

## **Fremont Great Books Book Club**

### **Discussion Questions for “The Talented Mr. Ripley” by Patricia Highsmith**

**June 21, 2025**

1. What are some of the factors that made Tom's childhood difficult? How has his upbringing affected his character?
2. The book was written in (1954). How does that time period affect the way the book was written?
3. How are Dickie Greenleaf and Tom Ripley's relationships with Marge Sherwood different?
4. Is Tom Ripley genuinely interested in other people, or does he just use them? What or who attracts him sexually?
5. In what way does the author explain Tom's development from petty criminal to cold blooded murderer? Does she make the reader feel sympathy for Tom in spite of his actions?
6. What motivates Tom to kill Dickie and Freddie? Is there a similar trigger or not?
7. When Tom has dinner with the Greenleafs in New York, Tom promises them he will do everything he can to convince Dickie Greenleaf to return to the U.S. Does Tom keep his promise? Why does he invite Mr Greenleaf to stay with him in Venice?
8. How does Tom rationalize the deaths of Freddie Miles and Dickie Greenleaf? Does he seem to feel guilt or remorse?
9. What are the importance of Dickie Greenleaf's rings to Tom? What do they symbolize? Why does he keep them, even though he knows it is dangerous to have any of Dickie's possessions with him?
10. Why does Ripley deceive others and himself about his identity? What is the author implying about Tom's shifting identity?
11. What is the author saying about the American class system? Tourism/travel?
12. How is The American Dream presented in “The Talented Mr. Ripley?”

## **SOURCES AND LINKS**

[Home - Talented Mr. Ripley discussion guide - LibGuides at Ramapo Catskill Library System](#)

<https://www.enotes.com/topics/talented-mr/questions>

<https://www.gradesaver.com/the-talented-mr-ripley/study-guide/essay-questions>

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