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INDIVIDUAL LEARNING PACKET/TEACHING UNIT

Cry, the Beloved Country

A L A N P A T O N



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Individual Learning Packet

Teaching Unit

Cry, The Beloved Country

by Alan Paton

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Cry, the Beloved Country

Objectives

By the end of this unit, the student will be able to:

1. point out how the novel's protagonist, Reverend Kumalo, changes in the course of the story although he is sixty years old at the opening.
2. discuss why the following characters appear to most readers to be representatives of personality types rather than fully developed characters:
 - Reverend Msimangu
 - Gertrude Kumalo - Reverend Kumalo's sister
 - John Kumalo - Reverend Kumalo's brother
 - Absalom Kumalo - Reverend Kumalo's son
 - Arthur Jarvis
3. support or refute the idea that the Reverend Stephen Kumalo is a tragic hero by referring to the text.
4. write a character profile for James Jarvis, Arthur's father, and point out how he grows and changes in the novel.
5. comment on the following symbols in the story:
 - red earth as a symbol for the destruction of the tribal way of life
 - clothes as a symbol for a person's lifestyle.
6. infer about characters and events when these meanings are not explicitly stated.
7. discuss the author's style of writing which includes the following:
 - short phrases to illustrate English as a second language for many of the characters
 - the use of a beginning dash to punctuate the dialogue in place of quotation marks
 - use of repetition to say the same thing in slightly different words.
8. discuss the following uses of language in the novel:
 - sarcasm
 - metaphor
 - irony.
9. comment on the role of black women in South Africa and their lack of opportunity to improve the conditions of their lives.

10. recognize the difference between the following two types of narration and determining when the point of view changes:
 - third-person omniscient narration
 - third-person limited narration.
11. discuss the use of repeated character descriptions
 - as a help for the reader to keep the characters straight
 - as a signal to the reader that the character is a “character type” representing a group rather than a single individual.
12. discuss the role religion plays in the lives of the characters
 - to fortify the characters so they can continue their lives
 - to guide the characters into decent lifestyles.
13. discuss the role and responsibility the white man in South Africa has for the disintegration of tribal culture.
14. point out the role that fear and greed play in preventing white South Africans from implementing social reform.
15. point out three chapters in the novel which provide the reader with diverse viewpoints beyond those of the characters in the story.
16. compare and contrast the living conditions for the natives who live in the valley with those of the natives who leave to live in the city.
17. point out and comment on the specific incidents in the story that give rise to the following generalizations about life:
 - People must be thankful for what they have even though they are unable to understand their purpose in life.
 - Power corrupts both whites and blacks.
 - It is better to settle differences with love than with violence.
 - Pain and suffering are relieved by kindness and love.
 - There will always be suffering in life, so people must learn to handle this suffering with courage and faith.
18. discuss how the author's personal experiences in South Africa influence the following characters and ideas in the novel:
 - Arthur Jarvis' views on native social issues
 - Christian values in the importance of faith in God to live a good life
 - the attitude of Absalom toward the young white man who runs the reformatory.

19. explain how the name “Absalom” is an example of a Biblical allusion and point out the significance of the name in this novel.
20. point out the significance of the title of the story as it reflects the author’s love for his country and his sadness for the living conditions of the natives.
21. define parable and discuss what moral is taught by the parable of the man asleep in the grass.
22. cite incidents from the novel to support the following major themes:
 - Tribal disintegration results in young natives relocating to the cities.
 - The best hope for rebuilding native culture is through education and the relinquishing of ancient tribal customs which destroy the land.
23. support or refute the idea that this novel is a problem, or sociological, novel written to educate the reader about the social problems in South Africa and to present possible solutions.
24. discuss the following native problems from the perspectives of both the whites who fear change and the black natives who yearn for it:
 - native crime
 - trade unions
 - education
 - segregation
 - family life.
25. define vocabulary words closely related to South Africa’s terrain, society, and politics.

Cry, the Beloved Country

Biographical Notes of Alan Paton

Alan Paton, a white man born in South Africa in 1903, dedicated much of his life to improving the lives of the native South Africans during the period of racial segregation known as Apartheid. A religious man, he believed in Christian values and the power of God to improve conditions in South Africa.

Paton, of British heritage, learned to speak both Afrikaans (the language spoken by the Dutch settlers) and Zulu. In love with his homeland— its beautiful countryside and rich traditions—Paton wanted all South Africans (Afrikaans, Zulu, and English speaking) united for the good of the country.

Accepting the job as warden of the Diepkloof Reformatory for African Juvenile Delinquents, Paton believed he could make a difference in the lives of the young natives and set about transforming the reformatory from a dirty, dismal place to a happier, healthier place. It was from these and other first-hand experiences that Paton wrote *Cry, the Beloved Country*. When published in 1948, it became an immediate success; unfortunately, Paton died in South Africa in 1992 before the social changes he ardently worked for were instituted.

All references come from the Scribner's Paperback Fiction Edition of *Cry, the Beloved Country*, 1995, copyright 1948.

Cry, the Beloved Country

Test

1. “The great red hills stand desolate, and the earth has torn away like flesh.”
The red hills in the above passage are a symbol for
 - A. the destruction of the tribal culture by the pressures of white civilization.
 - B. the power of the rains that fall in South Africa.
 - C. the barrenness of the African countryside and the barrenness of the people’s lives.
 - D. the deaths of the native children because of lack of water.
 - E. Both A and B
2. A Bantu word that is a title of respect is
 - A. kloof.
 - B. umfúndisi.
 - C. titihóya.
 - D. siyáfa.
 - E. kraal.
3. “His friend Msimangu would preach this afternoon, in the chapel that he had seen. But because they were not all of one church here, there was no altar with a cross upon it”
The above passage is an example of
 - A. first-person-omniscient narration.
 - B. the author’s style of writing using repetition to emphasize his ideas.
 - C. third-person narration.
 - D. the author’s style of writing using short phrases to illustrate the fact that English is a second language for Kumalo.
 - E. Both C and D
4. Paton portrays black women in South Africa as
 - A. having little opportunity to better themselves.
 - B. being tempted by alcohol, lust, and gambling just like the men.
 - C. suffering because of the loss of their children.
 - D. Both A and B
 - E. A, B, and C
5. Many of the characters in the book are referred to by epithets such as “the man who carried the bags” rather than by their names. Which character has both a name and an epithet?
 - A. “the rosy-cheeked priest”
 - B. “the chief”
 - C. “the young white man”
 - D. “the pregnant girl”

6. The novel tells us that most native youths leave the farms to live in Johannesburg because
 - A. there is insufficient land to support all of the children in a family.
 - B. they desire to receive an education.
 - C. the farm land is so poor they are unable to support themselves as farmers.
 - D. they desire to have better houses.
 - E. Both A and C
7. Shanty Town springs up almost overnight because
 - A. there is a serious lack of affordable housing for blacks in the city.
 - B. Dubula encourages the natives to boycott white housing projects because the rent is too high.
 - C. the native criminal element takes over the other native housing areas and the decent families have no place to live.
 - D. the conditions in the mining communities are terrible so the families must make their own houses out of scrap materials.
8. The character in the novel who is clearly a mouthpiece for Paton's own views is
 - A. Reverend Kumalo.
 - B. John Kumalo.
 - C. John Harrison's father.
 - D. Arthur Jarvis.
 - E. John Jarvis.
9. Which of the following statements does the novel suggest is true regarding the education of native children?
 - A. White people are afraid of more schools because they think more education will produce smarter criminals.
 - B. The natives view the teachers as white devils and therefore stay away.
 - C. The children will be off the streets if there are more native schools.
 - D. Both A and C
 - E. A, B, and C
10. The moral lesson taught by the parable of the man lying in the grass whom no one warns about the impending storm is that
 - A. we must help each other to see the dangers around us.
 - B. it is not wise to remain outside in a thunderstorm.
 - C. storms in life often come on us suddenly.
 - D. only God can control nature.
 - E. Both C and D

11. Mr. Jarvis honors the memory of his son by
 - A. donating a large sum of money to the boys club for native youth.
 - B. helping the natives in the valley rebuild their farms and learn to work them properly.
 - C. creating a park and playground in the center of the village which he names after his son.
 - D. Both A and B
 - E. None of the above
12. The Kumalo family represents
 - A. the enduring strength of love binding together a family.
 - B. all the problems of blacks in South Africa in miniature.
 - C. how ignorance destroys a family.
 - D. Both A and B
 - E. A, B, and C
13. Stephen Kumalo destroys his relationship with his brother by
 - A. insisting John help Absalom by making his son Matthew tell the truth at the trial.
 - B. telling John that he does not approve of his sinful life style and that John deserves to have his son in prison.
 - C. telling John one of his friends is betraying him to the authorities.
 - D. asking him for money for Absalom's defense.
 - E. Both A and B
14. The Bishop decides to let Kumalo remain in Ndotsheni because
 - A. Jarvis sends Kumalo a note telling him he is planning to help Kumalo build a new church.
 - B. Jarvis sends Kumalo a note letting him know that he does not blame Kumalo for his wife's death.
 - C. Kumalo pleads with him, telling him his parishioners do not hold him responsible for his son's actions.
 - D. Msimangu writes the Bishop a letter telling the Bishop how much Kumalo has suffered already.
 - E. Both A and B
15. The overall theme presented in Book 3 is
 - A. one of forgiveness for sins.
 - B. one of sadness for the loss of tribal culture.
 - C. one of hope and the promise of rebuilding a future for Kumalo's people.
 - D. one of despair over the rise in native crime, especially in Johannesburg.

16. Letsitsi shocks Kumalo when he tells him
- A. he is not grateful to Jarvis and other white people for their help because he thinks their help is repayment for past ills.
 - B. he, too, has killed a white man.
 - C. the people of the valley must learn to plow up and down the hills.
 - D. a dam is going to be built so there will be no more droughts.
 - E. Both A and B
17. The title of the novel suggests that the author's feeling about South Africa is
- A. disgust at his country's hypocrisy.
 - B. love for his homeland.
 - C. sadness at the injustices in the country.
 - D. pride in his country's accomplishments.
 - E. Both B and C
18. The character of John Kumalo is used to illustrate which of these themes?
- A. Power corrupts both whites and blacks.
 - B. There will always be suffering in life, so we must learn to handle it with courage and faith.
 - C. Repentance is necessary for forgiveness.
 - D. A man must be accepting of whatever happens even though he is unable to understand the purpose of his life.
 - E. Both C and D
19. The story about the origins of Shanty Town
- A. is told to Kumalo by the taxi driver.
 - B. is an example of an event included in the novel which does not advance the plot but does advance the reader's understanding of life in South Africa.
 - C. best illustrates the unfair conditions in the mining towns.
 - D. lets the reader know that many natives are poor, but not all of them turn to crime as Absalom does.
20. The author named Absalom Kumalo after
- A. his own son.
 - B. a character from Greek mythology.
 - C. a Biblical character.
 - D. a fallen Zulu chief.

Essays

(Answer any two.)

1. Name and identify five characters in the novel who represent types of personalities. Indicate the type of personality each represents.
2. A problem novel is defined as a story which defines a particular social problem and may present probable causes and solutions to that problem. Support this novel as a problem novel by stating the social problem it presents, its probable causes, and its possible solutions. Cite events from the story to support your answer.
3. Identify the novel's protagonist and antagonist and point out the nature of the conflict between them.
4. In the context of this story which of the following social problems facing native South Africans do you think is the *most* destructive? Cite events from the story to support your choice.
 - the break up of the family unit
 - economic hardships imposed by the greedy white South Africans
 - discrimination
 - lack of educational opportunities

Cry, the Beloved Country

Test Answer Key

1.	A	6.	E	11.	D	16.	A
2.	B	7.	A	12.	B	17.	E
3.	C	8.	D	13.	C	18.	A
4.	E	9.	D	14.	E	19.	B
5.	A	10.	A	15.	C	20.	C

Cry, the Beloved Country

Questions for Essay and Discussion

1. Define the following terms: veld, kloof, titihoya, umfundisi, repression, robot, pro deo, Afrikaner, republic, nationalism, assessors, inkosikazi.
2. What do Gertrude's new clothes symbolize? Why does she leave them behind when she returns to her sinful life? What type of person may she represent?
3. How much power does the Zulu chief have to help his people? What does the following metaphor say about the government's efforts to help the chief? "But they were feeding an old man with milk, and pretending that he would one day grow into a boy." Does the chief seem to you to be a person or a type of person?
4. Why is Kumalo sarcastic when Father Vincent suggests he pray and rest after Kumalo returns from visiting his son in prison? "Kumalo stood up. I trust that is so, he said, but I have no hope any more. What did you say I must do? Yes, pray and rest."
5. Compare the lives of the following native women. Why are they so different? Do the women themselves have the power to change their circumstances?
 - Mrs. Kumalo
 - the young pregnant girl
 - Gertrude
 - Mrs. Lithebe
6. Discuss the difference between third-person omniscient and third-person limited point of view. Which narration is used most often in the first paragraph of each chapter? Why?
7. Find five examples of epithets. Critics believe Paton uses these in place of names so the characters can represent "groups" rather than individuals. For the five epithets you find, explain what "group" each is supposed to represent.
8. Discuss the following statement: Religion is important to the story because Christian values and faith help the characters endure their suffering, guide the characters into decent lives, and promote hope for the future of South Africa.
9. How does John Jarvis help the natives of Ndotsheni begin to rebuild their lives, giving them hope for the future? Could they have managed it without his assistance? Is he presented as a fully developed character or as a representation of a type?
10. Why are many of the white citizens of Johannesburg reluctant to support social programs whose aim is to reduce native crime?

11. List the reasons many of the young natives are leaving their homes to make new lives in Johannesburg. What impact does this have on South African culture and economy?
12. What is the author's opinion of power? Cite events from the story to support your answer.
13. Trace Reverend Kumalo's growth in his awareness of the underlying causes for native crime. What gives this character heroic stature by the end of the novel?
14. How and why does John Jarvis keep the Bishop from transferring Kumalo away from Ndotsheni?
15. Review the brief biography of Paton. Which characters in the novel are based on his personal experiences and may be considered fictional versions of himself?
16. What is ironic about Arthur Jarvis' death? In terms of the novel, why is his death necessary?
17. How does reading the Gettysburg Address influence John Jarvis' decision to donate a large sum of money to the native boys club?
18. What is Kumalo feeling when he tells Father Vincent the parable of the sleeping man in Chapter 15?
19. Do you think Kumalo is a good father to Absalom? What more could he have done to help his son, both before and after the murder?
20. Write a character sketch of Msimangu. Why do you think he decides to join a monastery?
21. Do you think Absalom receives a fair trial? Do you think his sentence would have been different if his friends were truthful? What is the significance of his name "Absalom"?
22. How does Reverend Kumalo destroy his relationship with his brother?
23. Discuss the significance of the title of the novel. Find passages in the story to support Paton's love of South Africa.
24. Cite incidents in Book 1 to support the following major theme: Tribal disintegration results in young natives relocating to the cities.
25. Discuss the conclusion of this book, and state whether you believe it is pessimistic or optimistic about South Africa's future.
26. Define a problem novel. What social problem is defined in this novel?
27. What does the blood-red earth symbolize in this novel?

28. Since 1948 many changes have taken place in South Africa. Discuss what progress has been made in racial and social equality and point out how it has come about.
29. The plot of a novel is built around conflicts between the protagonist and antagonist. Consider Reverend Kumalo as the protagonist of this novel. Who or what is the antagonist?

Cry, the Beloved Country

Definitions and Terms

Antagonist - the person or force that is in conflict with, or opposes, the protagonist. **Example:** Nurse Ratched opposes McMurphy throughout *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*.

Epithet - an adjective or phrase that emphasizes a character's personality by referring to the attributes possessed by another person or thing. These epithets help the reader understand important characteristics of the people. **Example:** "Achilles the invincible." The "*Homeric epithet*" is a phrase, usually a compound adjective, which serves the same purpose and is frequently applied to objects as well as humans. **Examples:** "rosy-fingered Dawn"; "the wine-dark sea."

Inference - the act of drawing a conclusion that is not actually stated by the author. **Example:** In *The Pigman*, John and Lorraine are writing a "memorial epic" about Mr. Pignati. Therefore, the reader may logically assume that Mr. Pignati dies in the book.

Irony - a perception of inconsistency, sometimes humorous, in which the significance and understanding of a statement or event is changed by its context. **Example:** The firehouse burned down.

- **Dramatic Irony** - the audience or reader knows more about a character's situation than the character does and knows that the character's understanding is incorrect. **Example:** In *Medea*, Creon asks, "What atrocities could she commit in one day?" The reader, however, knows Medea will destroy her family and Creon's by day's end.
- **Structural Irony** - the use of a naïve hero, whose incorrect perceptions differ from the reader's correct ones. **Example:** Huck Finn.
- **Verbal Irony** - a discrepancy between what is said and what is really meant; sarcasm.
Example: A large man whose nickname is "Tiny."

Metaphor - a comparison of two things that are basically dissimilar in which one is described in terms of the other. **Example:** The moon, a haunting lantern, shone through the clouds.

Narrator - the one who tells the story. The narrator must not be confused with "author," the one who writes the story. If the narrator is a character in the book, the proper term is "first-person narration." **Example:** *Moby Dick* is narrated by Ishmael, a crewmember. If the narrator is not a character in the book, the correct term is "third-person narration." **Example:** *Sense and Sensibility*.

Parable - a brief story or tale that illustrates a moral or life lesson. Example: Jesus' story of the loaves and fishes.

Protagonist - the central or main character in a story around whom the plot centers. **Examples:** Hester Prynne in *The Scarlet Letter*; David Copperfield in *David Copperfield*.

Sarcasm - the use of harsh words to deride and criticize. Sometimes, sarcasm is apparent only by the way something is said rather than the actual words that are used; other times the sarcasm is obvious. **Example:** In *The Catcher in the Rye*, Holden says about a taxi driver he dislikes that, "he certainly was good company. Terrific personality."

Style - the way an author chooses and uses words, phrases, and sentences to tell the story. For example, in an action/adventure story, the author may use simple words and short, choppy sentences, because this style moves the story along quickly. In a story about a college professor, the same author may choose to use polysyllabic, unfamiliar words, and long, convoluted sentences.

Symbol - an object, person, or place that has a meaning in itself and that also stands for something larger than itself, usually an idea or concept; some concrete thing which represents an abstraction. **Example:** The sea could be symbolic for "the unknown." Since the sea is something that is physical and can be seen by the reader, and also has elements that cannot be understood, it can be used symbolically to stand for the abstraction of "mystery," "obscurity," or "the unknown."

Theme - the central or dominant idea behind the story; the most important aspect that emerges from how the book treats its subject. Sometimes theme is easy to see, but, at other times, it may be more difficult. Theme is usually expressed indirectly, as an element the reader must figure out. It is a universal statement about humanity, rather than a simple statement dealing with plot or characters in the story. Themes are generally hinted at through different methods: a phrase or quotation that introduces the novel, a recurring element in the book, or an observation made that is reinforced through plot, dialogue, or characters. It must be emphasized that not all works of literature have themes in them. **Example:** In a story about a man who is diagnosed with cancer and, through medicine and will-power, returns to his former occupation, the theme might be: "Real courage is demonstrated through internal bravery and perseverance." In a poem about a flower that grows, blooms, and dies, the theme might be: "Youth fades, and death comes to all."

Tragic hero - the main character in a tragedy; in order to fit the definition, the hero must have a tragic flaw, which causes his or her downfall. **Examples:** Hamlet's main character weakness is his indecision; Lear's is his pride.

Cry, the Beloved Country

Study Guide Teacher's Copy

Book 1

Chapter 1

1. What do the first two lines of the book tell the reader about the author's opinion of Africa?
"There is a lovely road that runs from Ixopo into the hills. These hills are grass-covered and rolling, and they are lovely beyond any singing of it." (Pg. 33)

The author loves Africa and the beauty of the countryside.

2. Define veld, kloof, and titihoya.

veld – open, grassy country in South Africa

kloof - a deep, narrow valley or gorge in South Africa

titihoya - one of the birds of the veld

3. Briefly describe changes in the landscape between the lush hills and the valley below.

The hills of the valley turn red and bare. There are no titihoya birds. The grass is coarse and sparse.

4. Support the following statement: The red earth is a symbol for the destruction of the tribal way of life.

Paton describes the streams as "full of the red blood of the earth." The soil is too poor to sustain the tribe, so the young leave the valley. "The men are away, the young men and the girls are away. The soil cannot keep them any more." (Pg. 34) The tribes cannot survive if the next generation leaves the valley.

Chapter 2

1. Use clues from the story to define the title *umfundisi*. Support the idea that Stephen Kumalo is respected by his neighbors.

The title “umfundisi” means Reverend and is used by the small child when she comes to deliver the letter.

The child carefully opens the door of “so important a house.”

2. Why does the Reverend wait instead of immediately tearing open the letter?

A letter is an unusual event in Kumalo’s life. He is worried it contains bad news about his brother, sister, or son.

3. Remembering that Reverend Kumalo and his wife are from the Zulu tribe, why do you think Paton uses short sentences and phrases in the dialogue? Does the fact that Paton punctuates the dialogue with dashes rather than quotation marks help or hinder you?

The short phrases are characteristic of someone who is reading, speaking, or writing a second language. Paton wants the reader to understand that Zulu is Kumalo’s native language and anything else is awkward for him.

Answers will vary.

4. What door is Reverend Kumalo referring to in the following passage?

“You have opened a door, and because you have opened it, we must go through.” (Pg. 39)

Kumalo is referring to his wife’s comment that their son, Absalom, will never return home and attend St. Chad’s school.

5. Find an example of sarcasm in this chapter.

Answers will vary.

“Go up and ask the white man, he said. Perhaps there are letters. Perhaps they have fallen under the counter, or been hidden amongst the food. Look in the trees, perhaps they have been blown there by the wind.” (Pg. 39)

6. Support the idea that Reverend Kumalo places a great deal of importance on family.

Reverend Kumalo is going to use all of their savings to try to help his sister, who has not bothered to write to them.

7. What does the following passage tell the reader about the role of black women in South Africa?

“Then she sat down at his table, and put her head on it, and was silent with the patient suffering of black women, with the suffering of oxen, with the suffering of any that are mute.” (Pg. 40)

Black women are suffering because of the loss of their children to the cities, the strain of the hard physical work they must do to survive, and the lack of power they have to change their lives.

8. Whose eyes is Paton referring to in the last line of this chapter where he says “Happy the eyes that can close”? (Pg. 40)

Answers may vary. Example: He is referring to people who are not traveling because of a sick relative. He could also be referring to anyone who does not have the Reverend's problems.

9. This novel is written in third-person omniscient. Find an example of this type of narration in this chapter.

Answers will vary. Examples:

*“He was reluctant to open it, for once such a thing is opened, it cannot be shut again.” (Pg. 39)
“Then she sat down at his table, and put her head on it, and was silent, with the patient suffering of black women, with the suffering of oxen, with the suffering of any that are mute.” (Pg. 40)*

Chapter 3

1. What favor is asked by the man who helps Kumalo with his bag?

He wants the Reverend to try to locate the daughter of Sibeko, who works for Smith in Ixopo.

2. Why are there mostly black travelers on the train? What is the “little lie” Kumalo tells the people on the train? What does the “lie” say about Kumalo's character?

There are mostly black travelers because the whites have cars. Kumalo lets the passengers know he is a Reverend but also implies that he frequently travels to Johannesburg. The Reverend likes the respect he enjoys in the valley and wants to maintain that level of respect while he is traveling.

3. By now, you have an idea of what happens in the book. Explain what the title means and what literary term is used in it.

Paton addresses the nation of South Africa, saying it weeps for its problems. The term could be a combination of apostrophe and personification.

Chapter 4

1. Why is Kumalo afraid to cross the street?

He remembers the story of Mpanza's son who is killed in a traffic accident. Kumalo tries to cross but is cut off by a bus.

2. If Kumalo is suspicious of the young man who offers to guide him to the Sophiatown bus, why does he give him a pound note to buy his ticket?

He is grateful to the young man for helping him through the confusing city. He wants to show the young man that he appreciates his kindness, so he trusts him with his money.

3. Support the following statement: Despite his unfortunate encounter with the young man who steals his pound note, show that Kumalo believes that most men are decent.

He asks an elderly man for help to find the ticket office. He trusts the man enough to travel with him to the Mission House.

4. What is Kumalo's opinion of Mr. Msimangu?

Kumalo likes Msimangu and thinks he is a confident young man.

Chapter 5

1. One characteristic of Paton's writing style is his use of repetition. He repeats the same idea by saying the same thing again using different words, in the same sentence or in the following sentence. For example: He describes the grass as something that " keeps men, guards men, cares for men."

Find an example of repetition in this chapter.

Answer will vary.

Example: "How the tribe was broken, and the house broken, and the man broken." (Pg. 56)

2. What do the priests talk about at dinner that first night?

They talk about the "sickness of the land, of the broken tribe and the broken house, of young men and young girls that went away and forgot their customs, and lived loose and idle lives. They talked of young criminal children..." (Pg. 52)

3. Sometimes in this novel, Paton does not give characters names but refers to them by epithets, usually representing personal characteristics. Find a character in this chapter who speaks but is identified only by a physical characteristic. What does the reader learn about the character from this description?

The “rosy-cheeked” priest indicates that the priest is white. (Pg. 51)

4. What is Msimangu telling Kumalo about his sister when he says, “It would be truer to say ... that she has many husbands”? (Pg. 53)

Gertrude is a prostitute.

5. Support the following statement: Msimangu is a humble servant of God and believes any good he does comes from God.

Answers will vary.

Example: When Kumalo thanks him for his kindness, Msimangu says, “I am not kind. I am a selfish and sinful man, but God put his hands on me, that is all.” (Pg. 55)

6. What does Kumalo learn about his brother John?

John is no longer a member of the church, but is a great politician.

7. Support the following statement: Msimangu does not think it is a tragedy that the white man came to South Africa.

What does Msimangu think is the real tragedy for South Africa?

The white man brought the church to South Africa, so his coming was not a tragedy for the priest. The real tragedy is that after the white man destroys the tribal community, he does not replace its structure with anything.

8. Why does Msimangu believe “fear rules this land”? (Pg. 56)

He thinks the white men, who make the laws, are afraid to make laws which will give black people any power to change their lives.

Chapter 6

1. Define *repression* as it applies to black South Africans. Why does John Kumalo call the black newspaper the “Bantu Repress”?

The black people are kept down, held back, and strictly controlled to prevent them from improving the quality of their lives. The black newspaper does not go far enough in supporting black issues, so John refers to it as the “Bantu Repress.”

2. Why are the young black children not in school?

Many of the schools are full, the children do not care if they get an education, and the parents do not care if the children go to school.

3. In Gertrude’s conversation with her brother, what evidence is there that she is not truly repentant about her wicked life and that she will ultimately disappoint her brother?

The voice she uses to call her son has the same wicked quality as the laughter Kumalo hears when he knocks at her door. She repents her sins because Kumalo pressures her into admitting her shame. Her change from a woman who sells liquor, gambles, and is a prostitute is much too fast. It is difficult for the reader to trust her sincerity.

4. List Gertrude’s possessions. How does Kumalo react to her son?

Gertrude has a table, chairs, bed, and some dishes. Kumalo kisses his nephew and plays with him.

5. Support the following statement: Kumalo expects to find his son and persuade him to return home just as easily as he finds Gertrude and persuades her to return home.

Answers will vary.

Example: “Kumalo himself was light-hearted and gay like a boy, more so than he had been for years. One day in Johannesburg, and already the tribe was being rebuilt, the house and the soul restored.” (Pg. 63)

Chapter 7

1. Discuss the extent to which you think the following statement may be accurate: Clothes in this story symbolize a person's lifestyle.

Some readers point out that when she was a prostitute, Gertrude wore a dirty dress and cap, and her son's clothes were dirty. After she leaves that life, though, Kumalo provides Gertrude with a new red dress and white turban. Her son receives a new outfit, too.

Kumalo's white collars are brown and frayed. They are not as white as they should be because his sister, son, and brother are not living proper lives, although he is still a priest.

2. Why does John not write to his brother?

John's wife left him ten years earlier. John is living with another woman who is not his wife. He does not write because he does not believe his brother will understand his life in Johannesburg.

3. Why does John prefer living in Johannesburg, with all of its problems, to life in Ndotsheni?

He does not have to obey the chief, whom he describes as a "white man's dog." (Pg. 67) In Johannesburg, he has his own business, and he is a man with some political influence. John believes tribal society is breaking apart and the new society will be in Johannesburg.

4. What is John's opinion of the church?

He thinks they have too many rules. The church speaks against the unfair laws the whites make, but nothing ever changes. The whites make all of the money out of the mines, and the blacks do all of the labor. The bishops say it is wrong, but they live in big houses, and the white priests make several times more than black priests like Kumalo.

5. Why does Stephen Kumalo's son leave home?

He does not get along with the woman who replaces his mother.

6. Support the following statement: Msimangu does not respect Stephen Kumalo.

Msimangu says that Stephen is a powerful speaker and can stir up the black population to revolt against the unfair laws but that Stephen is afraid of being arrested. He has the power to help his people, but not the courage to act.

7. What is the “truth” about power that Msimangu says the white men do not understand?

When black men get power, they do not use it to take revenge on the white people for the unfair treatment of the black population. The black men are corrupted by power, just like the whites. They use it to satisfy their own selfish wants.

8. Despite the corruption of both blacks and whites by power, Msimangu thinks there is still “hope” for South Africa to overcome its problems. What is the “hope” Msimangu sees for South Africa? What is his greatest fear?

Msimangu says, “But there is only one thing that has power completely, and that is love. ...I see only one hope for our country, and that is when white men and black men, desiring neither power nor money, but desiring only the good of their country, come together to work for it.” Msimangu fears that when the whites are ready to love South Africa “they will find we are turned to hating.” (Pg. 71)

9. What information about Absalom does Mrs. Ndlela withhold from Kumalo?

She and her husband do not like Absalom’s friends although they have never seen them do anything wrong.

Chapter 8

1. Who is Dubula?

Dubula is a man who stops the priests from using the bus because of the boycott. He is a political activist, but Dubula, unlike John, has the courage to act. He organizes the bus boycott and gives up his own work to picket.

2. What is good about Alexandra?

It is a place where a black man can own a house and have a voice in the community.

3. List two examples of how whites try to help blacks in this chapter.

Answers may vary.

Example: The whites offer rides to the black people who are walking, and whites fight against the petition to do away with Alexandra.

4. What information about Absalom does Msimangu learn from Mrs. Mkize?

Absalom stays there with his cousin, and they are both involved with stolen property. They left her house about a year ago, but the taxi driver Hlabeni is friends with them and may know where they are now.

5. A robot is the South African word for traffic light. What surprising event do the two priests witness while their taxi is stopped at a red light?

A white man is transporting black people in his car, helping them because they must boycott the buses. It is surprising that he is willing to go to court rather than stop helping the black travelers in need.

Chapter 9

Chapter 9 is the first of three chapters that do not contribute directly to the plot line. Instead, Chapter 9 helps the reader understand life in South Africa in general through short scenes unrelated to Kumalo's search for his son.

Many critics believe the overall theme of the deterioration of black character and traditions is presented in Book 1. Keep that theme in mind when answering these questions.

1. What are the reasons the black people move to Johannesburg?

They leave the farms because the crops fail, there is not enough land, there are too many taxes to pay on the land, or the farm is too small for all of the grown children.

2. Briefly describe the housing available in Johannesburg for black people.

There are five people to a room. They sleep on the floor. There are quarrels, and it is not always safe for the young girls to live so closely with the men.

3. How do black people get a house?

They must bribe the officials to get a house, and the waiting list is at least five years.

4. What is Shanty Town? Is it a healthy place to live?

On open ground by the railroad, the black families without houses build shelters from any materials they can scrounge. Soon the ground is covered with these makeshift homes.

The children die because of the poor conditions and unavailable medical care.

5. What is done to try to eliminate Shanty Town? Why are the government's efforts unsuccessful?

The poor conditions are featured in the newspaper. The government then builds houses for the people in Shanty Town. Unfortunately, as soon as the houses are built, more people move into Shanty Town. It is an endless cycle.

Chapter 10

1. Why is Kumalo more comfortable playing with his nephew than talking with his sister, Gertrude?

Kumalo's nephew enjoys listening to stories about the valley where Kumalo lives. Kumalo is much older than Gertrude, and they cannot talk together about her sins or anything serious about her life.

2. Sometimes when talking about home, Kumalo is sad. What makes him unhappy, and how does he ease his pain?

He is sad when he remembers the poor quality of life in the valley because of the poor soil and when he thinks about his son and the other young people leaving the valley hoping to do better in the City. Kumalo feels better when he thinks about his wife and friends.

3. State a generalization about life from the following passage:

"Now God be thanked that the name of a hill is such music... Wise men write many books, in many words too hard to understand. But this, the purpose of our lives, the end of all our struggle, is beyond all human wisdom." (Pg. 94)

Answers will vary.

Example: People must be thankful for what they have, even though they are unable to understand the purpose for their lives.

4. What kind of treatment does Absalom receive at the reformatory? Why do they release him?

Absalom receives fair treatment at the reformatory. He becomes one of the senior boys and is permitted to leave early to get married because of his good behavior.

5. Read the brief biography of Alan Paton. In what way do his personal experiences influence the way he writes this chapter?

Paton spent time as the warden of a Reformatory for African Delinquents. He believed he could help change the lives of the young black men in his reformatory. First, he improved the living conditions, let the boys play, and gave them more freedom. Under his care, it became more of a school than a prison.

The white warden of the reformatory in the book is patterned after Paton. He cares about the boys and demonstrates this by giving Absalom a second chance.

6. What steps does the white warden take to help Absalom lead a decent life?

He arranges for Absalom to get a job, open a Post Office book, and find a place to live. He also helps arrange Absalom's marriage to his [Absalom's] pregnant girlfriend.

7. Briefly describe Absalom's girlfriend. Why do you think Kumalo wants to go back to see her again?

Absalom's girlfriend is very young and thin. She is resigned to leading a hopeless life, relying on one man after another for her survival. Kumalo wants to see her again because she is carrying his grandchild and he wants to be sure the child leads a decent life.

Chapter 11

1. Find an example of irony in the details surrounding Arthur Jarvis' fate.

Arthur Jarvis is killed while writing a paper entitled "The Truth about Native Crime." He is killed by three native youths who apparently want to rob his home.

2. The title of this novel appears more than once in the text of the novel. Paton wants the reader to "Cry for the broken tribe, for the law and the custom that is gone. Aye, and cry aloud for the man who is dead." What do you think he means when he writes, "Cry, the beloved country, these things are not yet at an end"? (Pgs. 104-105)

Answers will vary.

Example: He is saying that South Africa is crying because of the terrible lives the people are living, because of all the social and political problems, and because there are no easy solutions to these problems and they will continue.

3. Kumalo is suffering from the loss of his son. What other, possibly more tragic loss is suggested by the following passage?

“There are times, no doubt, when God seems no more to be about the world.”

(Pg. 105)

Kumalo may lose his faith in God.

Chapter 12

Chapter 12 is the second of three chapters that do not contribute directly to the plot line. Instead it presents possible solutions to the native crime problems and also gives the reader a look at the attitudes of the white population toward the natives.

1. Why does Mr. McLaren disagree with the proposal to hire more police to protect people from native crime?

He thinks it is only a temporary solution. The natives must be helped to find a purpose or goal for their lives, or they will continue to “turn to drink and crime and prostitution.” (Pg.107)

2. What is wrong with Mr. de Villers’ plan to decrease crime by increasing school facilities?

The white people think more schools will produce only smarter criminals. In addition, there is the problem of who is to pay for them.

3. List three other possible solutions to native crime suggested in this chapter.

Answers will vary.

Example: Break the country up into separate areas for blacks and whites. Do not bring men to town to work without also bringing their families. Try to stop the decay of family religion.

4. Why are the white people afraid to implement any real reforms for the native population?

They are worried about losing their superior status that being white people affords them.

5. List the places the priests go to look for Absalom. Why do they ask “Is it bad?” (Pg. 112) and “Did it seem heavy?” (Pg. 115)

The go to visit Mrs. Ndlela of Edn Street, Mrs. Mkize, Mrs. Hlatshwayo, the reformatory, and Absalom’s girlfriend. They are trying to find out if the police are looking for Absalom. They ask “Is it bad?” and “Did it seem heavy?” because they want to know if the police are looking for him; they suspect he is one of the natives who killed Arthur Jarvis.

Chapter 13

1. What changes does Kumalo want to make when he returns to Ndotsheni?

He wants to make changes in the schools so the young are taught how to survive anywhere, not just in the valley. It is not enough to teach them to read and write; they must also learn to survive in the modern world.

2. Support or refute the following statement: The success of the blind school shows that the white people can help the native population.

The white people help the blind make a living in a dark world. If they can help the blind, they can also help the other natives in the country. Paton believes that the whites can make a difference if they want to.

3. After listening to Msimangu speak, Kumalo says, "Brother, I am recovered." Msimangu replies, "I have tried every way to touch you, he says, but I could not come near. So give thanks and be satisfied." (Pg. 124)

What has Kumalo recovered from, and to whom does Msimangu give credit for Kumalo's recovery?

Kumalo has recovered from his low spirits. He believed that there is nothing left in the world except for fear and pain. Kumalo is moved by Msimangu's wonderful service. Msimangu says that the credit belongs to God and he could not have reached Kumalo alone.

Chapter 14

1. What can you infer about John's character by the fact that twice his brother has come to visit him and twice he has failed to recognize him?

John is a very self-centered man. He does not look carefully enough at other people to be able to recognize even his own brother.

2. Kumalo asks his son "why" numerous times. What two unsatisfactory answers does Absalom finally give his father to explain his decline into crime?

He runs with bad companions and is under the influence of the devil.

3. John Kumalo plans to hire a lawyer to defend his son by claiming there is no evidence that the boy is one of the natives who committed the murder. Stephen Kumalo wants his son to tell the truth. Who do you think is behaving in the way most fathers might react under similar circumstances? Why?

Answers will vary.

4. Find an example of sarcasm spoken by the “young white man” at the end of this chapter.

“It is a wonderful work, he says, a wonderful work, a noble work.” (Pg. 134) The young man is very angry and discouraged because his work with Absalom has failed. If Absalom can not be saved, perhaps his work with the other natives is equally as useless.

5. Why does Kumalo decide to talk to Father Vincent?

He wants Father Vincent to help him find a lawyer for Absalom.

Chapter 15

1. Why does the “young white man” believe Kumalo must get a lawyer?

He does not trust John Kumalo. He thinks, things may go harder on Absalom if John’s son denies being part of the murder. He also needs a lawyer to help the court understand that Absalom kills Jarvis out of fear.

2. What do you think is more important to Kumalo, saving his son’s life or helping his son regain some decency in his life?

Answers will vary.

3. What moral lesson is being taught by the parable of the man lying in the grass?

Answers will vary.

Example: The man sleeping in the grass is unaware of the storm. There are people who could warn him, but they do not take the time. The moral is that we must help one another to see the dangers around us. It is part of our responsibility as people to make the effort.

4. Find the metaphor Father Vincent uses to explain why sorrow is better than fear.

“When the storm threatens, a man is afraid for his house, said Father Vincent in that symbolic language that is like the Zulu tongue. But when the house is destroyed, there is something to do. About a storm he can do nothing, but he can rebuild a house.”(Pg. 140)

5. Find an example of sarcasm in Kumalo's conversation with Father Vincent.

"Kumalo stood up. I trust that is so, he said, but I have no hope any more. What did you say I must do? Yes, pray and rest." (Pg. 141) Kumalo is being sarcastic. He thinks telling him to pray is too simple a solution to a complex problem and, therefore, useless.

6. What are the many things Father Vincent tells Kumalo to pray for?

He tells him to pray for Gertrude, her child, Absalom's girl, his grandchild, his wife, Arthur Jarvis' family, Kumalo's own rebuilding, the white people who commit injustices, and for his son's amendment.

Chapter 16

1. Why do you think Kumalo tries to hurt Absalom's girl by asking her, "Have you had a murderer before"? (Pg. 146)

Answers will vary.

Example: He is angry because the girl does not seem to understand the immoral life she has been living.

2. Compare Gertrude's response with the young girl's response to Kumalo's offer to take her back home with him. Which of them do you think is the most sincere? Why?

Answers will vary.

3. One of the major themes of this story is the hope of rebuilding a new life for the black natives. What evidence is there in this chapter that Kumalo is beginning to see and believe in this hope?

He laughs with the young girl when he realizes she is clever and eager for a new life. His pain over Absalom's problems is less after talking to the young girl.

Chapter 17

1. What does Mrs. Lithebe think of Gertrude? How is the young pregnant girl different from Gertrude?

Mrs. Lithebe enjoys having Gertrude around the house but thinks she is careless and talks to strange men. The young pregnant girl is obviously delighted to be living in the house. She is clean and content with the life Kumalo offers her.

2. By referring to the text, support or refute the following statement: Absalom can not truthfully say that he turns to crime because of bad companions.

Example: Absalom chooses his friends, but he does not choose friends who are “upright, hard-working, obeying the law” (Pg. 154) His friends are criminals, but he makes the decision to trust them of his own free will.

3. Briefly describe Absalom’s lawyer, Mr. Carmichael. When he first meets with Kumalo, what does he do that is unusual for a white man meeting a black man?

He is a tall, grave white man and behaves like he is important. Mr. Carmichael shakes Kumalo’s hand and calls him Mr. Kumalo.

4. What does it mean to take a case *pro deo*? Why does this action make Kumalo weep?

“Pro deo” means the lawyer is taking the case for God. He is doing it for free because it is the right thing to do. Kumalo weeps because he has come close to losing his faith, and Mr. Carmichael can prove God has not forsaken Kumalo or his son.

BOOK 2

Chapter 18

1. Support or refute the following statement: Mr. Jarvis understands the problems with the native farms but does not see any easy solution.

Answers will vary. Example:

He knows the natives do not understand modern farming methods. They have too many cattle and let the soil erode. The young leave the farms for the city. Education is not the answer because once natives are educated they leave the farm for easier work. Giving them more land does not work because they will destroy it, too. Even if they can make a living from farming, there will not be any workers for the white man’s farms.

2. Define “Afrikaner.” Briefly describe van Jaarsveld.

“Afrikaners” are white South Africans, not Englishmen, living in South Africa who are descendents of the Boers. Van Jaarsveld is the captain of the police. He is also very popular because he was a great rugby player and a soldier.

3. What do you think is Mr. Jarvis' opinion of the white man's responsibility to help the native population at this point in the story? Support your answer by citing passages from the chapter.

Example: Mr. Jarvis is very comfortable living at "High Place." He is comfortable with his white status. While it is true he can see the native problems, he does not see any easy solution. He asks the following questions: "And where was the land to come from, and who would pay for it?...who would work the white men's farms?" (Pg. 163) He reviews the problems in his mind, but he takes no direct action to solve them.

Chapter 19

1. Briefly identify John Harrison, Harrison, and Mary.

John Harrison is a young man. He is Mary's brother and Arthur Jarvis' brother-in-law. Harrison is Mary and John Harrison's father. He was Arthur Jarvis' father-in-law. Mary is Arthur Jarvis' widow.

2. What does James Jarvis learn about his son's life from Harrison?

His son is very popular with people of all races. He has learned to speak Afrikaans as well as Zulu. He speaks about native crime, the poor conditions in native hospitals, and the need for native schools. He also wants "settled labor," where the family accompanies the man when he goes to work at the mines.

3. Who is James Jarvis talking about in the following passage? What is surprising about his comments? What problem does Jarvis see with the native school, a problem he has obviously ignored?

"For he has never thought much of missionaries.... There was a mission near him, at Ndotsheni. But it was a sad place as he remembered it. A dirty old wood-and-iron church, patched and forlorn, and a dirty old parson, in a barren valley where the grass hardly grew. A dirty old school where he had heard them reciting...things that could mean little to them." (Pg. 174)

James Jarvis is talking about Kumalo when he refers to the "dirty old parson." It is surprising because we know Kumalo is very careful with his appearance, even if he cannot afford to buy new white collars. Jarvis notices that the native students are reciting things that will not help them improve their lives.

4. As James Jarvis goes to sleep, what question is weighing heavily on his mind concerning his son's death?

He wants to know why this happens to Arthur, a man who has clearly fought for the rights of the natives.

Chapter 20

1. Why do you think Jarvis is sorting through his son's papers and reading his manuscripts?

Answers will vary.

Example: He is sorry he did not understand his son better when he was alive. He is hoping to know him better through his papers, though.

2. What does the partial manuscript Jarvis reads say about the following topics?

Labor - It is not permissible to keep the natives unskilled just because the whites need unskilled labor for their mines.

Native Family Life - It is not permissible to continue to separate workers from their families now that the white people know it is destroying native family life.

White Wealth - It is not permissible to continue to get rich at the cost of other men.

Native Education - Native Education can no longer be left in the hands of the few people who are interested in educating the natives. All native children must be educated, and it is dangerous not to do so.

Segregation - Setting aside land for the natives did not work because the white population did not do it honestly. They gave the natives only one tenth of the land for four fifths of the people.

3. In the Gettysburg Address, Abraham Lincoln stated that it is important that the men who died to end slavery and bring freedom to everyone did not die in vain. Their descendents must honor their deaths by making sure The United States stays strong and free.

Knowing this, why do you think Jarvis takes the book containing the Lincoln address with him when he leaves?

Answers will vary.

Example: He is thinking about the changes his son wanted for South Africa. Perhaps he wants to honor his son the same way Lincoln wanted to honor the Civil War dead. Jarvis may want to continue his son's work for the good of South Africa.

Chapter 21

1. List the points Harrison is making about the following native problems—from the white perspective:

Crime - He thinks they need more security and police.

Trade Unions - He thinks the natives ought to be satisfied with clean compounds, good food, and medical attention. The mines will close if white owners must pay workers ten shillings a day instead of three.

Farmers - The farmers need the mines to continue to operate. Without the mines there will not be industry, and without industry, there will not be a place to sell the farmer's crops.

2. Define Republic. Why is Harrison against a Republic for South Africa? Define Nationalism. Why is Harrison against the Nationalists?

Republic - A state or nation in which the supreme power rests in the citizens entitled to vote. Harrison does not want a Republic because the natives far outnumber the whites. They would control the country.

Nationalism - The idea that national interests are more important than international interests. Harrison wants to preserve the mines which are owned by foreign countries. Nationalism puts the interests of South Africa over those of the mine shareholders.

3. List three ways the white population of South Africa goes against the teachings of Christianity to suppress the native population.

Answers will vary.

Example: Whites deny the natives brotherhood, deny them education by saying they are not intelligent, and deny them an opportunity to develop their gifts because the black population has no gifts; whites agree that the underdog needs help but want blacks to remain underdogs.

4. Many critics believe Arthur Jarvis' writings are really essays written by Paton during his life, not necessarily just for this novel. Use these writings to support the idea that Paton believes the native problems in South Africa are due to the greed of the white population.

Answers will vary.

Chapter 22

1. Support or refute the following statement: Even though the laws are made by the whites, the court system in South Africa tries to be fair to both natives and whites.

Answers will vary.

Example: The court listens to the natives and gives them a fair chance to present their side of the story. Both sides have attorneys, and race is not an issue in the court proceedings.

2. What part of the cross-examination goes badly for Absalom?

He cannot explain why he carried a loaded gun just to scare the servants and to protect himself.

3. How is Absalom's behavior in the courtroom different from the behavior of the other two natives on trial?

Absalom is silent while the prosecutor outlines the details of the crime, but the other two boys try to act shocked that they are being accused of such a terrible crime. They lie about being part of the murder while Absalom tells the truth.

4. What is Kumalo's reaction when he notices James Jarvis in the courtroom?

He trembles and looks away.

Chapter 23

1. The next section discusses the views of the black natives and the sympathetic whites toward the new-found gold. What changes in the mining system do they want to see at this new gold mine? Do you note any sarcasm in this section?

They want to use some of the money from the shares to erect anti-erosion works and also to subsidize boys and girls clubs, social centers, hospitals, and higher wages for the miners.

Answers may vary.

2. What evidence is there that the people campaigning for the improvements in the new mine do not have the power to make the changes actually happen?

The people who want the improvements do not own any of the shares.

Chapter 24

1. Why does Jarvis feel angry when he reads his son's manuscript "Private Essay on the Evolution of a South African"?

Arthur Jarvis says that his parents taught him to be honorable, charitable, and generous but that they did not teach him anything about South Africa.

2. What is significant about the way James Jarvis enters and exits his son's house? Why does he leave through the front door after reading his son's "Private Essay"?

Answers will vary.

Example: James Jarvis enters through the back, past the stains of his son's blood. By doing this, he reminds himself of his loss. He keeps coming back to try to understand his son. When he leaves through the front door, "He was not afraid of the passage and the stain on the floor; he was not going that way any more, that was all." (Pg. 209) Jarvis has accepted his son's death and is going to go forward with his own life. He now understands his son and can go on.

Chapter 25

1. Support the following statement: Jarvis is sensitive to Kumalo's feelings even before he knows Kumalo's son murdered Arthur.

Example: Jarvis is patient while Kumalo sits on the steps and trembles. It is difficult for a white man to wait, but he waits for Kumalo to finally state his business.

2. Many critics believe the lives of the two fathers parallel each other—Jarvis in the white world of Ndotsheni and Kumalo in the native world. Describe the similarities in their lives in the following areas:

Relationship with their sons - Both of their sons are raised to be good people, and both sons leave their father's way of life to make their own way in Johannesburg.

Understanding of the native problems in South Africa - Both men are seeing the problems of the natives with new eyes. Jarvis realizes it is the responsibility of the whites to help the natives change, and Kumalo realizes the futility of trying to preserve the tribal culture.

3. Why does Jarvis not translate all the comments made by the white woman about Sibeko's daughter?

He is sensitive to the feelings of Kumalo and decides not to hurt him with the comment that she does not care where the girl is.

4. How does Kumalo show his respect for Jarvis when he thanks him for the information about Sibeko's daughter?

He answers in Zulu instead of English. He does not want to embarrass Jarvis by pointing out that he understands the nasty comment.

5. How does Kumalo describe Arthur Jarvis as a small boy?

He says that "there was a brightness in him." (Pg. 214)

Chapter 26

1. Why do Dubula and Tomlinson listen to John Kumalo speak with "contempt, and with envy"? (Pg. 215)

They envy him his magnificent speaking voice but are contemptuous because he is too cowardly to support their case fully. He condemns the conditions of the mines but lacks the courage to call for a strike.

2. Why does Msimangu thank God that John Kumalo is corrupt?

He thinks John is interested in keeping his power and possessions. He wants them more than he wants to change Africa. Msimangu thinks God has given John a great power in his voice. This power is enough to cause the natives to strike, bringing bloodshed to the country. He thanks God John is too corrupt to use his power.

3. What does the white population of South Africa learn, just from the threat of a strike?

They realize how dependent they are on the native workers.

4. The last two paragraphs in this chapter are about quiet. The first is the quiet in the mines after the strike is over, and the second is about the quiet in the forest. It is not a coincidence that these paragraphs are presented side by side. What do you think Paton is saying when he concludes, "Nothing is ever quiet, except for fools"? (Pg. 224)

Answers will vary.

Example: Anyone who thinks the natives are content and the problems in the mines are solved is a fool. The problems are eating away at South Africa just as the white ant eats away the paneling.

Chapter 27

1. Why does Mrs. Lithebe hide the newspaper from Kumalo?

The headlines are about another white person killed by natives. Another murder like this will possibly hurt Absalom's case. She wants to keep it from Kumalo so he does not worry even more about his son.

2. What do you think about Gertrude's longing to become a nun? Do you think she is really happy to be leaving Johannesburg?

Answers will vary.

Example: She is losing her battle against her desires for sex and gambling. Gertrude wants to please her brother and raise her son in a decent environment, but she is attracted to her other life. She does not want to be a nun; she really wants to find the strength in herself to resist temptation.

3. What promises does Absalom's girlfriend make to Gertrude?

She promises not to tell Kumalo that Gertrude is thinking about becoming a nun, not to talk carelessly anymore, and to take care of Gertrude's son.

Chapter 28

1. Define "assessors."

Assessors are consultants or advisers to the judge.

2. Why does the judge decide to discharge Absalom's two accomplices, even after he testifies they are present during the murder? What happens to Absalom's friends?

He is unwilling to accept Absalom's word that they were his accomplices. There is no other concrete proof that they were present at the murder. Absalom's friends are cleared of the murder, but the judge wants their other criminal activities investigated.

3. Support the following statement: Even though Absalom has confessed to the murder, the judge looks for any opportunity he has to find the young man innocent of the crime.

First, the judge decides that Absalom's confession is truthful and that he is not an innocent person confessing to a crime. Next, the judge agrees with the defense attorney that the city has had a wicked influence on Absalom and that society must shoulder the blame for this. However, he must follow the law. The defects in society must be corrected by the society, not the judge. He finds Absalom had an intention to kill by the weapons taken into the house—the iron bar and loaded gun.

4. What custom does the young white man break after hearing Absalom sentenced to death?

He helps Kumalo out of the courtroom. The white exit is on one side and the black exit is on the other. It is against custom for a white man to help a black man.

5. The name Absalom is an allusion to the Bible. In the Bible, King David's son Absalom is a handsome, restless man with long hair. He insults his father and joins with his enemies. When he catches his long hair on the branch of a tree, Absalom is killed by King David's men. King David mourns for the loss of his son, despite his son's crimes against his father.

Why do you think Absalom is an appropriate name for Kumalo's son?

Absalom in the novel leaves the valley and the customs of the Zulu tribe to join the white world of Johannesburg. He goes against his father's teachings by stealing, getting his girlfriend pregnant without marrying her, and eventually killing a white man. Absalom is sentenced to die, and Kumalo, like King David, mourns for his son.

Chapter 29

1. This chapter has one of the most powerful scenes in the book. Absalom clings to his father's knees, begging him not to leave him. What do you think about Kumalo's leaving his son to face his hanging alone?

Answers will vary.

2. What is Stephen Kumalo trying to tell his brother John when he lies to him about the "friend" sent to his shop to spy on John's activities?

He is trying to tell John that he needs to be careful about whom he trusts. Absalom trusts his "friends" and they turn on him to save themselves. John's "friends" will do the same.

3. What generalizations about life may be drawn from the following passage?
"He had come to tell his brother that power corrupts, that a man who fights for justice must himself be cleansed and purified, that love is greater than force." (Pg. 246)

Answers will vary.

Example: Power corrupts both whites and blacks. It is better to settle differences with love than with violence.

4. Why does Jarvis give John Harrison a check for one thousand pounds?

He wants John to use the money to help keep other native boys from turning to crime by supporting the boys club.

5. What do you think about Msimangu's decision to join a "community and would forswear the world and all possession"? (Pg. 248)

Answers will vary.

Example: It is an honor for a black man to be considered holy enough to join the white priests at such a high place. It is a terrible waste for a priest with so many talents to live a life away from the people who need him.

6. What does the fact that Gertrude leaves her new clothes behind tell the reader about where she has gone?

Gertrude has gone back to gambling and prostitution. The clothes are a symbol of the renewal of her moral life with her brother. When she abandons that life again, she also abandons the clothes.

7. List all the characters, besides Reverend Kumalo, who appear in the first two books. What character type may each of these people represent?

Answers may vary.

BOOK 3

Chapter 30

1. How does Kumalo know immediately that he has been missed in the valley?

One woman puts her apron over her face, crying with joy. A small child welcomes him home, explaining that they did not understand his replacement, that they understand only their umfundisi.

2. In what way does Kumalo immediately acknowledge the shameful conduct of his family? How do his parishioners react to his family problems?

Kumalo prays at the church with the people from his church. He prays for forgiveness for Gertrude and Absalom. The congregation prays with him and does not hold him accountable for their sins.

3. What generalizations about life may be drawn from the following passage?

“Pain and suffering, they are a secret. Kindness and love, they are a secret. But I have learned that kindness and love can pay for pain and suffering.... For our Lord Suffered. And I come to believe that he suffered, not to save us for suffering, but to teach us how to bear suffering. For he knew that there is no life without suffering.” (Pg. 261)

Answers will vary.

Example: Pain and suffering are relieved by kindness and love. There will always be suffering in life, so we must learn to handle it with courage and faith.

4. Many critics believe the overall theme of Book 3 is rebuilding and hope. What does Msimangu do to help Kumalo rebuild his life? What other evidence of rebuilding and hope are presented in this chapter?

Msimangu gives Kumalo a Post Office Book with more money than he and his wife have ever had. With it, they can buy new clothes, a symbol for new life in this novel. The pregnant girl and Gertrude's son both provide hope for the future by representing the next generation. They are both content to live in the quiet home and the valley.

Chapter 31

1. What does the following metaphor tell the reader about the government's efforts to help the chiefs make better lives for their people?

“But they were feeding an old man with milk, and pretending that he would one day grow into a boy.” (Pg. 264)

The government is trying to sustain the tribal system as if it were still a viable, growing social system. The tribal system is destroyed and outdated. Helping it is like giving an old, dying man milk to help him grow strong like a young boy.

2. Why does Kumalo go to see the chief?

It is mainly a courtesy visit. Kumalo does not really believe the chief has the power to help his people. Kumalo wants him to help change the curriculum at the school so the children are taught how to care for the land.

3. When the schoolmaster does not have any ideas on how to keep the young people in the valley, who does Kumalo ask for help?

He prays to God for help and commends Ndotsheni into His hands.

4. Who is the small boy on the red horse? How does he make Kumalo laugh?

He is Arthur Jarvis' son. He is visiting his grandfather. The small boy makes Kumalo laugh because of his bright, interesting questions and his eagerness to learn Zulu.

5. How does the small white boy learn about the sick Kuluse child?

The small white boy asks for some milk and discovers that there is no milk in Ndotsheni and that small children are dying because they need milk.

Chapter 32

1. What did you feel when you read the story about the chief and his pitiful attempts to be helpful to the magistrate and the men who are placing the sticks in the ground?

Answers will vary.

Example: It is comical, yet sad that the Chief is reduced to pretending to be great and powerful. It also shows that any real changes to help the native population are going to require the whites to take some responsibility until the natives have the power and knowledge necessary to cope in an industrialized society.

2. Support the following statement: Jarvis is sympathetic to Kumalo's feelings when he learns there will be no mercy for Absalom.

Answers will vary.

Example: Jarvis brings up the subject of Absalom by asking if there is going to be mercy. When he reads the letter saying there is no mercy he says, "I do not understand these matters ... but otherwise I understand completely." (Pg. 279) Jarvis understands what it means to lose a son.

3. Why does Kumalo not ask about the mysterious sticks or help Jarvis carry his saddle?

He is paralyzed with thoughts about his son's execution which is scheduled for the fifteenth.

Chapter 33

1. Why does Napoleon Letsitsi come to Ndotsheni?

Jarvis hires him to come to Ndotsheni and teach farming methods.

2. List the ways Letsitsi plans to help the people in the valley.

They must save the dung and use it to fertilize the land. They must gather the weeds instead of letting them rot in the sun. They must learn to plow up and down the hills and plant trees for fuel. They must also plant trees along the edges of streams to prevent erosion. Some men must give up their land for the trees. Also, the people must give up counting their wealth in cattle so there is more grass.

3. Support or refute the following statement: Kumalo believes the changes proposed for the valley are God's work.

Answers will vary.

Example: He refers to Letsitsi as an angel from God. He also calls Jarvis' grandson a small angel from God. Kumalo puts the fate of Ndotsheni in God's hands, and he believes God sent the small boy and Letsitsi to help the valley.

Chapter 34

1. Who is the inkosikazi?

She is Arthur Jarvis' mother and John Jarvis' wife.

2. Why does Kumalo not visit the Jarvis house to offer his sympathies in person? What does he do instead?

He can not go there because the house will be full of white people. He will have to stand by himself until Jarvis comes out. He knows no one will deliver a message to Jarvis from Kumalo. Instead, Kumalo decides to send a sympathetic note to Jarvis.

3. Support or refute the following statement: The death of Mrs. Jarvis will not alter John Jarvis' plans for the valley.

Answers will vary.

Example: Kumalo describes Jarvis as "a man who put his feet upon a road, and that no man would turn him from it." (Pg. 272) Jarvis has decided to help the valley, and even the death of his wife will not change his plans.

4. Why does the Bishop want to transfer Kumalo to another parish? Do you think he is punishing him for his sinful family?

The Bishop wants to transfer Kumalo because he thinks remaining near the father of the man Absalom murdered will be uncomfortable for both Jarvis and Kumalo. He is not trying to punish Kumalo, just avoid trouble.

5. What two things does John Jarvis say in his reply to Kumalo's letter that help the Bishop decide to let Kumalo remain with his parish?

First, Jarvis tells Kumalo that one of his wife's last wishes was to build a new church at Ndotsheni. Second, he says she was ill before their son was killed. In other words, he does not hold Kumalo's son responsible for her death.

6. Who goes to get the flowers for Mrs. Jarvis' wreath? Why does he not have a name?

Paton refers to him as "the friend who carries the bags." (Pg. 279) Many of the characters in the book are more "types" than individuals, and Paton describes them with words instead of names.

Chapter 35

1. What new idea is Letsitsi presenting to Kumalo in the following passage?
"We do not work for men...we work for the land and the people.... We work for Africa... Not for a white man or a black man, but for Africa." (Pg. 303)

Letsitsi is saying that Jarvis pays him but he is not really working for Jarvis. He is working for Africa. Jarvis and the other white men who have robbed them of their land do good now as a form of repayment. Letsitsi does not work for Jarvis' money but for the love of the land and the people. It is a new idea to Kumalo not to be grateful to the white man for his help.

2. What advice does Kumalo give Letsitsi?

He tells Letsitsi to be careful not to hate any man, even white men, and not to desire power over any man, because power corrupts.

Chapter 36

1. Why does Kumalo go up into the mountain?

He is going there to pray because his son is scheduled to be executed the following morning.

2. What is Jarvis telling Kumalo in the following passage?
"...he stretched his hand over the darkening valley, and he said, One thing is about to be finished, but here is something that is only begun. And while I live it will continue. Umfundisi, go well." (Pg. 307)

Absalom's life is about to be taken, but the valley is just beginning to live again. Jarvis pledges to continue his help in restoring life to the valley.

3. Support or refute the following statement: The last line in the book is intended to be hopeful and optimistic about the future of Africa.

“But when that dawn will come, of our emancipation, from the fear of bondage and the bondage of fear, why, that is a secret.” (Pg. 312)

Answers will vary.

4. What is your opinion of Reverend Kumalo? In your opinion, does he achieve heroic stature?

Answers may vary.

Cry, the Beloved Country

Study Guide Student Copy

Book 1

Chapter 1

1. What do the first two lines of the book tell the reader about the author's opinion of Africa?
"There is a lovely road that runs from Ixopo into the hills. These hills are grass-covered and rolling, and they are lovely beyond any singing of it." (Pg. 33)
2. Define veld, kloof, and titihoya.
3. Briefly describe changes in the landscape between the lush hills and the valley below.
4. Support the following statement: The red earth is a symbol for the destruction of the tribal way of life.

Chapter 2

1. Use clues from the story to define the title *umfundisi*. Support the idea that Stephen Kumalo is respected by his neighbors.
2. Why does the Reverend wait instead of immediately tearing open the letter?
3. Remembering that Reverend Kumalo and his wife are from the Zulu tribe, why do you think Paton uses short sentences and phrases in the dialogue? Does the fact that Paton punctuates the dialogue with dashes rather than quotation marks help or hinder you?
4. What door is Reverend Kumalo referring to in the following passage?
“You have opened a door, and because you have opened it, we must go through.” (Pg. 39)
5. Find an example of sarcasm in this chapter.
6. Support the idea that Reverend Kumalo places a great deal of importance on family.

7. What does the following passage tell the reader about the role of black women in South Africa?
“Then she sat down at his table, and put her head on it, and was silent with the patient suffering of black women, with the suffering of oxen, with the suffering of any that are mute.” (Pg. 40)
8. Whose eyes is Paton referring to in the last line of this chapter where he says “Happy the eyes that can close”? (Pg. 40)
9. This novel is written in third-person omniscient. Find an example of this type of narration in this chapter.

Chapter 3

1. What favor is asked by the man who helps Kumalo with his bag?
2. Why are there mostly black travelers on the train? What is the “little lie” Kumalo tells the people on the train? What does the “lie” say about Kumalo’s character?
3. By now, you have an idea of what happens in the book. Explain what the title means and what literary term is used in it.

Chapter 4

1. Why is Kumalo afraid to cross the street?
2. If Kumalo is suspicious of the young man who offers to guide him to the Sophiatown bus, why does he give him a pound note to buy his ticket?
3. Support the following statement: Despite his unfortunate encounter with the young man who steals his pound note, show that Kumalo believes that most men are decent.
4. What is Kumalo's opinion of Mr. Msimangu?

Chapter 5

1. One characteristic of Paton's writing style is his use of repetition. He repeats the same idea by saying the same thing again using different words, in the same sentence or in the following sentence. For example: He describes the grass as something that " keeps men, guards men, cares for men."

Find an example of repetition in this chapter.

2. What do the priests talk about at dinner that first night?

3. Sometimes in this novel, Paton does not give characters names but refers to them by epithets, usually representing personal characteristics. Find a character in this chapter who speaks but is identified only by a physical characteristic. What does the reader learn about the character from this description?
4. What is Msimangu telling Kumalo about his sister when he says, "It would be truer to say ... that she has many husbands"? (Pg. 53)
5. Support the following statement: Msimangu is a humble servant of God and believes any good he does comes from God.
6. What does Kumalo learn about his brother John?
7. Support the following statement: Msimangu does not think it is a tragedy that the white man came to South Africa.

What does Msimangu think is the real tragedy for South Africa?

8. Why does Msimangu believe "fear rules this land"? (Pg. 56)

Chapter 6

1. Define *repression* as it applies to black South Africans. Why does John Kumalo call the black newspaper the “Bantu Repress”?
2. Why are the young black children not in school?
3. In Gertrude’s conversation with her brother, what evidence is there that she is not truly repentant about her wicked life and that she will ultimately disappoint her brother?
4. List Gertrude’s possessions. How does Kumalo react to her son?
5. Support the following statement: Kumalo expects to find his son and persuade him to return home just as easily as he finds Gertrude and persuades her to return home.

Chapter 7

1. Discuss the extent to which you think the following statement may be accurate: Clothes in this story symbolize a person's lifestyle.
2. Why does John not write to his brother?
3. Why does John prefer living in Johannesburg, with all of its problems, to life in Ndotsheni?
4. What is John's opinion of the church?
5. Why does Stephen Kumalo's son leave home?
6. Support the following statement: Msimangu does not respect Stephen Kumalo.
7. What is the "truth" about power that Msimangu says the white men do not understand?

8. Despite the corruption of both blacks and whites by power, Msimangu thinks there is still “hope” for South Africa to overcome its problems. What is the “hope” Msimangu sees for South Africa? What is his greatest fear?
9. What information about Absalom does Mrs. Ndlela withhold from Kumalo?

Chapter 8

1. Who is Dubula?
2. What is good about Alexandra?
3. List two examples of how whites try to help blacks in this chapter.
4. What information about Absalom does Msimangu learn from Mrs. Mkize?
5. A robot is the South African word for traffic light. What surprising event do the two priests witness while their taxi is stopped at a red light?

Chapter 9

Chapter 9 is the first of three chapters that do not contribute directly to the plot line. Instead, Chapter 9 helps the reader understand life in South Africa in general through short scenes unrelated to Kumalo's search for his son.

Many critics believe the overall theme of the deterioration of black character and traditions is presented in Book 1. Keep that theme in mind when answering these questions.

1. What are the reasons the black people move to Johannesburg?
2. Briefly describe the housing available in Johannesburg for black people.
3. How do black people get a house?
4. What is Shanty Town? Is it a healthy place to live?
5. What is done to try to eliminate Shanty Town? Why are the government's efforts unsuccessful?

Chapter 10

1. Why is Kumalo more comfortable playing with his nephew than talking with his sister, Gertrude?
2. Sometimes when talking about home, Kumalo is sad. What makes him unhappy, and how does he ease his pain?
3. State a generalization about life from the following passage:
“Now God be thanked that the name of a hill is such music... Wise men write many books, in many words too hard to understand. But this, the purpose of our lives, the end of all our struggle, is beyond all human wisdom.” (Pg. 94)
4. What kind of treatment does Absalom receive at the reformatory? Why do they release him?
5. Read the brief biography of Alan Paton. In what way do his personal experiences influence the way he writes this chapter?
6. What steps does the white warden take to help Absalom lead a decent life?
7. Briefly describe Absalom's girlfriend. Why do you think Kumalo wants to go back to see her again?

Chapter 11

1. Find an example of irony in the details surrounding Arthur Jarvis' fate.
2. The title of this novel appears more than once in the text of the novel. Paton wants the reader to "Cry for the broken tribe, for the law and the custom that is gone. Aye, and cry aloud for the man who is dead." What do you think he means when he writes, "Cry, the beloved country, these things are not yet at an end"? (Pgs. 104-105)
3. Kumalo is suffering from the loss of his son. What other, possibly more tragic loss is suggested by the following passage?
"There are times, no doubt, when God seems no more to be about the world."
(Pg. 105)

Chapter 12

Chapter 12 is the second of three chapters that do not contribute directly to the plot line. Instead it presents possible solutions to the native crime problems and also gives the reader a look at the attitudes of the white population toward the natives.

1. Why does Mr. McLaren disagree with the proposal to hire more police to protect people from native crime?
2. What is wrong with Mr. de Villers' plan to decrease crime by increasing school facilities?
3. List three other possible solutions to native crime suggested in this chapter.

4. Why are the white people afraid to implement any real reforms for the native population?
5. List the places the priests go to look for Absalom. Why do they ask “Is it bad?” (Pg. 112) and “Did it seem heavy?” (Pg. 115)

Chapter 13

1. What changes does Kumalo want to make when he returns to Ndotsheni?
2. Support or refute the following statement: The success of the blind school shows that the white people can help the native population.
3. After listening to Msimangu speak, Kumalo says, “Brother, I am recovered.” Msimangu replies, “I have tried every way to touch you, he says, but I could not come near. So give thanks and be satisfied.” (Pg. 124)

What has Kumalo recovered from, and to whom does Msimangu give credit for Kumalo's recovery?

Chapter 14

1. What can you infer about John's character by the fact that twice his brother has come to visit him and twice he has failed to recognize him?
2. Kumalo asks his son "why" numerous times. What two unsatisfactory answers does Absalom finally give his father to explain his decline into crime?
3. John Kumalo plans to hire a lawyer to defend his son by claiming there is no evidence that the boy is one of the natives who committed the murder. Stephen Kumalo wants his son to tell the truth. Who do you think is behaving in the way most fathers might react under similar circumstances? Why?
4. Find an example of sarcasm spoken by the "young white man" at the end of this chapter.
5. Why does Kumalo decide to talk to Father Vincent?

Chapter 15

1. Why does the “young white man” believe Kumalo must get a lawyer?
2. What do you think is more important to Kumalo, saving his son’s life or helping his son regain some decency in his life?
3. What moral lesson is being taught by the parable of the man lying in the grass?
4. Find the metaphor Father Vincent uses to explain why sorrow is better than fear.
5. Find an example of sarcasm in Kumalo’s conversation with Father Vincent.
6. What are the many things Father Vincent tells Kumalo to pray for?

Chapter 16

1. Why do you think Kumalo tries to hurt Absalom's girl by asking her, "Have you had a murderer before"? (Pg. 146)
2. Compare Gertrude's response with the young girl's response to Kumalo's offer to take her back home with him. Which of them do you think is the most sincere? Why?
3. One of the major themes of this story is the hope of rebuilding a new life for the black natives. What evidence is there in this chapter that Kumalo is beginning to see and believe in this hope?

Chapter 17

1. What does Mrs. Lithebe think of Gertrude? How is the young pregnant girl different from Gertrude?
2. By referring to the text, support or refute the following statement: Absalom can not truthfully say that he turns to crime because of bad companions.
3. Briefly describe Absalom's lawyer, Mr. Carmichael. When he first meets with Kumalo, what does he do that is unusual for a white man meeting a black man?
4. What does it mean to take a case *pro deo*? Why does this action make Kumalo weep?

BOOK 2

Chapter 18

1. Support or refute the following statement: Mr. Jarvis understands the problems with the native farms but does not see any easy solution.
2. Define “Afrikaner.” Briefly describe van Jaarsveld.
3. What do you think is Mr. Jarvis’ opinion of the white man’s responsibility to help the native population at this point in the story? Support your answer by citing passages from the chapter.

Chapter 19

1. Briefly identify John Harrison, Harrison, and Mary.
2. What does James Jarvis learn about his son's life from Harrison?
3. Who is James Jarvis talking about in the following passage? What is surprising about his comments? What problem does Jarvis see with the native school, a problem he has obviously ignored?

“For he has never thought much of missionaries.... There was a mission near him, at Ndotsheni. But it was a sad place as he remembered it. A dirty old wood-and-iron church, patched and forlorn, and a dirty old parson, in a barren valley where the grass hardly grew. A dirty old school where he had heard them reciting...things that could mean little to them.” (Pg. 174)
4. As James Jarvis goes to sleep, what question is weighing heavily on his mind concerning his son's death?

Chapter 20

1. Why do you think Jarvis is sorting through his son's papers and reading his manuscripts?

2. What does the partial manuscript Jarvis reads say about the following topics?

Labor –

Native Family Life –

White Wealth –

Native Education –

Segregation -

3. In the Gettysburg Address, Abraham Lincoln stated that it is important that the men who died to end slavery and bring freedom to everyone did not die in vain. Their descendents must honor their deaths by making sure The United States stays strong and free.

Knowing this, why do you think Jarvis takes the book containing the Lincoln address with him when he leaves?

Chapter 21

1. List the points Harrison is making about the following native problems—from the white perspective:

Crime –

Trade Unions –

Farmers –

2. Define Republic. Why is Harrison against a Republic for South Africa? Define Nationalism. Why is Harrison against the Nationalists?
3. List three ways the white population of South Africa goes against the teachings of Christianity to suppress the native population.
4. Many critics believe Arthur Jarvis' writings are really essays written by Paton during his life, not necessarily just for this novel. Use these writings to support the idea that Paton believes the native problems in South Africa are due to the greed of the white population.

Chapter 22

1. Support or refute the following statement: Even though the laws are made by the whites, the court system in South Africa tries to be fair to both natives and whites.
2. What part of the cross-examination goes badly for Absalom?
3. How is Absalom's behavior in the courtroom different from the behavior of the other two natives on trial?
4. What is Kumalo's reaction when he notices James Jarvis in the courtroom?

Chapter 23

1. The next section discusses the views of the black natives and the sympathetic whites toward the new-found gold. What changes in the mining system do they want to see at this new gold mine? Do you note any sarcasm in this section?
2. What evidence is there that the people campaigning for the improvements in the new mine do not have the power to make the changes actually happen?

Chapter 24

1. Why does Jarvis feel angry when he reads his son's manuscript "Private Essay on the Evolution of a South African"?
2. What is significant about the way James Jarvis enters and exits his son's house? Why does he leave through the front door after reading his son's "Private Essay"?

Chapter 25

1. Support the following statement: Jarvis is sensitive to Kumalo's feelings even before he knows Kumalo's son murdered Arthur.
2. Many critics believe the lives of the two fathers parallel each other—Jarvis in the white world of Ndotsheni and Kumalo in the native world. Describe the similarities in their lives in the following areas:

Relationship with their sons –

Understanding of the native problems in South Africa –

3. Why does Jarvis not translate all the comments made by the white woman about Sibeko's daughter?
4. How does Kumalo show his respect for Jarvis when he thanks him for the information about Sibeko's daughter?
5. How does Kumalo describe Arthur Jarvis as a small boy?

Chapter 26

1. Why do Dubula and Tomlinson listen to John Kumalo speak with “contempt, and with envy”? (Pg. 215)
2. Why does Msimangu thank God that John Kumalo is corrupt?
3. What does the white population of South Africa learn, just from the threat of a strike?
4. The last two paragraphs in this chapter are about quiet. The first is the quiet in the mines after the strike is over, and the second is about the quiet in the forest. It is not a coincidence that these paragraphs are presented side by side. What do you think Paton is saying when he concludes, “Nothing is ever quiet, except for fools”? (Pg. 224)

Chapter 27

1. Why does Mrs. Lithebe hide the newspaper from Kumalo?
2. What do you think about Gertrude’s longing to become a nun? Do you think she is really happy to be leaving Johannesburg?
3. What promises does Absalom’s girlfriend make to Gertrude?

Chapter 28

1. Define “assessors.”
2. Why does the judge decide to discharge Absalom’s two accomplices, even after he testifies they are present during the murder? What happens to Absalom’s friends?
3. Support the following statement: Even though Absalom has confessed to the murder, the judge looks for any opportunity he has to find the young man innocent of the crime.
4. What custom does the young white man break after hearing Absalom sentenced to death?
5. The name Absalom is an allusion to the Bible. In the Bible, King David’s son Absalom is a handsome, restless man with long hair. He insults his father and joins with his enemies. When he catches his long hair on the branch of a tree, Absalom is killed by King David’s men. King David mourns for the loss of his son, despite his son’s crimes against his father.

Why do you think Absalom is an appropriate name for Kumalo’s son?

Chapter 29

1. This chapter has one of the most powerful scenes in the book. Absalom clings to his father's knees, begging him not to leave him. What do you think about Kumalo's leaving his son to face his hanging alone?
2. What is Stephen Kumalo trying to tell his brother John when he lies to him about the "friend" sent to his shop to spy on John's activities?
3. What generalizations about life may be drawn from the following passage?
"He had come to tell his brother that power corrupts, that a man who fights for justice must himself be cleansed and purified, that love is greater than force."
(Pg. 246)
4. Why does Jarvis give John Harrison a check for one thousand pounds?
5. What do you think about Msimangu's decision to join a "community and would forswear the world and all possession"? (Pg. 248)
6. What does the fact that Gertrude leaves her new clothes behind tell the reader about where she has gone?
7. List all the characters, besides Reverend Kumalo, who appear in the first two books. What character type may each of these people represent?

BOOK 3

Chapter 30

1. How does Kumalo know immediately that he has been missed in the valley?
2. In what way does Kumalo immediately acknowledge the shameful conduct of his family? How do his parishioners react to his family problems?
3. What generalizations about life may be drawn from the following passage?
“Pain and suffering, they are a secret. Kindness and love, they are a secret. But I have learned that kindness and love can pay for pain and suffering.... For our Lord Suffered. And I come to believe that he suffered, not to save us for suffering, but to teach us how to bear suffering. For he knew that there is no life without suffering.” (Pg. 261)
4. Many critics believe the overall theme of Book 3 is rebuilding and hope. What does Msimangu do to help Kumalo rebuild his life? What other evidence of rebuilding and hope are presented in this chapter?

Chapter 31

1. What does the following metaphor tell the reader about the government's efforts to help the chiefs make better lives for their people?
"But they were feeding an old man with milk, and pretending that he would one day grow into a boy." (Pg. 264)
2. Why does Kumalo go to see the chief?
3. When the schoolmaster does not have any ideas on how to keep the young people in the valley, who does Kumalo ask for help?
4. Who is the small boy on the red horse? How does he make Kumalo laugh?
5. How does the small white boy learn about the sick Kuluse child?

Chapter 32

1. What did you feel when you read the story about the chief and his pitiful attempts to be helpful to the magistrate and the men who are placing the sticks in the ground?
2. Support the following statement: Jarvis is sympathetic to Kumalo's feelings when he learns there will be no mercy for Absalom.
3. Why does Kumalo not ask about the mysterious sticks or help Jarvis carry his saddle?

Chapter 33

1. Why does Napoleon Letsitsi come to Ndotsheni?
2. List the ways Letsitsi plans to help the people in the valley.
3. Support or refute the following statement: Kumalo believes the changes proposed for the valley are God's work.

Chapter 34

1. Who is the inkosikazi?
2. Why does Kumalo not visit the Jarvis house to offer his sympathies in person? What does he do instead?
3. Support or refute the following statement: The death of Mrs. Jarvis will not alter John Jarvis' plans for the valley.
4. Why does the Bishop want to transfer Kumalo to another parish? Do you think he is punishing him for his sinful family?
5. What two things does John Jarvis say in his reply to Kumalo's letter that help the Bishop decide to let Kumalo remain with his parish?
6. Who goes to get the flowers for Mrs. Jarvis' wreath? Why does he not have a name?

Chapter 35

1. What new idea is Letsitsi presenting to Kumalo in the following passage?
“We do not work for men...we work for the land and the people.... We work for Africa... Not for a white man or a black man, but for Africa.” (Pg. 303)
2. What advice does Kumalo give Letsitsi?

Chapter 36

1. Why does Kumalo go up into the mountain?
2. What is Jarvis telling Kumalo in the following passage?
“. . .he stretched his hand over the darkening valley, and he said, One thing is about to be finished, but here is something that is only begun. And while I live it will continue. Umfundisi, go well.” (Pg. 307)
3. Support or refute the following statement: The last line in the book is intended to be hopeful and optimistic about the future of Africa.
“But when that dawn will come, of our emancipation, from the fear of bondage and the bondage of fear, why, that is a secret.” (Pg. 312)
4. What is your opinion of Reverend Kumalo? In your opinion, does he achieve heroic stature?

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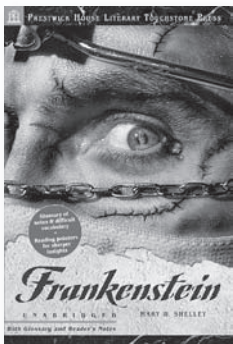
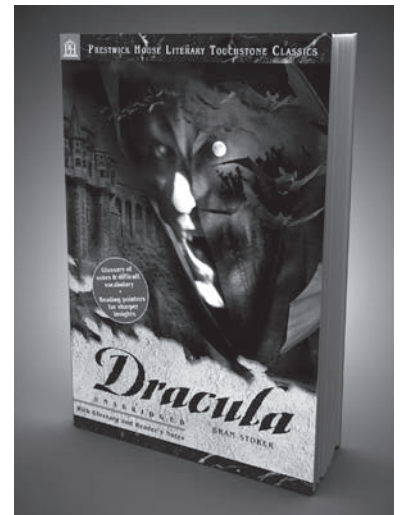
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