email me a picture of your book club reading JUMP and be featured on The Official Blog-Zine of Terra Little. A great way to showcase your book club to the world and to share your thoughts about JUMP! ([www.terralittle.blogspot.com](http://www.terralittle.blogspot.com)!)

~ Want me to join your book club and participate in your discussion of JUMP? Let's do it! I can join your club via Skype webcam, virtual chat or telephone. Contact me today!

~ Post your review(s) of JUMP online at Amazon, Barnes&Noble, Goodreads, Shelfari and lots of other places! I'll owe you big time!

~ Let's meet and chat...in person! Does your book club host author visits or other literary events and you'd like me to join you? Contact me today!

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