

“Brokeback Mountain” Discussion Questions

“There was some open space between what he knew and what he tried to believe, but nothing could be done about it, and if you can’t fix it you’ve got to stand it.”

1. How do Jack and Ennis differ in their attitudes toward their situation and toward their own identity (e.g., their sexual orientation)? What do you think Brokeback Mountain represents to them, and especially Jack?
2. How does Jack die, and what evidence of this is there? What apparently led to his death?
3. Describe the shirt(s) Ennis finds in Jack’s closet and their significance. What is revealed about the time when Ennis punched Jack? Why do you think Ennis threw the punch?
4. What do you think are the most important themes and messages of the story? Explain how various elements of the story are used to develop these themes.