Changing the Subject By Kate Abley

Editable Questions for Readers

1. What effect on her character did Sue’s appearance have at different times in the book? What effect did it have on other people?
2. Sue talks openly about her views on race and immigration, often interchanging the two, why does she do that? What was your initial reaction to her views?
3. Linda has stayed best friends with Sue for decades, why: Sue is a racist and hasn’t been around much? Could you be best friends with a racist?
4. What play on words do you see in the title? In the worlds of science and medicine, politics and sociology or philosophy, how is the word ‘subject’ defined? Why do you think the author chose that title?
5. What effect did Sue’s views on politics, the Tory Party and Brexit have on her actions? What personal reasons did she have for holding those views? Do her views on Brexit change? Why did the author make her a Brexiteer?
6. What times in Sue’s life reminded you of your experience? What was your response?
7. Sue’s friend’s mum has Alzheimer’s Disease, how does this affect her actions?
8. Sue visits a psychiatrist who reminds her of Sigmund Freud but also resembles another Nineteenth Century German thinker. Did you spot any quotes from one of them? Why would the author make this reference?
9. Both mortality and surviving feature in the story. How do these work together, and how do they conflict?
10. Sue travels a great deal in the first half of the story, what does travel, the way she does it and who she travels with do to her?
11. Sue’s view of Angela changes, why? Is she right?
12. Sue believes that enacting her plan has made her free, why does she think that? Is she right?
13. The chances of an actual rejuvenation treatment are extremely remote, there is no Tip of My Tongue Campaign or EIEIO and the care.data strategy has been put on indefinite hold. Was the story believable?
14. Do you have a favourite part of the story? Why?
15. What didn’t you like about the story?
16. Was the pace too fast? Or slow?
17. Would you like to meet any of the characters? Who? What would you talk about?
18. Did the end surprise you? Why did the author choose that end?
19. These questions were developed by the author (even though I’m writing in the third person?), do they reflect what you were thinking about as you read? What were you thinking about while you read the story?