

Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry

by Mildred D. Taylor

1977 Newbery Medal Winner

A Teaching Guide

by Margaret Whisnant



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Cover Page Image: Dollar Photo Club

Rural Mississippi, 1933

A time of legal racial discrimination
enforced by injustice, inequality, indifference, and terror. . .

A place of poor tenant farmers,
whose toil barely keeps them alive. . .

The home of the Logan family,
three generations, proud of their heritage,
land owners, trouble makers, survivors. . .

As a **roll of thunder** signals the coming storm,
the oppressed lift their voices,
“**hear my cry**,” . . .

The story has just begun. . .



Goals

To . . .

- Offer a teaching guide with a full spectrum of learning experiences that flow from **basic knowledge** to **higher-level thinking skills**.
- Provide **classroom-ready** materials that **motivate** and **instruct**.
- Create **novel-specific activities** that require careful reading, help develop comprehension skills, and challenge the thinking process.
- Accommodate a wide variety of student **ability** and **interest**.
- **Support teachers** by providing a practical teaching resource that saves preparation time.
- Include **cross-curricula activities** as an integral part of the novel study.
- Correlate to various **education standards and requirements**, including **CCSS**, for language arts.

The Seven Components. . .

1. Summaries

Written in present tense, the chapter-by-chapter summaries are more detailed than those found in most teachers' guides or other sources. Important points of the plot, character motivation and development, and story clues are all included. For quick reference, the summaries are presented in bulleted format. These synopses are a valuable resource for

quickly becoming familiar with a title when time is limited
managing a reading program that involves multiple titles/reading groups
facilitating independent study
refreshing memory when using a novel from year to year.

2. Before You Read

In this component, the focus is on sparking student interest. Each teaching pack includes both an **independent activity** and a series of **whole-group/small-group discussion** or **research topics**, written as open-ended questions.

At least one **bulletin board idea** is included. In some cases, activities in the **Think, Write, Create** component also involve the creation of a bulletin board or classroom display.

3. Vocabulary

One of the many advantages of literature-based reading instruction is the opportunity to observe vocabulary in action! It is this circumstance that drives the vocabulary portion of the novel teaching packs.

Word Choices. . .

The words lifted from the novel for focused study are chosen based on one or more of the following criteria:

<i>their level of difficulty</i>	<i>their frequency of use in children's literature</i>
<i>their importance in comprehending the story</i>	<i>their value as useful composition vocabulary</i>
<i>the probability that they will be encountered across the curriculum</i>	<i>unique meanings, spellings, pronunciation, etc.</i>

Word Lists and Definitions. . .

For teacher convenience and reference, word lists with definitions are included. The selected words are arranged in story order, complete with page numbers so they can be spotted easily and studied in their "natural habitats." For clarity, the definitions are paraphrased to match the word's tense, number, part of speech, etc. rather than cross referenced as in a standard dictionary. The major resource of this information is www.dictionary.com.

Dictionary Activities. . .

Long word lists are divided into chapter sets of workable numbers and presented as **Dictionary Digs**—sometimes given a slightly different name to correspond with the theme of the novel. In this introductory stage, students use a dictionary to answer a series of multiple choice questions about word meanings, usage, unique characteristics, etc.

Using the Words. . .

Other activities, which pull terms from the lists in random order, lead students through a variety of word studies which include

sentence usage
word forms
synonyms and antonyms
anagrams
categories
word groups/connections

word types (acronyms, onomatopoeia, etc.)
scrambled sentences
analogies
whole-class/group games
etymologies

4. Assessment

The two sections in this portion of the teaching pack offer a wealth of materials designed to build a strong **foundation** for student progression to higher level thinking skills. The operative phrase is **basic comprehension**.

Short Answer Questions

Short answer questions for each chapter (or groups of chapters) are the first available assessment tools. The items encourage (and check) careful reading. Some require the reader to recognize a major event or idea while others involve finding a minor detail. The questions are in *sequence* with the pages they cover, but they are **not** designed to call attention to plot construction or other story elements.

The short answer questions can be used as

student reading guides
pop quizzes

discussion groups guides
conferencing with individual students

Objective Tests

The objective tests have multiple functions. In addition to their obvious application, they also serve as tools that can *improve **comprehension skills** by providing practice in understanding plot structure and recognizing important story elements.*

Rationale:

Focus on the Plot. . .

Whether they are aware of their ability or not, all good readers sense the **rhythm** of the **connected** events that compose the plot of a novel, and consequently **comprehend** the story. They are in tune with cause and effect, behavior and consequence, sequence—the heartbeat of the narrative.

This “plot rhythm” forms the framework for the objective tests. The chain of events that tell the story have been pulled from the novel and reformatted into a series of sequential questions, none of which require **interpretation**. They are intended to **draw student attention to the fact that something happened**, not to what the incident means. That comes later.

In addition to their testing function, teachers may use the pages to strengthen their students’ ability to **Summarize**: With only the questions as a guide, have students write a summary of the chapter. For a set of ten questions, limit the number of sentences they may write to seven or fewer. When they work with twenty or more questions, allow no more than twelve sentences.

Report the News: Ask your students to write a newspaper article based on the events identified in a set of questions and the *who, what, when, where, why* elements. Some information needed to complete this assignment may be located in previous chapters.

Twist the Plot: Choose one or two questions from each chapter and change its answer—true to false, no to yes, etc.—to demonstrate how changing a single (or several) events would (or would not) change the story. This process can be used to help students become proficient in distinguishing major plot movers from minor story details.

The Characters. . .

Too often, when they are asked to describe a story character’s personality, the only answer many students can muster is “nice.” This portion of the Novel Teaching Pack, coupled with related activities from **Think, Write, Create**, is a well of opportunities for those teachers who wish to eradicate “nice” from their students’ vocabularies!

Questions that identify a character’s personality and/or motivation are purposely and carefully included with the plot movers. Again, the questions do not require **interpretation**. They simply establish that someone did or said something—knowledge that is invaluable when character analysis is required.

Implied Meaning and Story Clues. . .

The objective tests include items that establish the existence of story components carrying ***implied meaning***. ***Story clues*** that tantalize the reader with hints of future events also appear as question. At this point in the novel study, as before, **interpretation** is not the goal. **Awareness** of the **facts** is the target.

Developing/Improving Listening Skills. . .

Listening skills are rightfully included on every list of state competency requirements. Rather than always requiring students to answer test questions on a printed page, why not surprise them occasionally by doing the test orally and meeting competency goals at the same time?

Discussion Guide Capability. . .

The objective tests are helpful discussion guides. Use individual items on these pages to draw student attention to sequence, cause and effect, story clues (foreshadowing), character traits, recognizing and interpreting implied meanings, etc. These “thinking out loud” sessions are an **important building block** for the next learning phase.

5. Think, Write, Create

In this section, students pack up what they already know about the novel and go exploring into its every nook and cranny. Some activities require the simplest interpretation or application, while others will challenge the most proficient thinkers. There is a high probability that young scholars, even reluctant ones, will label some of the selections as ***fun***.

Rationale:

Guidelines. . .

Most of the items in this section are based on the skills presented in the ***Taxonomy of Educational Objectives (Bloom’s Taxonomy)***. There are two reasons for this choice. First, it mirrors the Novel Teaching Pack’s primary purpose of building a variety of sophisticated thinking skills on a foundation of basic knowledge. Second, in following the taxonomy guidelines, activities that correlate with many state educational standards emerge automatically.

Organization. . .

Chapter-specific activities are grouped and presented according to their corresponding sets of **Short Answer Questions** and **Objective Test** page(s). Having led students through the basics for each chapter (or selected section), teachers may shop in this section for in-depth activities to optimize student understanding and interest. Armed with a firm grasp of each successive chapter, students are more likely to anticipate, embrace, and enjoy the next section. By repeating the process, students are also mastering concepts and intricacies connected to the **whole** novel

The **Whole Book Activities**, as their name indicates, require a grasp of the theme(s), characters, implications, etc. as they apply to the full novel. These pages are a teacher’s smorgasbord of culminating possibilities. In some cases, the choices are outgrowths of concepts that students have dealt with in a previous activity. In others, students are encouraged to look at the novel from a new angle.

Levels of Difficulty. . .

A broad spectrum of **difficulty levels** to accommodate the needs of individual students, including the gifted, is an integral part of ***Think, Write, Create***. However, **all** items from this section are intended to **challenge** and **sharpen** thinking abilities.

Activities. . .

Every novel teaching pack includes activities that require students to choose and use precise, appropriate, and meaningful **vocabulary**. These exercises involve choosing a group of words to describe a character’s personality or behavior. The following example is from ***Charlotte’s Web***.

Eight-year-old Fern cried and begged her father not to destroy the runt pig. She sealed the little animal’s fate by asking her father if he would have killed her if she had been born very small.

- Which **two** of the following words do you think **best** describe the way Fern’s father behaved during this episode? Explain your choice. Include the definitions of the words you selected in your answer.

<i>practical</i>	<i>sensitive</i>	<i>loving</i>	<i>cruel</i>	<i>considerate</i>
<i>realistic</i>	<i>flexible</i>	<i>callous</i>	<i>compassionate</i>	<i>logical</i>

- Choose **two** words from the list below that you believe **best** describe Fern’s behavior. Explain why they are the appropriate words. Use the definitions of your choices as part of your explanation.

<i>impulsive</i>	<i>compassionate</i>	<i>assertive</i>	<i>tender-hearted</i>	<i>hysterical</i>
<i>undisciplined</i>	<i>naive</i>	<i>juvenile</i>	<i>humane</i>	<i>empathetic</i>

Teachers may opt to narrow the choices to fewer words, choose words for individual students, divide the class into groups and offer a specific set of words to each group, or use the assignment as it is written. Whatever the technique, it is here that the word **nice** can be knocked off the shelf, shattered on the floor, and swept out the door. No longer necessary. Useless. Gone!

Other items in this section challenge students to . . .

*write for self expression, for communication, and
for entertainment*

*form opinions and theories
cite “evidence” from the story to support their
explanations and opinions*

*connect personal experience to story situations
analyze story characters and events
make predictions based on given facts
imagine*

*think about social issues
create drawings, diagrams, photos, maps,,
models, recordings, films, etc.*

*categorize
engage in research and data gathering
become familiar with and identify literary elements
recognize and perceive story theme(s)
understand point of view*

Cross Curricula. . .

Think, Write, Create takes full advantage of opportunities to connect both major themes and the smallest story detail to other realms of the curriculum. In **Charlotte’s Web**, for example, students may apply their calculation skills to a page of “Spider Math.” In the **Holes** teaching pack is a challenge to create a game that utilizes a “saved” group of Camp Green Lake’s holes.

Options, options, and more options. . .

Think, Write, Create is purposely bulging at the seams to give teachers **pick-and-choose options** for
individualizing assignments

*group work
whole class activities*

*homework
short-term and long-term projects
differentiating assignments for two or more classes
capitalizing on student interest*

6. Graphic Organizers

Ideas for the graphic organizers are pulled from the chapter or whole book activities and expanded into a writing assignment. Priority is given to those topics that allow a student to relate personal experiences, make choices, empathize with a story character, and/or imagine.

Structure. . .

The organizers do not repeat a set pattern of circles, squares, lines, etc., prescribed for a particular type of writing. Each one is tailored to a **specific idea** pulled from the novel. **Structured directions** for organizing the topic support the student at this stage of the process so that **writing** is the major focus.

Non-writing Organizers. . .

Sometimes, students are enticed to stretch their imaginations by filling out “forms” or writing “diary entries.” One graphic organizer from **Hatchet**, for example, allows students to assume the persona of the pilot who rescued Brian by writing three entries into his log—the day before the rescue, the day of the rescue, and the day after the rescue. In the **Holes** Novel Teaching Pack, students become detectives and conduct a “background check” on Mr. Sir, recording their findings on the provided “official form.” In these cases, composition skills take a back seat to **imagination, empathy, and pure enjoyment**. Teachers may wish to capitalize on student enthusiasm by asking for a written “report” based on the information entered on the forms.

7. Answer Keys

Keys for **all items that require a specific answer** are included in this section.

A final note from the author. . .

It is my personal wish that when the last page has been read, the last activity completed, and the last idea discussed, at least one of your students will ask, “What are we going to read next?”



Margaret Whisnant

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Chapter Summaries

1

- The Logan children—Stacey (12 years old), Christopher-John (seven years old), Little Man (six years old), and Cassie—walk to their first day of school on an October morning.
- Six-year-old Little Man is excited about his first day of school, but Stacey is not happy that his mama will be his 7th grade teacher.
- The children walk to the forest that marks the edge of their family's four hundred acres. Beyond that is Harlan Granger land, worked by share-cropping families.
- In 1887, the Logans' grandpa buys two hundred acres of Granger land and another two hundred acres in 1918. There is still a mortgage on the last two hundred acres and taxes on all four hundred.
- The price of cotton drops in 1931, and Papa goes to work for the railroad. Now in 1933, he is again in Louisiana earning money to pay the mortgage and taxes on the land.
- While Papa is away, Mama teaches and runs the farm, and Big Ma—in her sixties—works in the fields and keeps the house.
- T.J. Avery, who has failed Mama's class the year before, and his brother Claude join the Logans on their walk. T.J. suggests that Stacey could pass along information about his mama's tests.
- T.J. tells the Logans there has been a burnin' done on purpose by some white men at the Berrys' the night before.
- T.J. complains that Cassie told about his visit to the Wallace store dancin' room and almost got him whipped. He places the blame on his brother Claude and escapes punishment. The Logans are disgusted with T.J.
- Near the second crossroads, the white children's school bus purposely forces the children off the road and sends clouds of dust into the air.
- Towheaded Jeremy Simms appears to walk with the Logans, a habit that brings him ridicule and welts. Jeremy's older sister, Lillian Jean, calls him away from the Logans to the Jefferson Davis County School.
- After an hour's walk, the children reach Great Faith Elementary and Secondary School, a semicircle of four wooden houses on brick stilts with a one-room church in the center.
- Because most of the students pick cotton from early spring until fall, the school term is from October to March. Eventually most students drop out of school altogether.
- Cassie's fourth-grade classroom is separated from Little Man's first-grade class by a heavy canvas curtain. Miss Daisy Crocker is acting in her regular job as fourth grade teacher as well as a first grade substitute until Miss Davis returns.
- Miss Crocker announces that this year all the children will have books.
- Cassie is disappointed that the fourth-grade readers are badly worn and marred by pencils, crayons, and ink. When he is issued a first-grade reader in the same condition, Little Man asks for another book and is severely admonished by Miss Crocker.
- Little Man throws the book he is issued on the floor and stomps it when he sees the word *nigra* written on the chart on the inside cover. He takes a whipping rather than pick up the book.
- Cassie refuses to keep her own book, which also had the word *nigra* on the inside cover, and takes a whipping from Miss Crocker as well.
- Later Miss Crocker tells Mama about the whippings while Cassie listens from the hall. Miss Crocker is dismayed by Mama's lack of concern.
- Mama glues a piece of paper over the chart on one of the books. Miss Crocker warns there could be trouble if anyone from the Superintendent's office sees what she has done.
- Miss Crocker says Mama is biting the hand that feeds her and spoiling her children, who have to learn how things are. Mama says maybe they do, but they don't have to accept them.
- Mama, who has been at Great Faith for fourteen years and considered by many other teachers as a disruptive maverick, plans to glue paper over the inside covers of the seventh grade books as well.
- Cassie sees that her mama understands and decides to wait until the evening to talk to her.

Vocabulary Lists with Definitions

(Arranged in Story Order)

(Some words can be found on more than one page.)

Set One: Chapter 1—Chapter 2

- meticulously** Done in a way as to take or show extreme care about minute details; precisely; thoroughly; exactly; strictly. (p. 3)
- exasperation** State of irritation or extreme annoyance; frustration; aggravation. (p. 4)
- concession** The act of conceding or yielding, as a right, a privilege, or a point or fact in an argument; the thing or point yielded; the privilege of maintaining a secondary business within another business premises. (p. 4)
- intriguing** Arousing the interest or curiosity of by unusual, new, or otherwise fascinating or compelling qualities; appealing strongly to; captivating. (p. 4)
- admonished** Corrected or cautioned gently but earnestly; reminded of something forgotten or disregarded, as an obligation or responsibility. (p. 4)
- testily** Irritably; impatiently; crossly (p. 4)
- raucous** Harsh; grating; raspy; rowdy; disorderly (p. 5)
- pensively** Dreamily or wistfully thoughtful, sometimes marked by sadness or involving little or no purposeful thought. (p. 6)
- emaciated** Extremely thin, especially as the result of starvation; puny; haggard; scrawny. (p. 8)
- jauntily** Done in an easy and sprightly manner; accomplished with an air of self-confidence. (p. 8)
- undaunted** Undiminished in courage or valor; not discouraged; not forced to abandon purpose or effort; not giving way to fear; intrepid. (p. 8)
- morosely** Gloomily; sullenly; in an ill-humored manner; expressed in a moody, sulky humor. (p. 11)
- amiably** Behaving so as to show pleasant, good-natured personal qualities; agreeably; done in a friendly manner; graciously. (p. 11)
- disdainfully** Scornfully; disrespectfully; in a proud or domineering manner. (p. 11)
- sparsely** Thinly, as in scattering or distribution; meagerly; scantily. (p. 12)
- loitering** Standing about idly; lingering aimlessly; delaying or dawdling. (p. 15)
- traverse** To pass or move over, along, or through; to extend across or over. (p. 17)
- dubious** Doubtful; questionable; having an uncertain outcome. (p. 21)
- audible** Capable of being heard; loud enough to be heard. (p. 22)
- droned** Hummed; made a low, continuous, monotonous sound; to speak in a monotonous tone; continued in a dull, monotonous manner. (p. 22)
- monotonously** In a way that lacks variety; boringly. (p. 22)
- appalled** Filled with dismay or a sudden alarming dread or fear; shocked; amazed. (p. 23)
- temerity** Reckless boldness; foolhardy disregard of danger; rashness; recklessness. (p. 23)
- indignant** Feeling, expressing, or characterized by strong displeasure at something considered unjust, offensive, or insulting. (p. 24)
- throngs** Large groups of people gathered or crowded close together; multitudes. (p. 27)
- noncommittal** Refusing to pledge to attach oneself to a position on an issue or a question; not taking sides; not expressing one's feelings; indecisive (p. 29)
- radical** Extreme, especially as regarding change from accepted or traditional thought; favoring drastic political, social, or economic reform. (p. 31)
- imperiously** In a domineering, haughty manner; urgently; in the manner of a dictator. (p. 31)
- sinewy** Lean and muscular. (p. 33)
- gait** A manner of stepping, walking, or running. (p. 33)
- formidable** Causing fear, apprehension, or dread; awesome in strength, size, etc. (p. 34)
- ebony** A deep, lustrous black; a hard, heavy, durable wood, most highly prized when black, from various tropical trees of southern India and Sri Lanka. (p. 34)
- ornate** Elaborately decorated or adorned, often in an excessive or showy manner; showy; rich; lavish. (p. 36)

Dictionary Digs

(Set One: Chapter 1-Chapter 2)

Use a dictionary to answer the following questions about some words from Chapter 1 and Chapter 2 of *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*. Write the **letter** of the correct answer in the blank to the left.

- _____ 1. A *synonym* for the word **dubious** is (A) delightful, (B) disheartened, (C) doubtful.
- _____ 2. Another way to say that something is *fascinating* is to say that it is (A) **indignant**, (B) **intriguing**, (C) **formidable**.
- _____ 3. Which of the three words **best** completes the following sentence?
Ms. Delaney was _____ by the number of students who hadn't completed the assignment.
(A) **radical**, (B) **appalled**, (C) **emaciated**
- _____ 4. Which of the following would **not** generally be thought of as a **formidable** task?
(A) finding your way to an unfamiliar address in your city, (B) being lost in a jungle and navigating your way out, (C) locating sunken or buried treasure.
- _____ 5. In addition to being the name of a color, **ebony** is also a type of (A) bird, (B) writing, (C) tree.
- _____ 6. An *antonym* of **disdainfully** is (A) respectfully, (B) hurriedly, (C) cautiously.
- _____ 7. Which of the following would probably **not** be described as **raucous**? (A) a crowd of basketball fans who do not agree with a referee's call, (B) a large flock of noisy birds landing in a grove of trees, (C) a symphony orchestra in concert.
- _____ 8. Something that should be done **meticulously** is (A) bridge construction, (B) repotting a plant, (C) reading a comic book.
- _____ 9. Which of the following words applies to **gait** and **gate**?
(A) homographs, (C) homophones, (C) homonyms
- _____ 10. What word had the double meaning of *the act of yielding or admitting* and *a secondary business located on the premises of a larger business—a movie theater, for example*?
(A) **concession**, (B) **exasperation**, (C) **loitering**
- _____ 11. An **ornate** dining room is (A) plainly furnished with neutral colors, (B) spacious, with enough room for several dozen people to dine comfortably, (C) elaborately decorated.
- _____ 12. Which word can be substituted for *frustration* in the following sentence without changing its meaning?
Dad's frustration at not being able to crank the sputtering lawnmower was obvious.
(A) **exasperation**, (B) **concession**, (C) **noncommittal**
- _____ 13. A possible reason for an **indignant** attitude is (A) an emotional occasion such as a wedding, (B) overwhelming fear, (C) an insult.
- _____ 14. If a person *gazed* **pensively** at a painting, he or she was (A) thinking in a dreamy manner, (B) frowning or squinting at it, (C) having difficulty seeing it clearly.
- _____ 15. Which of the following is **not** usually **audible**? (A) thunder, (B) snow, (C) wind.
- _____ 16. The word **droned** is associated with (A) a sound, (B) a particular geography region, (C) a measuring instrument.
- _____ 17. Which of the following words is connected to a warning or a general reminder?
(A) **emaciated**, (B) **undaunted**, (C) **admonished**

Short Answer Questions

1

1. What were the names and ages of Cassie's brothers?
2. Why was Stacey not happy about his seventh-grade year?
3. The October morning when the Logans were walking to their first day of school, what year was it?
4. Why was Papa away working for the railroad?
5. How did Little Man get his clothes dirty?
6. Why was Jeremy often ridiculed and hit because he associated with the Logans?
7. How much time did it take for the Logans to walk from their home to the Great Faith Elementary and Secondary School?
8. Why did the Great Faith Elementary and Secondary School begin in October and dismiss in March?
9. Why did most of the fourth and first grade students gasp when Miss Crocker announced that they would all have books?
10. What were the **two** things that Little Man didn't like about his book?
11. Name the state where the Logans lived.
12. Mama, who had started teaching at Great Faith when she was nineteen, was considered by many of the other teachers as a disrupting maverick. How long had Mama been a teacher at Great Faith? How old was Mama?

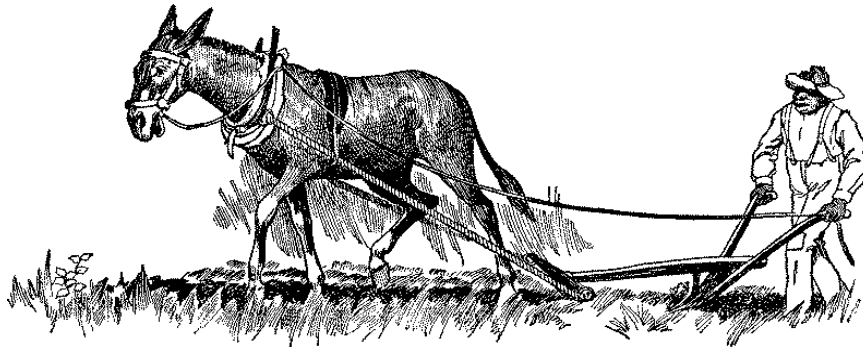
2

1. What was Papa's answer when Little Man asked him what he was doing home?
2. Papa had three brothers. Where were the two eldest?
3. What did Cassie suspect was the reason for Mr. Morrison's presence?
4. When John Henry Berry stopped at the filling station for gas, what did the white men say about him?
5. What did the sheriff do when Henrietta Toggins told him what the white men had done to John Henry, his brother, and his uncle?
6. What did Papa say he would do if he ever found out his children had been up to the Wallace store?

1 Pages 3-31

Write either **True** or **False** in the blank before each statement.

- _____ 1. Little Man was meticulously neat.
- _____ 2. The Logan family lived in Mississippi.
- _____ 3. Cassie had one older brother and two younger brothers.
- _____ 4. Stacey was not happy about going back to school because his mama would be his teacher.
- _____ 5. Cassie's family owned four hundred acres, but there was debt on half of it and taxes to be paid on all of it.
- _____ 6. Cassie's papa had gone to work on the railroad to earn money to buy more land.
- _____ 7. This story took place in the 1960's.
- _____ 8. Papa thought it was important to live on land that the family owned.
- _____ 9. Papa had an older brother who lived in Chicago.
- _____ 10. The adults worked and children wore threadbare clothing to ensure that the taxes and the mortgage on the Logan land were always paid.

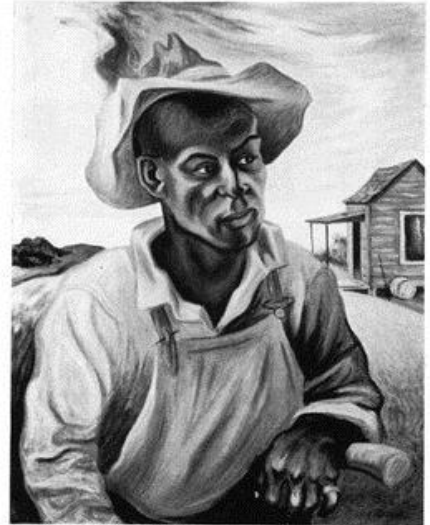


- _____ 11. T. J. Avery's family were sharecroppers on Granger land.
- _____ 12. Big Ma was good at medicine and was often called for when people were sick.
- _____ 13. According to T. J. Avery, the Berrys' burning was the result of a horrible accident.
- _____ 14. Cassie and her brothers liked T. J. Avery a lot.
- _____ 15. All the children, except Little Man, left the road to avoid being engulfed in dust stirred up by the white children's school bus.
- _____ 16. The Logan children didn't ride a school bus because they lived only a short distance from school.
- _____ 17. The white children didn't seem to mind that towheaded, blue-eyed Jeremy associated with the Logans.
- _____ 18. The Logan children walked for an hour to get to school.
- _____ 19. The Jefferson Davis County School and the Great Faith Elementary and Secondary School were very much alike in size and appearance.

2 Pages 32-41

Write either **Yes** or **No** in the blank before each question.

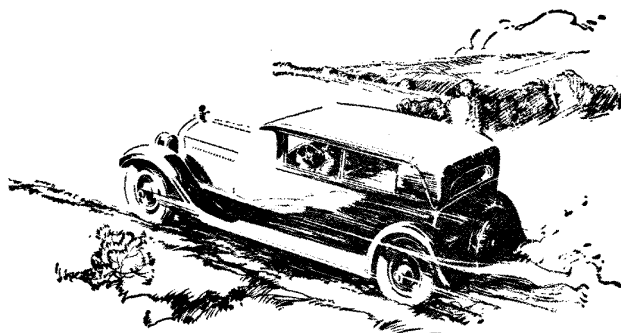
- _____ 1. Was Big Ma Papa's mother?
- _____ 2. When Papa came home, were Big Ma, Mama, and the children out in the field picking cotton?
- _____ 3. Did Papa say seeing his babies was the reason he came home?
- _____ 4. Was Mr. L. T. Morrison a very short, young man?
- _____ 5. Did the house where Cassie and her family lived have bare walls and only two pieces of furniture?
- _____ 6. Was Papa planning to be home for two weeks?
- _____ 7. Did the Logans live near the city of Vicksburg?
- _____ 8. According to Papa, had he brought Mr. Morrison home with him to work on the farm as a hired hand?
- _____ 9. Was Mr. Morrison fired from his job on the railroad because he had been injured in an accident?
- _____ 10. Did Mr. Morrison's voice sound like the roll of low thunder?
- _____ 11. Were Mama and Big Ma upset that Papa had brought Mr. Morrison home with him?
- _____ 12. Did Cassie suspect that Papa's bringing Mr. Morrison home had something to do with the burnings that T.J. had talked about?
- _____ 13. As a result of the burning, did John Henry Berry die?
- _____ 14. Were John Henry Berry and his family sharecroppers?
- _____ 15. Had the men at the gas station accused John Henry of flirting with a white woman?
- _____ 16. Did John Henry fight with the white men at the filling station?
- _____ 17. Did the white men set fire to John Henry, his brother, and his uncle?
- _____ 18. Did the sheriff arrest the men who attacked John Henry Berry after Henrietta Toggins told him what she had seen?
- _____ 19. In addition to the burning, had T.J.'s father also heard of a lynching?
- _____ 20. Did Papa forbid his children to go to the Wallace store where older children went to dance, buy bootleg liquor, and smoke cigarettes?



3 Pages 42-68

Write the **letter** of the correct answer in the blank before each question.

- _____ 1. The October rain (A) brought wind and cold, (B) was unusually heavy, (C) changed the dust into fine, red mud.
- _____ 2. As a shield from the rain, Mama insisted that the children use (A) umbrellas made of leaves, (B) dried calf skins, (C) capes made of old canvas.
- _____ 3. Another problem for the children was (A) getting soaked by the rain on their way to school, (B) not being able to reach school on time, (C) being splashed with muddy water by the Jefferson Davis school bus.
- _____ 4. Much of the money that supported the black school came from (A) Great Faith Church, (B) community sales and festivals, (C) donations from local citizens.
- _____ 5. The humiliation of coming home each day with muddy clothes was most strongly felt by (A) Little Man, (B) Cassie, (C) Stacey.
- _____ 6. Big Ma suggested that Little Man handle the problem with the school bus by (A) paying it no mind, (B) being friendly, (C) taking a different route to school.
- _____ 7. The noise the children mistook for the school bus was (A) a small tornado, (B) Mr. Granger's silver Packard, (C) a distant train.
- _____ 8. After the bus forced the children into muddy water, Little Man (A) turned and went home, (B) threw a mudball at it and then cried, (C) threw a rock at the bus.



- _____ 9. Stacey promised Little Man that being taunted by the bus full of white children (A) wouldn't happen again for a long time, (B) wasn't as bad as he thought, (C) would soon be stopped forever.
- _____ 10. Jeremy Simms walked with the Logan children because he (A) was afraid of the people on the bus, (B) liked them, (C) enjoyed teasing Cassie.
- _____ 11. At noon, the children met in (A) the church, (B) the auditorium, (C) the tool shed.
- _____ 12. During their lunch hour, the children (A) searched for nails in the shed where the church stored supplies, (B) dug a huge hole at the place where the bus forced them off the road and filled it with murky water, (C) tried to clean the mud off their clothes.
- _____ 13. Soon after the children were back in school, (A) it began raining heavily again, (B) their plan was discovered, (C) the rain stopped.
- _____ 14. When the bus came by, Cassie and her brothers were (A) walking on the road, (B) close to home, (C) watching from the small forest above the road.
- _____ 15. When the bus drove into the trap, the result was a water-logged engine and (A) a crushed fender, (B) two flat tires, (C) a broken axle.

WHOLE BOOK TEST

Write the **letter** of the correct answer in the blank before each question.

- _____ 1. Cassie and her family lived in (A) Georgia, (B) Alabama, (C) Mississippi.
- _____ 2. This story took place in the (A) 1933, (B) 1944, (C) 1958.
- _____ 3. How was Cassie's family different from the other families in the area? (A) They were originally from Illinois. (B) They were wealthy and educated. (C) They owned the land they lived on.
- _____ 4. How did the Logan children get to school? (A) Mama took them in the wagon. (B) They walked. (C) They rode with Papa in the buggy.
- _____ 5. Most of the students at Great Faith School came from families who (A) worked in a local cotton mill, (B) worked for the Wallaces, (C) were sharecroppers.
- _____ 6. Cassie had (A) three brothers, (B) one sister and two brothers, (C) one brother and two sisters.
- _____ 7. Mama was (A) a maid in the Granger mansion, (B) famous for her cooking, (C) a teacher at Great Faith School.
- _____ 8. How did the Logan children feel about T. J. Avery? (A) He was their best friend, (B) They didn't like him. (C) They were afraid of him.
- _____ 9. When the white children's bus drove by, (A) it purposely slung dust and mud on Cassie and the other children as they walked along the road, (B) the driver slowed down to let Cassie and the others pass, (C) T. J. sometimes threw rocks at the white children.
- _____ 10. Which one of the Logan children was meticulously neat? (A) Cassie, (B) Little Man, (C) Christopher-John.
- _____ 11. Cassie and Little Man were both whipped on the first day of school because they (A) were late, (B) refused to accept the used books with the word "nigra" written in them, (C) refused to sit near the window.
- _____ 12. What crop did the Logan family grow? (A) cotton, (B) tobacco, (C) corn.
- _____ 13. Harlan Granger wanted the Logan land because (A) he didn't think black people should own land, (B) it was richer than his, (C) it was part of his family's land before the Civil War.
- _____ 14. Uncle Hammer lived (A) on Granger land, (B) in Chicago, (C) near Vicksburg.
- _____ 15. Uncle Hammer's car was (A) like Mr. Granger's, (B) old and battered, (C) a Model-T.
- _____ 16. T. J. Avery got into trouble in Mama's class because (A) he used bad language, (B) he got into fights, (C) he cheated on exams.
- _____ 17. Papa left in the fall to (A) work in a coal mine, (B) visit Uncle Hammer, (C) work on the railroad.
- _____ 18. Mr. Morrison lost his job because he (A) was disabled in an accident, (B) was too old to work, (C) got into a fight and beat up some white men.



Think, Write, Create

Chapter Activities

Chapter 1

Stacey was not happy about going back to school because his mama was going to be his teacher.

- Why do you think Stacey was unhappy about his seventh-grade situation? What were the disadvantages of being in his mama's class? How do you suppose other students felt about the fact that one of their classmates was the teacher's son? Was Stacey in a position of advantage? Explain.
- Would you like to be a member of a class taught by one of the adults in your family? Why or why not?

The Logan children walked an hour to school and another hour back home each day because Great Faith Elementary and Secondary School could not afford a school bus.

- Speculate as to how the Jefferson Davis County School was able to have **two** school buses. Who paid for them? Explain how the school bus provisions for the two schools were unfair.
- Who pays for the school buses that bring students to your school?
- Do some research to find answers to the questions below. You may be able to collect some information by interviewing the right people at your school.

How much does a new school bus cost?

Where do school buses come from? What companies make them?

How much does it cost to operate a bus for one month? (gas, driver, maintenance, etc.)

Why are school buses yellow with black lettering?

During a period of our country's history, including 1933 when Cassie's story takes place, white children and black children were not permitted to go to the same school. The laws during this time said children of different races were to be educated in a system that was described as *separate but equal*.

- The Logans certainly attended a *separate* school. In your opinion, was the Great Faith Elementary and Secondary School *equal* to the Jefferson Davis County School? Use events and descriptions from the story to support your answer.
- Why do you suppose the *separate but equal* system was finally struck down? How was it doomed to failure?

Based on their ***Buildings and Physical Appearance, Students and Teachers, Transportation, Materials, and Equipment***, and ***Schedules*** how does the school you attend compare with the Great Faith Elementary and Secondary School? (See **Graphic Organizer #1**)

Chapter 2

What are some story clues that prove Papa was an **affectionate** father and husband? Would you also describe him as **demonstrative**? Use the meaning of the word and Papa's own behavior to support your answer.

Using the description on pages 35 and 36, draw a **floor plan** to illustrate your concept of the **whole** Logan house, including the porch and the various doors.

Think, Write, Create

Whole Book Activities

Though she had been a teacher at Great Faith Elementary and Secondary School for fourteen years, Mama was still considered by many of the other teachers as a disruptive maverick.

- What is a *maverick*? As a teacher, did Mama fit the definition? Give specific examples.
 - In what way(s) was Mama a maverick as a mother and a member of the community?
-

Mr. Morrison lost his job with the railroad because he injured some white men in a fight, a fact that could lead someone to form a first impression of him as a violent, dishonorable man.

- Explain how Mr. Morrison's behavior as a part of the Logan family proved that he was both *honorable* and *dependable*.
 - Do you believe Mr. Morrison was justified in using violence to protect himself, Papa, and Stacey? Why or why not?
 - How was Mr. Morrison an asset to the Logan family?
 - If Mr. Morrison had been allowed to be a mentor to T. J., how might his fate have been different?
-

Big Ma said one reason she loved Cassie's mama was because she had lost her own daughters when they were babies. However, the bond between the two women went much deeper. Tell how Big Ma and Cassie's mama were alike on the following points:

how they felt about the land
how they protected their children and taught them to cope
the ways they tried to bring about change
their service to people in the community
their pride in their past—both as a family and as a race

Because of racial discrimination and poverty, Cassie and her brothers faced limited opportunities and the constant threat of harm. Today's young people must also cope with a mine field of temptations and pitfalls.

Compare the problems Cassie faced to the hurdles that a young person of her age and economic level must deal with today. As you see it, what improvements have created a brighter future for modern children? In your opinion, what obstacles left over from the past or created in the present still need to change?







Organize your thoughts, and then write a composition about **Life Challenges—Then and Now**. (See **Graphic Organizer #8**)

Uncle Hammer's eyes had a cold, distant glaze. Big Ma was worried about his angry reaction to Cassie's experience in Strawberry. Obviously, Uncle Hammer dealt with racial discrimination with his temper.

- Why do you suppose Uncle Hammer did not live in Mississippi with his brother and mother? Was he running from something or was he searching for a better life? Could it have been a combination of both? Use events from the story and Uncle Hammer's own words to support your conclusions.
 - In what way(s) was Uncle Hammer more successful than Papa? What important thing(s) did Papa have that Uncle Hammer didn't?
-

School—1933 and Now

Based on their ***Buildings and Physical Appearances***, ***Students and Teachers***, ***Transportation, Materials, and Equipment***, and ***Schedules and Classes*** how does the school you attend compare with the Great Faith Elementary and Secondary School? Use the organizer below to gather information and write a composition about ***School—1933 and Now***. Include at least one **new** feeling that you formed about your school.

Points of Comparison	Great Faith Elementary and Secondary School	My School
<i>Buildings and Physical Appearances</i> 		
<i>Students and Teachers</i> 		
<i>Transportation, Materials, and Equipment</i> 		
<i>Schedules and Classes</i> 