

Advanced Placement in
English Literature and Composition

Individual Learning Packet

Teaching Unit

I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings

by Maya Angelou

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I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings

Objectives

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

1. distinguish between an autobiography and an autobiographical novel
2. trace the motifs of:
 - ignorance
 - self-esteem
 - racism
 - displacement
 - defiance against racism
3. analyze the novel's title in relation to the themes expressed
4. analyze the impact of literary conflict on the development of characters
5. analyze narrative voice as used throughout the text
6. respond to multiple-choice questions similar to those that will appear on the Advanced Placement in English Literature and Composition Exam
7. respond to free response items similar to those that will appear on the Advanced Placement in English Literature and Composition Exam
8. offer a close reading of *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* and support all assertions and interpretations with direct evidence from the text, from authoritative critical knowledge of the genre, or from authoritative criticism of the novel.

I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings

Introductory Lecture

Background Information

In an interview with the *New York Times* in January, 1993, Maya Angelou stated, “In all my work, what I try to say is that as human beings we are more alike than we are unlike.” This statement characterizes Angelou’s life as well as her writing. Her work has been compared to that of the freed slave, Frederick Douglass. Both have been called “articulators of a collective heritage” and are said to have been charged with the task of interpreting a collective culture for all races.

Angelou often describes her time in Stamps as the time she learned what it was like to be a black girl with boundaries that were set by whites. Her first experiences with racism were in Stamps, working in the family store. During the “Jim Crow era,” from 1876 to the mid 1960s, one law governed southern whites while a very different law governed southern blacks: black people were to show deference to whites through their actions, words, and manners. Black women were called “Auntie” or “girl” and were never addressed as “Miss” or “Mrs.” In polite society, men were referred to as “niggra.” Black people had separate seating areas for public performances and could not sit with whites in restaurants. There were signs for “Coloreds” and “Whites” posted on drinking fountains and bathrooms. There were also signs that equated Negroes to animals, denying rights to Negroes and dogs on the same sign. Although the Jim Crow laws dominated the southern way of life, racist attitudes were widespread throughout the country. Those were the times that shaped the poet and philosopher Maya Angelou.

It was not until the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 that legalized segregation was ended for African-Americans.

In the 1950s, Angelou worked as a dancer and singer. This is when she eventually adopted the stage name “Maya Angelou.” She traveled extensively with a troupe in Europe, but eventually returned to New York City where she was involved in many artistic endeavors. In the 1960s, she became more involved in political activities, at one time working with activists Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, Jr.

Throughout her life, Maya Angelou has faced displacement, racism, segregation, ignorance, drug addiction, and betrayal. Despite all of this, she has risen above her troubles to become a champion of civil rights, as well as a notable American poet and writer. In 1993, she was asked to read her poem, “On the Pulse of Morning,” at President Bill Clinton’s inauguration. Although she has received several honorary doctorates, and has taught on the faculties of several colleges and universities, Angelou has never received a formal college education.

Angelou remains a private person despite the six volumes of her autobiography begun with *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*. She stated, “I have nothing to rest upon. Every time I write I

still have to face an empty page,” writing is still a process of “dragging my pencil across old scars to sharpen it.” Yet Maya Angelou has stated, “I will go anywhere at any time. No one frightens me.”

In an interview with *USA Today* in 1985, Angelou stated, “What I would like said about me is I dared to love. By love I mean that condition in the human spirit so profound it encourages us to develop courage and build bridges in attempts to reach other human beings.”

Genre: Autobiographical Novel

An autobiography is a literary work about a person’s life that is written by that person. It may be solely based on the writer’s memory. This genre differs from a memoir in that a memoir is typically more intimate and provides more focus on the emotions and feelings of the subject.

Angelou’s work falls into a relatively new and unexplored genre, the “autobiographical novel.” The autobiographical novel is distinguished from autobiography by the fact that it is, at least in part, fiction. Autobiographical novels can be loosely based on the author’s life and times; however, names and locations may be changed and events may be altered, condensed, or created to seem more dramatic. One such example is the incident with Dentist Lincoln. Although the incident did occur, the name of the dentist was changed and is a symbolic expression of the mockery made of President Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation by the whites who practiced discrimination. In Angelou’s novel, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, critics have stated that her work has strong similarities to fiction including development of characters, establishment of setting and plot, and use of dialogue. Critics also point out that Angelou’s descriptions of her childhood are particularly vivid in detail, given her age at the time of writing.

I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings

Practice Free Response Questions

Practice Free Response Question #1

Literary conflicts serve to motivate the characters of novels and shape their developmental arcs. In the novel, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, Maya is faced with many conflicts—both internal and external. In a well-organized essay, examine the main character’s internal conflict and analyze how it serves as the motivation for her growth in the novel.

Avoid plot summary.

Practice Free Response Question #2

Character relationships serve to develop and shape characters in literature. In the novel, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, young Maya is influenced by several strong characters. In a well-organized essay, compare and contrast the relationships Maya has with other characters and analyze the impact they have on her growth as a character.

Do not merely summarize the plot.

Practice Free Response Question #3

Read the passage from Chapter 16 that begins, “The very next day, she called me by the wrong name,” and ends, “Mrs. Cullinan was right about one thing. My name wasn’t Mary.” Then, write a well-organized essay in which you analyze how the language of the passage characterizes the character and the society in which she lives.

Practice Free Response Question #4

Read the passage from Chapter 19 that begins, “The last inch of space was filled, yet people continued to wedge themselves along the walls of the Store,” and ends, “It wouldn’t do for a Black man and his family to be caught on a lonely country road on a night when Joe Louis had proved that we were the strongest people in the world.” Then, in a well-organized essay, evaluate the author’s attitude towards the event described in the passage and its significance to the time period of history in which the event occurred.

Practice Free Response Question #5

I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings is an autobiographical novel although it has characteristics not present in a typical autobiography. In a well-organized essay, explain how Angelou's choice of genre is an effective way to convey the main themes of the novel.

Practice Free Response Question #6

A novel's title helps convey a message or helps the reader gain a better understanding of the work as a whole. Using the novel *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, analyze Angelou's title in relation to the ideas expressed in the novel.

I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings

Practice Multiple-Choice Questions

Practice Multiple-Choice Questions 1-5

Carefully read the passage from the preface of Maya Angelou's, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* beginning with, "Just thinking about it made me go around with angel's dust sprinkled over my face for days," and ends, "If growing up is painful for the Southern Black girl, being aware of her displacement is the rust on the razor that threatens the throat. It is an unnecessary insult." Then, select the best answer to the questions below.

1. The choice of words, "plain ugly cut-down from a white woman's once-was-purple throwaway" and "old-lady-long" indicate that the narrator is
 - A. disenchanted.
 - B. satisfied.
 - C. ambivalent.
 - D. ashamed.
 - E. contented.

2. The lines of the passage beginning, "Wouldn't they be surprised when one day I woke out of my black ugly dream, and my real hair, which was long and blond, would take the place of the kinky mass that Momma wouldn't let me straighten," and ends, "Because I was really white and because a cruel fairy stepmother, who was understandably jealous of my beauty, had turned me into a too-big Negro girl, with nappy black hair, broad feet and a space between her teeth that would hold a number-two pencil," introduces the reader to which motif concerning the narrator?
 - A. ignorance
 - B. strong black women
 - C. racism
 - D. displacement
 - E. defiance against racism

3. One can discern from the tone of the passage that the narrator's attitude toward others' expectations of her is primarily
 - A. indifferent.
 - B. content.
 - C. defiant.
 - D. angry.
 - E. fearful.

4. In the metaphor “[the] rust on the razor that threatens the throat,” the throat is
 - A. the oppressing white society.
 - B. the collective experience of Black Society.
 - C. pre Civil-Rights southern society.
 - D. Maya’s feelings of displacement.
 - E. the vulnerability of an unjust system.

5. Which sentence best demonstrates the narrator’s self-image?
 - A. “Just thinking about it made me go around with angel’s dust sprinkled over my face for days.”
 - B. “My head was up and my eyes were open, but I didn’t see anything.”
 - C. “Because I was really white...”
 - D. “It was old-lady-long too, but it didn’t hide my skinny legs, which had been greased with Blue Seal Vaseline and powdered with the Arkansas red clay.”
 - E. “As I’d watched Momma put ruffles on the hem and cute little tucks around the waist, I knew that once I put it on I’d look like a movie star.

Practice Multiple-Choice Questions 6-11

Carefully read the passage from Chapter 15 of Maya Angelou's, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, beginning with, "She said without turning her head, to me, 'I hear you're doing very good school work, Marguerite,'" and ending, "Momma reminded us that 'white folks' mouths were most in general loose and their words were an abomination before Christ.'" Then, choose the best answer to the multiple-choice questions below.

6. Mrs. Flowers refers to Maya as "Marguerite" throughout the passage to indicate
 - A. she does not know Maya well enough to use her nickname.
 - B. her belief that Maya is a valuable human being.
 - C. her disapproval of Maya's unsophisticated manners.
 - D. her belief that it was not proper to call someone by a nickname.
 - E. she refuses to use a name that Maya has embraced.
7. What purpose does literature have in Maya's life?
 - A. Literature is just words written on pages, and it has no purpose.
 - B. Literature reminds Maya of her mother.
 - C. Literature allows Maya escape from her feelings of displacement.
 - D. Literature helps Maya identify the source of her oppression.
 - E. Literature distracts Maya from the trauma of rape.
8. Mrs. Flowers tells Maya to be "intolerant of ignorance but understanding of illiteracy." Why is illiteracy excusable, but ignorance not?
 - A. The ignorance of white society leads to the illiteracy of Black Society.
 - B. People are willfully ignorant, but illiteracy is something that some cannot avoid.
 - C. It is worse to be ignorant than to be illiterate.
 - D. Black people living in the South weren't given the opportunity to learn to read.
 - E. Ignorance is the result of oppression and racism.
9. Which term best describes Maya's feeling about Mrs. Flowers's reading when she states, "Her voice slid in and curved down through and over the words"?
 - A. lyrical
 - B. ambiguous
 - C. haughty
 - D. mystifying
 - E. joyous
10. Maya sees Mrs. Flowers as separate from "common" people and activities because Mrs. Flowers
 - A. has dignity, grace, sophistication, and education.
 - B. is wealthier than the others in the community.
 - C. is an influential person in the community.
 - D. is pretentious towards everyone but Maya and Momma.
 - E. does not frequent the Store like other members of the community.

11. Maya's punishment for using the words, "By the way," indicates which motif?
- A. self-esteem
 - B. ignorance
 - C. defiance of racism
 - D. racism
 - E. displacement

Practice Multiple-Choice Questions 12-17

Carefully read the passage from Maya Angelou's, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, Chapter 24, which begins, "Momma knocked on the back door and a young white girl opened it to show surprise at seeing us there. Momma said she," and ends, "I turned as the door slammed, and she was gone," then answer the questions.

12. The discrepancy between how Momma addresses the dentist and he addresses her illustrates
 - A. the racism that typifies this period in history.
 - B. the alienation felt by Momma.
 - C. Momma's lack of self-esteem.
 - D. ignorance on the part of Dentist Lincoln.
 - E. defiance of racism.
13. By choosing to describe her feelings as the "burden of Blackness," Maya is expressing
 - A. anger at race.
 - B. frustration for the situation.
 - C. oppressive attitudes caused by race.
 - D. animosity at the situation.
 - E. grief over past wrongs to race.
14. By saying "He didn't see the towel around my jaw or notice my swollen face," Maya is using
 - A. verbal irony.
 - B. dramatic irony.
 - C. situational irony.
 - D. presumption.
 - E. rhetoric.
15. Which statement best expresses the dentist's initial feelings about the situation?
 - A. "He made no comment, orally or facially."
 - B. "He didn't see the towel around my jaw or notice my swollen face."
 - C. "He was choosing words the way people hunt for shells."
 - D. "He reddened slightly."
 - E. "He had never once looked at me."
16. This passage, as a whole, best illustrates the development of which motif?
 - A. self-esteem
 - B. racism
 - C. displacement
 - D. ignorance
 - E. defiance of racism

17. At the ending of the selected passage, Momma behaves in a way that is most uncharacteristic of her. The description of her actions illustrates which motif?
- A. self-esteem
 - B. displacement
 - C. ignorance
 - D. defiance of racism
 - E. racism

Practice Multiple-Choice Questions 18-23

Carefully read the following passage from Maya Angelou's, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, Chapter 25, which begins, "Bailey said he saw a man, a colored man, whom nobody had delivered. He was dead," and ends, "I'm sure she began piecing together the details of our California trip that night," then answer the questions.

18. The overall tone of the passage can be expressed as
 - A. uplifting.
 - B. informative.
 - C. reassuring.
 - D. ominous.
 - E. abhorrent.
19. Bailey relates that, "The colored men backed off and I did too, but the white man stood there, looking down, and grinned," indicating to the reader that the white man was
 - A. enjoying the scene.
 - B. trying to lighten the mood.
 - C. the cause of the man's death.
 - D. braver than the colored men.
 - E. mentally handicapped.
20. The word "they" in the fifth and sixth paragraphs refers to
 - A. white people.
 - B. colored people.
 - C. the prisoners in the calaboose.
 - D. law enforcement officers.
 - E. women.
21. Uncle Willie's attitude towards "they" is best described as
 - A. fearful.
 - B. angry.
 - C. resigned.
 - D. ignorant.
 - E. envious.
22. Which of the following statements LEAST portrays Bailey's overall feelings toward the incident?
 - A. "Momma asked if Bailey had recognized the man, but he was caught in the happening and the event."
 - B. "Bailey couldn't let go of the horror."
 - C. "His voice was ancient with shock."
 - D. "Bailey was talking so fast he forgot to stutter, he forgot to scratch his head and clean his fingernails with his teeth."
 - E. "Whew, I was glad to get out of there."

23. The passage as a whole best illustrates the motif of
- A. ignorance.
 - B. racism.
 - C. displacement.
 - D. self-esteem.
 - E. defiance of racism.

Practice Multiple-Choice Questions 24-30

Carefully read the passage from Chapter 29 of Maya Angelou's, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, which begins, "I remember Mr. Red Leg's story like a favorite melody," and ends, "But in the street, meeting the same situation, we easily said, 'It be's like that sometimes,'" then answer the following questions.

24. The author's overall attitude toward Mr. Red Leg's scam on the white man can be best described as
- A. disgusted.
 - B. frightened.
 - C. satisfied.
 - D. indifferent.
 - E. worried.
25. What are Mr. Red Leg's feelings toward the white man who was his mark?
- A. The man was a fool, and he deserved to be deceived.
 - B. The man conned several black men, and Red Leg feels justified stealing from him to avenge them.
 - C. The man didn't appreciate what he had, so Red Leg took away his wealth to teach him a lesson.
 - D. The man was a racist, and he had to be punished.
 - E. The man insulted Mr. Red Leg, and Mr. Red Leg wanted revenge.
26. The choice of words, "I played scary at first" in the ninth paragraph most likely means that Red Leg
- A. acted afraid of the white man.
 - B. began the interaction with a feeling of distrust of the white man.
 - C. threatened the white man with bodily harm upon meeting him.
 - D. displayed bravado and acted the "tough guy."
 - E. refused to speak with the man.
27. All of the following can be inferred from the paragraph that begins, "When he finished, more triumphant stories rainbowed around the room," and ends, "but got some revenge in the bargain," EXCEPT that she is
- A. aware of the social inequity and injustice faced by her race.
 - B. proud of the men's actions, despite their illegality.
 - C. ashamed of the men for flagrantly disregarding the law and rights of others.
 - D. delighted by the stories that Red Leg tells.
 - E. impressed by the intelligence and ingenuity of the men's plan.

28. The statement “offered only the crumbs from his country’s table” refers to
- A. ignorance to the plight of the Black Race.
 - B. society’s support of racism and segregation.
 - C. displacement felt by the Black Race not knowing where their true country was.
 - D. the second-class citizenship of the Black Race.
 - E. the racial tensions aggravated by the whites in a community.
29. The assertion, “Each single gain feeds into the gains of the body collective,” suggests that Black society is
- A. caste-like in its make-up.
 - B. about the individual more than the whole.
 - C. more concerned with helping mankind.
 - D. more about the whole than the parts.
 - E. driven to empower everyone.
30. This passage as a whole best illustrates the motif of
- A. self-esteem.
 - B. ignorance.
 - C. defiance against racism.
 - D. racism/segregation.
 - E. displacement.

I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings

Multiple-Choice Answers with Explanations

1. The passage begins with Maya's comparing herself to having "angel dust spread over her face." Her description of the dress as "plain ugly cut-down" and "old-lady-long" indicates that she no longer feels this way. Thus, she was not satisfied (B), contented (E), or ambivalent (C) because she had obvious feelings on the subject. Although Maya may have felt ashamed (D), her descriptions were very insulting to the dress, expressing strong feelings opposite to what she felt at first. Therefore, **disenchanted (A)** is the best choice.
2. Maya begins this passage saying she would wake from her "black ugly dream," and she continues to give reasons for her manner of talking and dislike of Southern food. These are all clues that suggest that Maya feels as if she does not belong, indicating her strong feelings of **displacement (D)**.
3. Maya uses words like "silly," "nasty," and "ugly" to describe the dress, the children, and the church. These words, and others in the description, indicate that Maya is not indifferent (A) to her situation, nor is she content (B). Maya is not fearful (E) because she knows she will get a whipping, but runs home anyway. Although Maya is not happy with her dress or the situation, she still wears it and tries to follow the rules; therefore she is not defiant (C). However, based on the whole passage and the ending line, "It is an unnecessary insult," one can surmise that she is **angry (D)**.
4. The rust on the razor is representative of displacement (D). It is an unnecessary, added threat to the sharpness of a razor, which represents the harm inflicted on African-Americans by racist, oppressing White society (A). The throat symbolizes both Maya's experience of racism and displacement, as well as the **collective experience shared by all members of Black society (B)**. Pre-Civil-Rights southern society (C) is incorrect because this answer makes a general statement that encompasses both white and black people. (E) is entirely incorrect because the unjust system of racism and oppression is thriving and well.
5. Throughout the passage, Maya indicates that she feels she does not belong. The other children make fun of her, and she believes that she is ugly. Choice (A) indicates a positive feeling, comparing her feelings to having angel dust over her face, as does (E), when Maya indicates she will feel like a "movie star" in her dress. (B) is only a description of her behavior and it does not reveal her feelings on this issue. Although (D) gives some indication about her appearance with her "skinny legs," only **"Because I was really white..." (C)** captures her feeling that she does not feel a part of the Black Community.
6. Mrs. Flowers is acquainted with Momma and Maya's schoolteachers, and from them, she learns of Maya's character and potential. In addition, while Maya has rarely, perhaps never, had a personal conversation with Mrs. Flowers, Maya is frequently present when Mrs. Flowers talks to Momma. Because of this, (A) can be eliminated because Mrs. Flowers

knows Maya well enough to use her nickname. (C) is incorrect because, despite Mrs. Flower's education and refinement, she doesn't look down on the lack of sophistication in others, and this is apparent by her interaction with Momma. (D), while it may be true, is never suggested in the text, and (E) is completely incorrect because Mrs. Flowers respects Maya and would never do anything to damage her self-image. (B) is correct because Mrs. Flower respects and admires Maya, and she shows her respect by addressing Maya by her real name.

7. (A) is obviously false because literature does have a purpose in Maya's life. If it did not, she would not read books, nor would she have been entranced when Mrs. Flowers read *A Tale of Two Cities*. While reading helps Maya **escape from her feelings of displacement** (C), it does so by allowing her to connect with fictional characters and not by invoking memories of her mother (B). Literature does not help Maya identify the source of her oppression (D), and even though (E) may appear to be true, it is too specific. Maya is using literature to distract her from more than just the trauma of her rape.
8. (A) may be true, but it has no bearing on the question. (C) and (E) are true statements, but they do not explain why illiteracy is excusable and ignorance is not. (D) only says why some black people are illiterate, but **(B) explains why Maya should hold people accountable for their ignorance but not for their illiteracy**. As Mrs. Flowers says, "some people, unable to go to school [are] more educated than college professors." Black people in the South were denied education, and as a result, they did not learn to read. Illiteracy is caused by racism and oppression, but ignorance is something that is in everyone's power to avoid, and when individuals are ignorant, they are so with their own consent.
9. When Mrs. Flowers read, Maya was not certain they were the words she knew, sure that Mrs. Flowers was actually singing and that there were notes on the page. This would make the best descriptor **lyrical** (A).
10. From the beginning of the passage, Maya feels that Mrs. Flowers speaks with "clarity" such that even those who did not understand English would be able to understand her. **Her knowledge of poetry and literature, her manner of speaking, and her manners all indicate that she has dignity, grace, sophistication, and education that most people in the community do not have** (A). There is no indication that she is wealthier (B), influential (C), or influential to anyone other than Maya (D). Also, she obviously frequents the Store because it was there that she asked for Maya to come with her, thus eliminating (E).
11. At the end of the selected passage, Momma punishes Maya when she says, "By the way, Bailey." Bailey attempts to tell Momma what "by the way" means when used in speech by whites, but Momma only knows one meaning, that of the way of Christ. This is a clear example of her **ignorance** (B) as Momma does not know and does not understand common expressions used by others.
12. During the time period, black women were not referred to as "Mrs." in white society. Dentist Lincoln would never give Annie this respect in public. Using her first name,

- “Annie” is typical for the racist practices of the time period (A).
13. Maya is responding to Momma’s telling the nurse to say that “Annie” was there. This use of her first name does not make Maya angry (A) or frustrated (B), because, thus far, nothing has happened beyond the pain of her toothache and entering the white section of town. This also eliminates (D), which also concerns the situation that has not occurred yet. Although the “burden of Blackness” has something to do with her race, **Maya’s words indicate oppressive feelings (C)** rather than grief over past wrongs (E).
 14. The dentist asks why Momma is there, and he does not show any indication of having seen Maya with her head wrapped in a towel, even though she is standing right beside Momma. There is no way that he could not have known their reason for being there. Thus, Maya is using **verbal irony (A)** when she states, “He didn’t see the towel around my jaw or notice my swollen face.”
 15. At first, it seems that the dentist is attempting to be as polite as possible in dealing with the situation. He uses terms such as “nigra” and “colored people,” considered to be polite in public, before resorting to using the term “nigger” towards the end of the passage. He also is trying to give a reason rather than get angry and return to his office. Although “He reddened slightly,” (D) indicates an emotional reaction, **“He was choosing words the way people hunt for shells” (C)** implies that he is trying to be careful and delicate with the participants and not hurt their feelings.
 16. The dentist refuses to see Maya on the basis of her color. Although he does try to be polite at first, he still uses racist words and attitudes to deny Maya the care she obviously needs. This is an excellent example of the **racism (B)** that is so apparent in the South for the time period.
 17. Momma tries hard to not interact with whites or do anything that would cause them to retaliate against her or her family. She continues to pressure Dentist Lincoln and eventually follows him into his office to confront him. Her behavior is an example of the motif **defiance of racism (D)** that is made apparent by her confronting the racist beliefs of Dentist Lincoln.
 18. When Bailey begins by stating that he saw a colored man “dead and rotten,” this sets the tone for the whole scene. The subject is not uplifting (A), and it certainly isn’t reassuring (C). Although Bailey continues to describe the situation, he tells the story emotionally and not in a matter-of-fact, informative (B) manner. Abhorrent (E) does describe Bailey’s tone when talking about the actions of the white man and what happened, but the term **ominous (D)** is a better descriptor for the tone, since Momma makes the decision to send the children away after hearing Bailey’s tale. She is scared for her grandchildren and is attempting to protect them because if they stay, they could be in danger.
 19. The white man grinned and later stated that the man was “one nigger nobody got to worry about no more.” It is apparent that he has no sympathy for the dead man or the Black

- race. The smile on his face indicates that he is **enjoying the whole gruesome scene** (A) and is not disgusted or upset enough to back away. He is not trying to lighten the mood (B), especially since he tries to make the mood worse by pretending to lock the black men in the calaboose with the body. The white man may have been braver (D) than the others, but this answer does not touch on his dislike of black people. Finally, since his behavior is quite typical of racist white men in that time and he seems fully aware of what is happening, his actions do not indicate a mental deficiency (E). Although he could have been the cause of the death (C), there is nothing in the passage that suggests this. The only thing that is revealed about the white man is his racism.
20. “They” is referring to **white people** (A). Bailey uses the term after he describes the white man grinning over the dead body, and the man’s actions lead Bailey to wonder why “they” hate black people so much. Also, the term “they” appears to refer to a collective group of people who dislike black people, and since this book is about racism and hatred toward black Americans by whites, the reader should discern that “they” refers to white people.
21. Uncle Willie mutters that “They don’t really hate us. They don’t know us. How can they hate us?” to answer Bailey’s question. He is offering the only excuse he can fathom, and it is not fearful (A), angry (B), or envious (E). Although his opinion may be considered ignorant (D) of the truth, because he mutters the answer, it seems that he is attempting to make himself believe this statement so he can live his life the way he always has. Uncle Willie’s attitude is most likely **resigned** (C) because, even though he suspects some white people really do hate black people, he is not certain this statement is true. However, he tries to rationalize their hatred anyway in order to comfort Bailey.
22. Bailey is obviously horrified by what has taken place, and this is indicated by (B) and (C). Bailey normally scratches his head and cleans his fingernails (D), but he forgets to do those things, indicating that he is upset. Bailey states he was glad to get out of there (E), and this suggests that the situation was very disturbing for him. The statement that portrays Bailey’s feelings the least is (A), which only indicates that he was so involved in telling the story that he didn’t hear Momma’s question.
23. The white man grins when he beholds the dead black man, says that no one would miss him, and threatens to lock up all of the black men with the prisoners and the dead body. All of these actions of the white man illustrate the motif of **racism** (B).
24. After hearing Mr. Red Leg’s story, Maya says, “It wasn’t possible for me to regard them as criminals or be anything but proud of their achievements.” The correct answer is (C) **satisfied** because, while she knows what Mr. Red Leg and Just Black did was a crime, she feels the white man deserved it. She approves of what Red Leg and Just Black did, so she is not (A) disgusted. Maya is not (B) frightened by the story, and she is not (E) worried that a trick will be played on her or that the mark will get revenge. Maya does take interest in the story; therefore, she is not (D) indifferent.
25. Mr. Red Leg heard stories of how the man conned several black people out of their money,

but Mr. Red Leg never met him before the plan of deception was set into motion. Therefore, (E) is incorrect. Mr. Red Leg did not want to teach the man a lesson about valuing wealth (C), and even though the man was foolish (A) and racist (D), Mr. Red Leg's reason for deceiving the man was more specific. This man was targeted because (B) **he conned several black men, and Red Leg wants to avenge them.**

26. When Mr. Red Leg says "I played scary at first," he means that he needed to pretend to be **distrustful of the white man (B)** in order to get him to go along with the con. Just Black was trying to gain the white man's trust by convincing Red Leg that he was one of the few white men who could help them. Acting afraid (A) would not have gotten the white man to believe him, and acting like a tough guy (D) or threatening the white man (C) would have resulted in the white man leaving or calling the police. Refusing to speak to the man (E) would not help move matters further along.
27. Maya states that she could not regard the men as criminals and only sees them as getting revenge. She feels that a black man is "offered only the crumbs from his country's table but by ingenuity and courage is able to take for himself a Lucullan feast." She is describing her appreciation for their actions. She notices the social inequity (A), is proud of the men (B) and is delighted by their stories (D). She comments on their ingenuity and courage (E) so the obvious feeling that cannot be inferred from the passage is that **she is ashamed of the men for disregarding the law and rights of others (C).**
28. "Offered only the crumbs from his county's table" indicates that the country was giving something to black men, but it was only a fraction of what the country was giving to white men. Therefore, the **second-class citizenship of the Black Race (D)** is true. (A) is false because the reader, Maya, and Black society and White society are aware of the Black Race's plight, but White society does not care. Society's support of racism and segregation (B) is true, but the statement is too general, and the displacement felt by black people (C) and the racial tensions aggravated by whites in the community (E), while also true, aren't alluded to in this statement.
29. "Body collective" fed by "every single gain" indicates that black people believe their experiences affect everyone in their race. This eliminates (B) which deals with the individual and breaking society into pieces. This passage does not indicate that black people are interested in helping all of humanity, especially their white oppressors, and this eliminates (E) and (C), but nothing suggests that racial oppression creates an actual caste system (A). Thus, **(D) is the best answer. Black society sees itself as a whole rather than parts.**
30. Red Leg's whole story goes against the norms of society. He hears that a white man has taken advantage of many black men, and he decides to get revenge by conning him. Even though Red Leg and Just Black are attacking this man in particular, his crimes and misdeeds are done by many white men, and attacking him is an act of **defiance against racism (C).**

I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings

Preface

1. What motifs are introduced in the opening of the novel?

Maya introduces the motifs of self-esteem and displacement through her story at church. Maya views herself negatively. She sees herself as ugly and skinny, with feet too big, the wrong hair, and a gap between her front teeth that could hold a pencil. Maya's self-esteem is something that builds through the course of the novel, but it begins in a negative way. Her feelings of displacement are best illustrated by her story of being stolen by a jealous fairy. She feels that she is really a white girl who has been transformed, and this indicates her feelings of alienation from the Black community.

2. Maya feels that she is truly a beautiful white girl who has been transformed into an ugly black girl by a jealous fairy. What does this indicate about Maya?

Maya has strong feelings of not belonging in her community. She makes up tales about how the community will accept her if her clothes are nice or if they think her father was someone other than her real father.

Racism in the American South has brainwashed Maya into thinking that white girls are prettier and more important than black girls, and she feels as though she would have more value if she were white. Not only does Maya feel alienated from the Black community, but she also feels alienated from the American community because, as a black person, she is made to feel that she is a second-class citizen.

Chapter 1

1. What mood is established by the first two paragraphs of the chapter?

The mood set by the first two paragraphs of the chapter is one of hopelessness, displacement, and abandonment.

2. Does the Black Community aggravate the feelings of displacement felt by the siblings? Why?

The Black Community does accept Maya and Bailey, but it uses caution at first. The members are curious about everyone who comes from the outside, and nervous about trusting and accepting new people. Eventually, when community members know that the children will stay, they include and care for the children, making Maya and Bailey feel less lonely and unwanted.

3. Why is the Store written with a capital “S”?

The Store has great importance in Maya’s life. It represents a safe place, home, and a great achievement in the African-American community. It was unusual for a black woman to own a business, and by capitalizing the “S” in Store, Maya shows her and the community’s respect for Momma’s endeavor.

4. What is learned about Momma, and why was she an anomaly in the community?

Momma is a deeply religious woman, and she lets her beliefs guide her way of life. She is an important part of the community because she provides it with a place to get the goods and services they need without the complications of town and “white folks.” She is different from most African-Americans because she owns the Store and some of the surrounding land that houses the “powhitetrash” who continue to disrespect the family.

5. Compare the Store in the AM and the PM during picking season. What is the reason for the difference?

In the morning, the Store is a bustling place full of hope. Pickers gather to be driven to work, joke about the day ahead, and bet who will pick the most. The cash register is in constant use as the pickers buy things to take with them into the field.

In the afternoon, on the other hand, the place is no longer cheerful and lively. There is no more joking among the pickers; there is only complaining about the day spent toiling in the fields for little to no return.

In the morning, things look bright because the day holds many great possibilities. The workers hope that that particular day will be the day they get ahead and are able to pay off their debts to both Momma and the white storeowner in town. In the afternoon, however, having spent the day working harder than people are supposed to work, they are frustrated and tired. They are forced to face reality and acknowledge that they are no farther ahead than the day before, and they have to get up the next morning to do it all over again.

Chapter 2

1. How does Uncle Willie control the children despite his disability?

Uncle Willie is the disciplinarian of the household, and he controls Maya and Bailey with fear. He uses his strong arm to push them toward the stove when he needs them to do their work.

2. Explain why Momma is determined to let others know that Uncle Willie’s disability was caused by a caretaker and was not a condition incurred upon birth.

The strong, able-bodied men in the community have trouble finding work, and when they get

jobs, they are underpaid. These men are jealous of Uncle Willie because he lives a comfortable life and does not have to work. Momma wants everyone to know that the disability is not Uncle Willie's fault, nor was he born that way. She forgives the caretaker who dropped him, and she does not blame God for the accident. Momma wants the people in the community to accept and sympathize with Uncle Willie instead making jokes about him and using him as a scapegoat.

3. What is implied about Uncle Willie's self-esteem through the description of the visit from the strangers?

Uncle Willie is very self-conscious of his disability. He is embarrassed by it, and he wants the strangers to think that he is an ordinary person. As Maya says, "it was important to him that the couple (he said later that he'd never seen them before) would take a picture of a whole Mr. Johnson back to Little Rock." Uncle Willie wants to take this opportunity of interaction with newcomers, who do not know about his history or his disability, to boost his self-esteem and, for once, to feel as though he is part of the community.

Chapter 3

1. What racist belief that society holds is expressed in the description of "used-to-be-sheriff"?

Maya writes that people feel that if the "used-to-be-sheriff" could control "dumb animals," he could control "Negroes," too. This assertion equates black people with animals, and it strips them of their humanity.

2. Who are "the boys?" Why is the use of this term a misnomer?

"The boys" are members of the community who have Ku Klux Klan affiliations. The term "boys" would indicate that the members are young men, naïve to the racist attitudes held by adults, and lacking the ability to do violence against others. These particular men have every intention of harming others because of their race, and they use violence to assert superiority and control over black people. "The boys" is a deceiving name, and it hides hatred and evil behind an innocent facade.

3. What is the "used-to-be-sheriff's" warning?

The "used-to-be-sheriff" warns that "the boys" will be coming to Momma's store later that night, and he says that Uncle Willie should hide. A black man "messed with" a white woman, and, even though Uncle Willie had nothing to do with the incident, "the boys" will likely use him as a scapegoat and attack him.

4. What does Maya believe is the “used-to-be-sheriff’s” motivation for giving them the warning?

While the “used-to-be-sheriff” pretends to be kind by giving a warning of the ride, in actuality, he gives the warning to incite fear. He anticipates Uncle Willie hiding like a coward, and this action would reinforce the sheriff’s idea that the white people are superior and are in control.

5. How is Maya being sarcastic when she says, “Without waiting for Momma’s thanks, he rode out of the yard, sure that things were as they should be and that he was a gentle squire, saving those deserving serfs from the laws of the land, which he condoned.”

Maya scorns the “used-to-be-sheriff’s” deceptive attitude. Even though he pretends to be kind in giving the warning—or, in the metaphor Maya makes, pretends to be “a gentle squire, saving those deserving serfs from the laws of the land”—he is not giving the warning out of benevolence and a concern for Uncle Willie’s well-being. Furthermore, like the squire, he condones racism and “the boys” violence. Maya’s words indicate that she thinks his pompous and condescending attitude is insulting, and she also knows that his motivation for delivering the warning and others like it is not to help Uncle Willie and other black men, but to frighten them.

Chapter 4

1. What are some clues in this chapter that reveal and reinforce Maya’s poor self-esteem and displacement issues?

Maya describes herself as “big and elbowy”, she says her color is not as beautiful as Bailey’s, and she remarks that her hair is “steel wool” instead of “black curls.” Maya’s elders make similar, rude comments about her looks, and this reinforces her feelings of isolation and displacement. She describes her family as “handsome to a point of pain,” and the elders reinforce this idea by wondering where she came from and how such an ugly person came from a beautiful family.

2. In what ways does Bailey try to alleviate Maya’s feelings of displacement?

Bailey defends Maya to her elders by making disparaging remarks to them about their own families. Bailey risks getting punished so that Maya will feel that she belongs and know that he loves her. In addition, Bailey wants Maya to feel good about herself; however, she uses these incidents to increase her admiration for Bailey instead of seeing how important and special she is to make him do these things.

3. Maya turns Bailey into a hero, saying he is “such good fortune that it made me want to live a Christian life just to show God that I was grateful.” Is Bailey really a hero? Why or why not?

Bailey, like Maya, is just a child. He faces his own insecurities, doubts, and displacement/

abandonment issues. Despite this, Bailey is a hero to Maya. He is the only family she has intimately known, and he defends her even against her family's criticism, making him her savior. He also provides her with light-hearted fun in a world that is too serious.

4. What distinctions does Maya draw between “white folk” and black people?

Maya sees “white folk” as extravagant. They send their clothes out to be washed, and they pay others to do their chores. The delicacy and helplessness of the women are considered their best assets. Maya also thinks that their feet are small, their skin is see-throughly, and they “walk on their heels like horses.” She does not view them as real people.

5. Based on the details provided in this chapter, what are the effects of segregation has on children?

Stamps is so segregated that most black children never see white people. The only thing the children know about them is that they are to be despised and feared. They are a mystery to the black children, and Maya refers to whites as living an “alien unlife.” In Maya's opinion, “white folk” are not real people. This belief, created by the effects of segregation, further reinforces the belief that white and black people are so different that they can't live together peacefully.

Chapter 5

1. How does religion affect Maya's life?

Religious doctrine and aphorisms influence many of the household rules set for Maya and Bailey. For example, Maya and Bailey are expected to be clean and well-groomed because “not only is cleanliness next to Godliness, [but] dirtiness [is] the inventor of misery.” In addition, the Bible says that a naughty child can “bring destruction on its house and line” and “shame to its parents”; therefore, Maya and Bailey are warned not to be impudent. In Maya's opinion, these are “customary laws” that everyone obeys with the exception of the “powhitetrash” children.

2. According to Maya, in what ways are expectations different for white children and black children?

Black children are expected to be respectful of their elders and address them in such deferential terms as “Auntie” or “Missus.” Never is a child allowed to use an adult's first name when addressing him or her. In addition, black children do not demand to have things when they enter the Store, nor do they show a disregard for Momma's business by acting in a way that could damage her property.

White people, particularly the “powhitetrash” children that enter the Store, are not expected to show respect for older, black women. They refer to Momma as “Annie,” and they are rambunctious and wild in her store. They climb on the shelves, tamper with merchandise, and do things Maya and Bailey would never dream of doing. However, because they are white

children, Momma does not chastise or correct them like she would black children. She allows them to take liberties because she believes “the less you say to white folk... the better.”

3. What is ironic about the expectations for white children and the expectations for black children?

In the racist American South white people and their children, even the “powhitetrash,” were believed to be superior and more civilized than black people. Despite this viewpoint, their actions depict the opposite. The behavior of the children in Momma’s store shows that black children are quiet, kind, and respectful, and, therefore, civilized and superior to white children. On the other hand, white children are rude, vulgar, and barbaric, and this shows that they are more uncivilized.

4. In what ways does Momma show the “powhitetrash” children her dominance?

When Momma sees the girls approaching, she does not alter her behavior or get defensive. She stands confidently erect with her arms folded, and she keeps humming the same tune at the same pace. She shows no outward signs of disgust, and she ignores the girls’ bad behavior. When the incident is over, she says goodbye to them in a friendly manner. By pretending that the girls’ actions do not affect her, Momma shows them that, even though they are white, they are too insignificant to make her angry.

5. What bigger significance do Momma’s actions have?

Momma is not only standing up to the white children, she is also demonstrating non-violent resistance to the oppression of black people. Instead of cowering or responding violently to the girls’ behavior, Momma is rising above by being strong and disciplined in the face of adversity. She knows that the girls are trying to get her upset so their relatives and adult white friends can punish her. Instead of giving in to what they want, Momma maintains control by not doing anything that can be punished.

6. What are some clues that indicate Momma is offended by the girls’ behavior?

Maya remarks that even though Momma tries to appear natural, she stands with her knees locked, and she looks as though she has turned to stone. Momma’s apron strings are trembling, and even though Maya thinks it is from her humming, she may be trembling out of anger or fear. In addition, when Momma hums, she changes her song when one of the girls does a handstand, and this indicates that Momma is distracted and has lost her train of thought. Finally, when the girls leave, Momma says goodbye in a friendly manner, but her figure remains stiff and tense. Even though Momma pretends to not be bothered by the “powhitetrash” girls, she is very offended by their actions.

7. Why would Momma still call the girls “Miz” despite the indignities she is made to suffer by the girls’ rude behavior?

If Momma does not address the girls in the manner she always does, this would indicate that their actions affected her, and she will lose control of the situation. Also, Momma does not want to risk being disrespectful to a white person because she fears that white people will retaliate against her or her family.

8. When Momma tells Maya to wash her face, she sings a hymn to herself and says, “Glory, glory hallelujah, when I lay my burden down.” What is the significance of this hymn?

The song that Momma sings is an altered version of the “Battle Hymn of the Republic,” an abolitionist song written during the Civil War. Her choice of song is indicative of her strong religious beliefs, and it also expresses the common plight of African-Americans both as slaves during the Civil War and as second-class citizens during the 1930s. The original lyrics of the song are “Glory, glory, hallelujah! His truth is marching on,” and they suggest that a movement or wave of action will give rights to African-Americans. Momma’s words “when I lay my burden down,” however, suggests that reward will come in the afterlife. This idea explains the calm, non-violent behavior that Momma demonstrates in the Store: Momma does not expect a reward for her actions to come in this life; she believes it will come to her after death. Momma respects God’s rules and wishes more than the rules and wishes of white people, and she will not act in an unchristian way to retaliate against the girls.

Chapter 6

1. How does Maya view Reverend Howard Thomas?

Maya hates Reverend Thomas and his visits. Instead of seeing him as an inspiring spiritual leader, she sees him as a long-winded and ungenerous man. He always takes the best for himself at mealtime. Even though he kisses small children and pretends to care for his community, he never learns Maya’s and Bailey’s names. It seems to Maya that he gossips more than he preaches and does charitable work.

2. What does Reverend Thomas’s obesity represent?

Reverend Thomas’s obesity represents the hypocrisy in the Church. A reverend should be self-sacrificing, and he should avoid being tempted into debauchery and overindulgence. A reverend’s only concern should be preaching the Word of God, but Reverend Thomas’s main concern is getting invited to dinner.

3. Why does the Book of Deuteronomy appeal to Maya? What is happening in Maya’s life that makes this book important to her?

Maya likes Deuteronomy because she sees it as a book of definite, unalterable rules. In her

opinion, Deuteronomy eliminates the need for guessing what one should and should not do; if the book is memorized and the rules are followed exactly, there is no doubt that an individual will go to Heaven.

Maya's appreciation for this book demonstrates her need for stability and a clear understanding of right and wrong. She is presented with contradictory opinions on how to respond to racism, and she has trouble reconciling them. On one hand, Maya is taught to stand up and fight for what is right, but on the other, she is told to be kind to white people no matter what they do. For Maya, the Book of Deuteronomy is the ultimate authority on rules, and as long as she follows the rules the book lays out, she will go to Heaven.

4. In the passage about Sister Monroe, how does Angelou use repetition to convey humor?

When Sister Monroe gets into a passion at church, she repeatedly screams, "Preach it. I say, preach it!" Because she repeats this phrase so often, it begins to represent her. These words become comic; when they are spoken, the image of Sister Monroe running wild in the church is evoked. Whenever Bailey says, "Preach it. I say, preach it!" Maya instantly remembers Sister Monroe's funny behavior and starts to laugh.

5. In the same passage, how does Angelou use irony to convey humor?

Angelou writes that when Sister Monroe finally gets herself under control, she "walk[s] off the dais, cool and spent, and raise[s] her flinty voice in the hymn." This is an example of dramatic irony. Even though the congregation and the reader know that she got into a fit of passion and attacked the Reverend, Sister Monroe is completely oblivious, and she calmly rejoins the hymn as if nothing had happened. This use of irony is meant to be funny.

Angelou also says that she "saw the ushers...move discretely, like pallbearers, toward Sister Monroe's bench." This is an example of situational irony. Even though the ushers are trying to move toward Sister Monroe's pew unnoticed, everyone in the church knows what they are doing and anticipates Sister Monroe going into a passionate fit and having to be restrained.

6. What is the purpose of the story about Sister Monroe?

The purpose of the story is to demonstrate how enthusiastic some members of the church get about religion. Unlike Reverend Thomas, who is as unenthusiastic about religion as he is hypocritical, Sister Monroe is overcome by the Holy Spirit and driven to do odd and funny things.

In addition, the story about Sister Monroe shows how, even under the intense hardship of racism, Maya and Bailey retain their sense of humor and can have a good time laughing. This shows strength of spirit on the part of Maya and Bailey.

Chapter 7

1. Why does Momma instruct Maya and Bailey to be deferential to white people?

Maya and Bailey are taught to be deferential to white people because they are fearful of what white people will do if they are offended. Although Momma does not explicitly say what she believes white people will do to retaliate, Maya remarks that these are the “paths of life that she and her generation and all the Negroes gone before had found, and found to be safe ones.” Momma teaches the children to avoid speaking to white people, and if conversation is necessary, to be kind and not insolent.

2. How does this teaching go against Momma’s character?

Momma is very strong-willed, intelligent, and confident, and this teaching seems contrary to her values. While one might assume that she would try to fight injustice, racism in the South during the time the story takes place is so prevalent and dangerous that doing anything but being deferential to white people could get Momma and her family killed or seriously hurt. In Chapter 3, even though Uncle Willie has nothing to do with the white woman’s rape, he has to hide in the potato and onion bin so “the boys” would not attack him. Insulting a white person to his or her face could result in a similar or worse action against Momma and her family.

3. How does this contradiction between Momma’s values contribute to the theme of the helplessness of black people in the American South?

In order to survive in the racist South, black people were forced to defy their personal values and beliefs. Instead of defending themselves and standing up to the injustice done against them, they had to be complaisant and kind to their white oppressors. Black people were denied their basic human right to fight and preserve their dignity.

Chapter 8

1. What is the author attempting to show by naming towns in other states?

Angelou is illustrating that racism is not a localized problem and unique to Stamps; it is ubiquitous in the South.

2. Explain the use of the following simile about the Depression: “[It] must have hit the white section of Stamps with cyclonic impact, but it seeped into the Black area slowly, like a thief with misgivings.”

A thief with misgivings would be hesitant to steal and would probably take only a little from the community at a time. The Depression acts in a similar way on the Black Community. The white section of town notices the effects of the Depression immediately because the people go from prosperous to poor quickly. The black people are already poor and suffering economically,

so the effects of the Depression are less noticeable to them. However, since most black people depend on white people for their living, they do gradually feel the impact of the Depression.

3. How is the Black Community affected by the Depression?

The Depression causes a fall in cotton prices, and because the farmers make less profit off their cotton, they do not pay the black field hands as much. Black men's wages drop significantly, and, sometimes, they are not paid at all.

4. In what ways does Momma continue to show strength and ingenuity in the face of adversity? How does this affect Bailey and Maya?

Momma sets up a trading system so she can trade goods from the Store for goods local families receive through assistance from the government. As a result, Maya and Bailey remain well fed, and as a result of the trading, they get to eat new types of food. However, they have to travel to their friends' houses for "treats."

5. Explain why the Christmas presents from her parents affect Maya in a way contrary to what the reader would expect.

The gifts from Maya's parents reinforce both her feelings of detachment and the belief that her parents do not love her and Bailey. The gifts are a sign that the childrens' parents acknowledge their existence and know where they are, but they are not willing to take the children back to live with them. Instead of bringing Maya feelings of joy, the presents make Maya upset.

6. In what way does Bailey assume the role of hero once again?

Bailey acts as Maya's hero by attempting to reanalyze the reasons why their mother and father sent them gifts. Bailey says that the gifts are a sign that their mother forgives them for whatever it was they did that made her send them away. He tells Maya that she is getting ready to come for them and that they should expect her arrival any day.

Chapter 9

1. Why does Maya create an alternate reality of her father?

Maya was left by her father when she was too young to form any clear memories of him. In order to cope with her feelings of parentlessness and being left behind, Maya imagines what sort of person her father is, and she turns him into a character in her daydreams. Unlike her real father, who is far away and living another life, Maya can interact with this character and receive the love and attention she should have received from her father.

2. Why is Maya initially so proud of her father?

Maya is proud of her father because he is handsome and sophisticated. He speaks “proper English” instead of the dialect spoken in the Black Community, and he has an expensive car and clothes.

3. How does Bailey, Sr.’s success change Maya’s understanding of the limitations placed on African-Americans?

Unlike the black people in Stamps, Bailey, Sr., is rich and educated. His success shows Maya that African-Americans can be successful businessmen and own fancy things. While it may not be possible for black people to have those things in Arkansas, it is possible in California.

4. How might successes like Maya’s father’s have contributed to the Civil Rights Movement?

Maya’s father’s success demonstrates that there is no biological reason why black men cannot be as rich and educated as white people. African-Americans are just as intelligent as European-Americans, and the only thing hindering their progress is oppression.

5. In what ways does Bailey, Sr., hurt Maya’s self-esteem?

Bailey, Sr., refers to Maya as “Daddy’s baby,” even though Maya is seven years old. The term makes her feel stupid and immature. Furthermore, she is aware that her father is not interested in her life and opinions. He forgets about her and pays attention to young Bailey. When he does ask Maya questions, he does not wait for a reply. Bailey Sr., does not care about Maya: he is only pretending to be interested in her because that is what is expected of him as a father. By his actions, Maya’s father reinforces her low self-esteem issues, and he makes her feel both valueless and dumb.

6. When Maya learns that Bailey, Sr., wants to bring her to California, she goes to the pond to think. She asks herself, “Should I go with my father? Should I throw myself into the pond, and not being able to swim, join the body of L.C., the boy who had drowned last summer?” What do these thoughts say about Maya’s mental state? Why does she feel this way?

These thoughts show that Maya is depressed and anxious about the decision she must make.

It is possible that Maya feels this way because of her conflicting feelings about her parents. Throughout her childhood, Maya missed her parents and wished they would come for her. As a defense mechanism to deal with her feelings of abandonment, she became resentful about the situation, and she turned her hurt feelings into hatred toward her mother and father. Now, an opportunity is being presented to right the wrong, but Maya is not ready to forgive her father and give him a second chance. He is not the person she imagined him to be, and she dislikes the way he treats her. In addition, being uprooted once again and taken away from Momma’s home will only make her feel more isolated and alone.

7. The conversation in Pig-Latin that Bailey, Sr., and Maya have in the car translates to the following:

Maya (to Bailey, Jr., in Pig-Latin): Do you think this is our father, or do you think we are being kidnapped?

Bailey, Jr., (in Standard English): My, we're in St. Louis, and we're going to see Mother Dear.

Bailey, Sr., (in Pig-Latin): Who would want to kidnap you? Do you think you are Lindbergh children?

When Bailey, Sr., mentions Lindbergh children, he is referring to the Lindbergh case, in which the infant son of aviator Charles Lindbergh was kidnapped from home and held for ransom. What are some of the implications of the comparison of Maya and Bailey to the Lindbergh baby?

Bailey, Sr., could be implying several things. First, he could be implying, in a general sense, that Bailey and Maya are not important enough to be kidnapped. The Lindbergh kidnapping may have been mentioned only because it was a contemporary issue, and Bailey, Sr., wanted to be witty by making a reference to current events.

More likely, however, Bailey, Sr., could be implying that since the children are black, unlike the Lindbergh baby, nobody would want to kidnap them. This passage reinforces racist beliefs by applying more value to a white baby than to a black one. It suggests that black children could not be kidnapped because nobody would pay ransom for them.

8. How does the reunion with Vivian—Maya and Bailey's birth mother—differ in expectation and reality?

One would assume that a reunion with Vivian would resolve, or be a step toward resolving, Maya's feelings of alienation and abandonment. Bailey and Maya should have been overjoyed to know that their mother does truly want them, and it should have been a comfort to them to have their mother in their lives once again.

However, Maya feels that she is too ugly to belong to her mother. Her feelings of displacement are stronger than ever because she feels unworthy of being the child of such a beautiful woman.

In addition, Bailey accepts his mother without hesitation, and he loves her at first sight. He forgets the decision Maya and he made to hate their mother, and Maya feels as though Bailey is abandoning her. This reinforces her feelings of being an outsider.

Chapter 10

1. According to Maya's description, how is life in the North different from life in the South?

In the North, law breaking (gambling, drinking, etc.) occurs in the open and on the streets. Unlike in the South, men act like gangsters, and people openly do illegal activities in the streets. Food comes from the store already prepared instead of from the farm and prepared at home. In the North, Maya and Bailey are also introduced to new foods, and the foods they are familiar with, such as peanuts, are used in new and unique ways. The schools are different as well. The teachers are a lot more formal, but the students are less educated. Maya and Bailey are ahead of the kids in their classes.

2. Does Maya view one way of life better than the other? Explain your answer.

Maya thinks that life in the North is interesting and exciting, but it is not as wonderful as life in the South. Almost every time Maya mentions a new and enjoyable experience in the North, she becomes nostalgic and mentions how that same thing had more significance and meaning in the South. For instance, even though she likes eating peanuts with candy, she mentions how, at home in the South, "peanuts were brought in raw from the field and roasted in the bottom of the oven on cold nights. The rich scents used to fill the house and we were always expected to eat too many. But that was a Stamps custom." The image of warm peanuts in the oven on a cold night and the "rich" smell evokes feelings of comfort and contentment. More effort is put into acquiring and roasting peanuts in the South, and roasting them is an experience shared by the family.

3. How does Maya feel about her new teachers? How does her diction and imagery convey this opinion?

Maya feels that her teachers are formal and pompous. Maya says that they "talked down to their students from the lofty heights of education and white folks' enunciation." The phrase "talked down," has a negative connotation, suggesting arrogance and conceit; the phrase "lofty heights of education" is sarcastic. Despite the literal interpretation of those words, Maya does not think that education gives her teacher the right to be condescending.

Furthermore, the image that she presents of her teachers talking "through tight lips as if they were as afraid to let the sound out as they were to inhale the dirty air that the listener gave off," while comic, is disturbing. It suggests that the teachers think the children in their classroom are inferior to them, so inferior, that the teachers do not want to breathe the same air their students breathe.

4. How does the behavior of the teachers illustrate a distinct class system within the Black Community living in St. Louis?

At the time this story takes place, segregation is still in effect. Even though Maya does not outwardly state that her teachers are black, that should probably be inferred. Therefore, the

teachers look down on their students—not because of any racial distinction— but because they are educated and the students (and their families) are not. Education is the factor that separates the different classes of African-Americans.

5. Grandfather Baxter tells his sons, “if you ever get in jail for stealing or some such foolishness, I’ll let you rot. But if you’re arrested for fighting, I’ll sell the house, lock, stock, and barrel, to get you out!” Why might Grandfather Baxter feel stealing is worse than fighting?

The key issue is pride. It is likely that Grandfather Baxter feels that stealing from another person is in violation of pride. Wealth and property should be earned, not stolen. Having stolen property in one’s possession is akin to taking credit for the success of another person.

However, Grandfather Baxter probably feels that fighting is done in defense of pride. If one person fights another in self-defense, it indicates that dignity is so important that it is worth sacrificing physical well-being. Similarly, fighting in defense of one’s family preserves the pride and dignity of the family.

6. How does Uncle Tommy raise Maya’s self-esteem? How does this affect the woman she becomes toward the end of the novel?

Uncle Tommy tells Maya that intelligence is a better attribute to have than beauty. Beautiful women end up in labor-intensive, low-paying jobs, but intelligent women get higher-paying jobs and are more successful. Even though Uncle Tommy does not contradict Maya’s belief that she is ugly, he does convince her to value herself more for her intelligence. It is largely because of encouragement like this that Maya Angelou focused on education and became an accomplished woman of letters.

7. What is the significance of Maya’s name?

When Maya was a baby and Bailey was still a toddler, he called her “Mya sister” instead of Marguerite. Even as a child, Bailey was protective of Maya. “Mya sister” evolved into “My,” and finally “Maya.” Maya’s name illustrates Bailey’s love for her.

Chapter 11

1. How does Mr. Freeman separate himself from the children?

Mr. Freeman rarely interacts with Maya or Bailey. Every night when he comes home from work, he takes the food Vivian prepared for him off the stove and eats alone in the kitchen while the children read. Then, he sits in a big easy chair and waits for Vivian. He does not listen to the radio with Maya and Bailey, nor does he engage in any activities. He sits quietly until Vivian comes home, then, awakens like “a man coming out of sleep.”

2. Why does Mr. Freeman act this way?

Mr. Freeman is infatuated with Vivian. He does not care about her children or anyone else.

3. In what ways is Maya susceptible to Mr. Freeman's assault?

Maya suffers from extremely low self-esteem, and her feelings of alienation and isolation have made her believe that she does not belong anywhere, especially not with the beautiful family that surrounds her. Maya is longing for the comfort found in human companionship, and, initially, Mr. Freeman's attention makes her feel loved and desired.

4. What purpose does literature serve for Maya at this time in her life?

Literature is form of escape for Maya, and it distracts her from her feelings of guilt. She lives vicariously through the characters in literature; in particular, boys who overcome all obstacles and always defeat the villains. Through characters like Horatio Alger and Tiny Tim, she defeats the villains of the books and Mr. Freeman, whom she associates with those villains.

Chapter 12

1. What contributes to Mr. Freeman's escalating his abuse of Maya?

Maya's feelings of abandonment and alienation contribute to her wanting to please. Vivian is gone so long and Mr. Freeman needs an outlet, some release from the world he retreats to while she is away.

2. What does the reader assume happens to Mr. Freeman?

Vivian kicks him out. She may have been tired of him, giving what we have learned about Vivian. Possibly, she replaces him with someone else.

Chapter 13

1. Why does Maya lie about the previous incidents of molestation when she is testifying?

Maya lies because she fears that she was actually the cause of the incidents. She fears that her brother and her other family members will think of her as "bad" and will stop loving her. She fears to admit that she almost liked the closeness and feeling of warmth and security from the first episodes with Mr. Freeman.

2. What does the reader have to assume happens to Mr. Freeman?

Maya's uncles kill him.

3. What is significant about Maya's hiding in mutism? What is the ultimate result of her refusal to speak?

This novel is about a young girl's growing into a young woman and finding a voice with which to tell her story. Maya's retreating into silence is ironic and symbolic of her losing the sense of self she had been developing.

The ultimate result of her silence is that, once again, she is misunderstood and abandoned.

Chapter 14

1. "Their decision to be satisfied with life's inequities was a lesson for me." How does Maya apply this to her life?

Maya is able to slip into a mute world where she does not have to explain herself to anyone. Acceptance for the good and the bad in life is normal, so Maya is allowed to deal with her past in her own way.

2. How does Bailey deal with the abandonment?

Bailey Jr., tells elaborate stories about their time in St. Louis. He keeps the community entertained with exaggerations and fabrications.

Chapter 15

1. Why does Mrs. Flowers stand out in the community of Stamps, Arkansas?

Mrs. Flowers dresses nicely. She speaks properly and does not use common forms of address to people like "Sister." To Maya's eyes, she is refined and dignified.

2. Why would Momma's term of "Sister Flowers" be embarrassing to Maya?

Calling Mrs. Flowers "Sister Flowers" was embarrassing because, to Maya, it shows Momma's lack of sophistication.

3. Why is Mrs. Flowers's calling Maya "Marguerite" so important to Maya?

The use of Maya's proper name shows a level of respect for Maya that had never been shown to her before. It helps to rebuild Maya's shattered self-esteem.

4. Why would it be important to speak what is written and how would this contribute to Maya?

Words are given emotion and expression with the voice. On the page, words are flat. Stressing this fact encourages Maya to use her voice.

5. What is the distinction between the terms “ignorance” and “illiteracy”?

Ignorance is a choice—not to learn, not to try to understand, not to apply what one knows and understands. Illiteracy is simply a lack of education. Intelligence is not measured by the level of one’s education, but by how one uses what one does know and understand. Uneducated people can be smart, or wise, in their own ways, despite their lack of formal education.

6. How does Mrs. Flowers instill a sense of pride in Maya for their people?

Mrs. Flowers encourages Maya to not think poorly of people who have a poor education. She helps her see that the wisdom that has been passed down through generations of people is as valid as any education they would receive in a formal school.

7. Analyze the difference between what Maya says and what Momma understands when she is punished upon her return from Mrs. Flowers. What is the underlying cause of the reaction?

Maya’s exact words are “By the way,” intended to mean, “while we are talking of that, there is more to come.” Momma’s interpretation is that “By the way,” meaning, “Jesus is the Way.” To Mama’s way of Maya has used the Lord’s name in vain. The underlying cause of the whole incident is Momma’s ignorance of current styles of speech, particularly practiced by white people.

Chapter 16

1. How does Maya relate her experiences in life to those of white girls of the same age?

White girls of Maya’s age are engaged in dancing and having tea. They practice social graces. Maya is taught what she calls “Victorian values.” She learns how to embroider and crochet as well as iron and wash clothes. Much of the training she receives will have little value to her and the life she expects to have.

2. What is Glory’s reason for not letting Maya insult Mrs. Cullinan?

Glory’s family had worked for Mrs. Cullinan’s family since before the Civil War. She feels a strong loyalty, even affection, for the family.

3. Why could Maya forgive Mrs. Cullinan's calling her "Margaret" but not Mrs. Cullinan's calling her "Mary"?

Mrs. Cullinan's calling Maya "Margaret" could have been an honest mistake. For Mrs. Cullinan to call Maya "Mary," however, shows a blatant disregard on Cullinan's part for Maya's value and identity as a person.

4. Describe Maya's way of dealing with Mrs. Cullinan's insulting treatment of her. Why is it so successful?

Maya's failure to perform her job well, and ultimately breaking Mrs. Cullinan's favorite china can best be described as passive-aggressive. It works because somehow Maya manages to show Cullinan that a name and identity are as valuable as heirloom china.

Chapter 17

1. Why would the fact that Bailey is late on a Saturday be so worrisome to the family?

The historical time period would greatly affect how worried Momma is by Bailey's tardiness. At the time, if a black man or boy did not show up when expected, something bad had happened to him, possibly a lynching or other such violence.

2. In what ways does Maya show her immaturity as she walks with Momma to try to meet Bailey?

Maya shows her immaturity by believing that Bailey must have been taken by ghosts, bogeymen, "hants", specters, tigers, Bluebeards, or Rippers.

3. What indicators are provided in the narrative that Bailey is suffering a great deal by what has happened to him?

Bailey's walk is described as plodding. Maya states that he "walked like a man trudging up the hill behind a coffin." He does not offer an alibi or any excuse and tells Maya to leave him alone. All of these things indicate he is suffering.

4. Analyze Maya's reaction to seeing the movie *Mother Dear*.

Maya's laughter at the reaction of the white people points out the ridiculousness of racism. Maya emphasizes that Kay Francis and her mother are identical; if anything, Maya's mother was prettier than Kay Francis. The only difference between them, and Maya recognizes that this difference is key, is that Kay Francis is white and her mother is a Negro.

5. On what note does this chapter end?

The chapter ends on a note of loneliness and desperation. Maya is ironically pleased that she can see her “mother” whenever she wants, simply by saving her money and going to the movies. On the way home, Bailey’s stunt with the freight train emphasizes Maya’s fear of abandonment.

6. What is the effect of the narrator’s intrusion into the narrative at the end of this chapter?

The narrator’s brief pause in the story to mention a future event reminds the reader that this is a story that has already reached its end, and Maya has already become the person she is. There is both a sense of hope in this realization and a continued sense of despair in Bailey’s failure to find the life he hoped to find.

Chapter 18

1. What irony of human nature does the narrator make in this chapter?

Reflecting on the hard lives of the negroes among whom Maya grew up, the narrator reflects on the “gratitude” the poor and underprivileged express to God for their “accomplishments,” and how irrelevant God seems to become to the wealthy and successful.

2. What lessons about self-respect is Maya learning from observing her neighbors?

Maya is learning the value of respecting oneself as a requisite for gaining others’ respect. She finds it “hateful” that her neighbors allow themselves to be worked to exhaustion, and she finds it “shameful” that they don’t complain or take any action to improve their situations.

3. What is Maya realizing when she states that her “race may be masochists.”

When Maya watches her neighbors return from work beaten down and barely able to walk from their weariness and pain, and then, instead of going home to rest and recuperate for the next day, getting ready for the religious revival, she begins to realize that her people might actually like their suffering. They certainly do nothing to end or alleviate it.

4. How does the narrative about the revival give the reader insight into Momma?

The revival helps explain Momma’s reactions to white people. She feels that she can tolerate whites because she will get her salvation when she dies and goes to heaven. Burdens, such as tolerating racism, will be laid down when she dies and enters heaven.

5. Overall, what attitude does the narrator seem to display in this section about the role of religion in the lives of the people?

The narrator actually seems to mock the role of religion. Her tone throughout, when discussing the fact that these revivals are ecumenical, “uniting” the various Christian denominations, and when she is actually presenting portions of the service, is sarcastic. At the end of the service, and the end of the chapter, she makes it clear that nothing has changed in the lives of these people. They are still poor and tired and hungry. Clients still visit the whorehouse, and the music from the house of ill-repute is indistinguishable from the music at the religious service.

Chapter 19

1. Why is Joe Louis a hero?

Joe Louis was an enormously successful black boxer; so successful that he would be asked to fight a white man.

2. Why would hopes and dreams either be built or dashed on Joe Louis's success or failure?

If Joe Louis were to win, hope could be instilled in black men everywhere that they could rise above adversity and succeed. If he were to fail, it would reinforce the racist ideas that black people were inferior to whites.

3. “It wouldn't do for a Black man and his family to be caught on a lonely country road on a night when Joe Louis had proved that we were the strongest people in the world.” What is implied by this quote?

It is implied that a racist white man would attempt to prove his superiority and maintain the status quo by attacking a black man until he was dead or seriously injured.

Chapter 20

1. What is the narrator suggesting at the beginning of this chapter by expressing Maya's fear of being thought “womanish”?

Maya is indeed growing up, and, at the age of ten, she is caught between childhood and adulthood. She is afraid, however, of being thought to have reached the physical maturity of womanhood (and thus needing privacy when going to the bathroom) because that state would thrust her into new social and gender roles that she is not yet ready to assume.

2. Explain the significance of Louise on Maya's life.

Louise is Maya's first “girl” friend. Louise is the first girl that Maya can confide in and giggle

with as other girls her age do. Louise helps Maya enjoy activities that suit their age.

3. In what ways is Maya affected by her past?

Maya has known primarily abandonment, betrayal, and abuse. It is hard for her to trust and to open herself to true friendship with Louise.

4. What does Tommy provide Maya?

Tommy further provides Maya with self-esteem, the knowledge that she does possess qualities that someone else, someone her age, could find attractive.

Chapter 21

1. How does Joyce use Bailey? What emotional impact does she have on him?

Joyce uses Bailey to get food and items from the Store that she cannot afford. This serves to increase Bailey's sense of betrayal and abandonment. He craved love, while she was merely procuring material goods.

Chapter 22

1. What purpose do Maya's literary allusions serve?

The allusions serve several purposes. First, they are reminders that young Maya is intelligent, literate, and loves learning. The reader is reminded that this is the young girl who grows up to become the poet Maya Angelou. Second, the reference to Jane Eyre, also an orphan, rejected by family, creates a sharp contrast to Maya's situation. Maya notes that she was enjoying the sounds and smells of Momma cooking supper while reading of Jane's austere experiences.

2. How does the narrator create suspense at the beginning of this chapter?

The mention of an impending storm; the mysterious arrival of Brother Taylor; the "rattling" and "knocking" at the back door when there is apparently no one there; the description of the "cold moonlight" spilling in through the open door, nearly obliterating the meager light of the lamp; the cold wind striving with the warmth from the stove all read like elements from a gothic horror or ghost story.

3. Why is Maya distressed at the thought of Mr. Taylor telling about the appearance of his dead wife?

One might think that, to Maya, the ghost stories of the residents of Stamps were not entertainment, but illustrations of their simple, unsophisticated, and superstitious natures. However, later

in this same chapter, she admits that she was as superstitious as they were, and the stories actually frighten her.

4. What narrative technique does the episode with Mr. Taylor allow the author to employ?

Mr. Taylor's visit on this stormy November night allows the author to provide a flashback to Mrs. Taylor's funeral that previous summer.

5. What impact does Sister Taylor's funeral have on Maya?

The funeral makes death real for Maya. She says that, for children at her age, death was more unreal than gruesome. But witnessing Sister Taylor's ceremony, and viewing the body—once strong and alive—lifeless in its casket, Maya comes to understand the unbeatable power of death.

6. What does Maya illustrate by her reluctance to leave the circle of lamplight to fetch the fork for the potatoes?

Maya is illustrating that she is frightened by Brother Taylor's story.

7. What does the author mean when she says of Momma and Brother Taylor's conversation, "The sense of what they were saying became lost, and only the exercise remained"? How does she depict this in the book?

The author is explaining that both Momma and Brother Taylor are talking quickly, almost in unison. Neither is listening to the other, so the conversation is not a real dialogue. This is illustrated by Angelou's use of dashes to indicate how one speaker is interrupting the flow of the other speaker's sentence.

8. What does Maya learn about her grandmother from this episode?

Maya learns that her grandmother's faith is not simply an empty exercise, but a true source of strength that allows her to be helpful to others in both physical and emotional need.

Chapter 23

1. Why is the eighth grade graduation so significant in the lives of the community of Stamps?

At the time this novel takes place, few blacks were able to attend school. Even among rural whites, high school was almost the equivalent of what college would be today. Many people in the 20s, 30s, and 40s finished school at the eighth grade. For a Negro, then, an eighth-grade graduation would indeed be significant.

2. What is Maya's tone when she describes the school she attended: "Unlike the white high school, Lafayette County Training School distinguished itself by having neither lawn, nor hedges, nor tennis court, nor climbing ivy"?

The tone is clearly sarcastic. The details missing from Maya's school are what would "distinguish" an exquisite school from an inadequate school. Angelou, however, ironically presents the lack of these details as "distinguishing features."

3. Explain the irony of Donleavy's using the word "praise" in his message to the graduating class.

Praise is generally a term used to express happiness and pleasure over someone's achievements. It is used to lift others up and make them feel good about their accomplishments. Donleavy's message of praise, however, speaks of the wonderful places the white students at a neighboring high school will be going. He speaks of the opportunities the white students will have. His message relays the idea that all the Negro students have to look forward to is to become a farmer or field worker, possibly an athlete. Instead of lifting up the community of Stamps, his "praise" emphasizes the reality of the times.

4. What thought process is occurring in Maya's mind in the paragraphs beginning with "Graduation, the hush-hush magic" ending with, "we were an abomination. All of us"?

Once again, Maya is having a crisis of self-confidence. Donleavy is clearly suggesting that there is no hope for educational or professional advancement for blacks. What, then, is the purpose of an education? Why should a twelve-year-old Maya take any pride in her accomplishment if the ultimate result is for her only to be a domestic servant? Any Negro who aspired to more was an abomination in the eyes of White America.

5. Maya relates, "I could have cried at the impertinence of 'I am the master of my fate, I am the captain of my soul.'" Why would she say this?

At this point, Maya is convinced that, as a black woman in her society, she is most definitely not the master of her fate and the captain of her soul. She believes that she has no control over her destiny whatsoever.

6. Why does the singing of "Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing" have the effect it has on Maya?

Maya admits that she had never before really paid attention to the words that deal with overcoming challenges and oppression. The fact that the valedictorian dared to turn his back on the crowd and begin to sing the song that clearly was not a planned part of the commencement, inspires Maya to the belief that she can overcome these limitations placed on her by others' expectations. She does not have to fulfill their mediocre prophecies.

7. Maya states, "It may be enough, however, to have it said that we survive in exact relationship to the dedication of our poets (include preachers, musicians and blues singers)." Explain what she implies with this quote.

Maya's observation is that black people can keep their spirits up in the face of adversity because they are able to find inspiration and solace for their troubles through poems, songs, and preaching. The collective experiences expressed in these outlets eases the burdens of their lives.

Chapter 24

1. What is significant about the difference in how Momma addresses the dentist and he addresses her? Why is this ironic?

Momma addresses the dentist with personal and professional respect, as Dentist Lincoln. He, however, addresses her with familiarity, even, perhaps, condescension. This is ironic because there was a time in the past when the doctor needed to rely on help from Momma, and this alone should motivate him to treat her more respectfully.

2. What is so humiliating for Maya about Momma's referring to herself by her first name?

The humiliation is part of the total experience. Maya and Momma are in the white section of the town. They have had to knock at the back door, and Momma gives her name almost the way a slave might have a century earlier. Despite the pain in her mouth, Maya is fully aware of the inequality between the races.

3. How does the author present Doctor Lincoln as both a racist and a hypocrite? Why doesn't the author use these words in her portrayal of the dentist?

Doctor Lincoln is racist in his refusal to treat "colored" patients. He even says that he would rather put his hand in a dog's mouth than in a Negro's. His hypocrisy is evident in the fact that Momma was apparently "good enough" to borrow money from, but not good enough to treat as a patient. Angelou does not condemn Doctor Lincoln with either term; instead she simply portrays his words and actions, and allows the reader to realize the truth for him or herself.

4. In this passage, Maya provides two versions of the exchange between Momma and the dentist. How are the two versions different?

The two versions are different in that in one, Momma is strong, but she is also just and right. In the other, she is deceitful, vengeful and wrong.

5. Why does Maya present the two versions?

Maya presents the two versions to illustrate to the reader that her child's view of her grandmother

was still naïve and idealistic. We also see glimpses of the writer, the storyteller, that Maya will grow up to become.

6. What device does the author use to present to the reader the true account of the encounter? Why does she rely on this device?

Maya admits that she did not witness the exchange between Momma and the dentist, so her account is “presumed” to be the only possible truth. To provide the reader with the actual facts of the encounter, the author has Maya overhear Momma talking to Uncle Willie about the exchange.

Chapter 25

1. What is the purpose of the opening paragraph of this chapter?

The opening paragraph establishes how and why Momma never fully explains why she is taking Maya and Bailey to California.

2. Uncle Willie states “They don’t really hate us. They don’t know us. How can they hate us? They mostly scared.” What is Uncle Willie attempting to explain?

Uncle Willie is explaining the real roots of white racism: white people are scared because they really don’t understand black society. The segregationist and racist attitudes have created a situation of fear based on ignorance. To Willie, unmotivated hate is incomprehensible.

3. What thematic climax does the episode in the first part of this chapter point to? What plot event does this climax motivate?

All along, one of the themes of this book has involved the difficulty of growing up black in a racist society. Up until now, this racism has affected Maya’s and Bailey’s self esteem. They have been taught to blend in, to be invisible, and not to attract attention. The racism has been attitudinal. Now, however, Bailey especially is presented with the physical, often fatal aspects of racism. This is what motivates Momma’s intent to move Maya and Bailey away from the South to a place where they will, she hopes, be safer.

4. What other theme is Maya emphasizing when she complains, “we were made to abide in a kind of limbo until white people we would never see, in offices we would never visit, signed and stamped and mailed the pass back to Momma”?

Again, Maya is emphasizing her feeling that she was not in control of her own destiny, neither as a person, nor as a minority in an oppressive society.

5. Why does Maya say she would not miss, of all people, Mrs. Flowers?

Mrs. Flowers had introduced Maya to books. Maya is either cynically saying Mrs. Flowers has served her purpose, or—more likely—that the deep and lasting impact Mrs. Flowers made on Maya's life meant that she would never really leave Mrs. Flowers behind, and could not, therefore, miss her.

Chapter 26

1. What does Maya mean when she describes Momma as “too big and too black and very old fashioned”?

Maya is suddenly aware that the purpose of this “trip to California” is to be with her mother, and that this was likely to bring up many unfortunate and unhappy past associations. In that context, in Maya's frame of mind, nothing is good—the train's seats are hard and scratchy, the boiled eggs are sour, and Momma is something of an embarrassment. But the observation says much more about Maya's state of mind than about Momma.

2. Why is Maya so anxious about meeting and living with her mother? What suggests that she finally overcomes this anxiety?

Maya has always envisioned her mother as larger-than-life, glamorous, and powerful—a goddess. She considers herself ugly and awkward. As a result, she is anxious. The anxiety passes when she and Bailey acknowledge that, even though they are “enamored” of their mother, she is “nervous” about them. This, according to Maya, makes her mother human.

3. What does Mother teach her children through her lifestyle? How is life with Mother different from life with Momma?

Mother likes to have fun and she does not necessarily follow rules. Her anger still rules her actions and she is unpredictable. However, Mother does teach Maya and Bailey about life and helps extend their knowledge of the world through their experiences with her. Life with Mother is much faster, louder, and busier than life had been with Momma in Stamps.

Chapter 27

1. How does World War II present an ironic opportunity for Negroes? Why is it ironic? What does it indicate about human nature?

With the invasion of Pearl Harbor and the United States' declaring war on Japan, came the internment camps, when Asian-Americans were deprived of their homes, businesses, and their freedom. Negroes bought up the businesses that the Asian-Americans lost. The opportunity for work and housing was ironic because, first of all, it was founded upon a loss of opportunity for

an entire community. Also, as Maya points out, one might have thought that the blacks, having been subjected to oppression and discrimination themselves, would have been more sympathetic to the plight of the Asian-Americans. Maya's point is that something in human nature allows one race to discriminate against another race with impunity. The Asians were different from the blacks, but they were not powerful. Since the blacks did not have to fear them, the blacks did not have to consider them at all.

2. How does Maya find contentment against the backdrop of the war?

After a lifetime of feeling unsettled, abandoned, and alienated, Maya feels she somehow belongs in the city of San Francisco. The city represents to her a perfect blend of intimacy and strangeness, propriety and friendliness, etc. She says it reflects the woman she wants to be when she grows up.

3. What is the point of the story with which Maya closes this chapter?

Once again, Maya illustrates the irrationality of white racism, this time with the story of a woman whose "reason" for refusing to sit beside a negro is shown to be ridiculous.

Chapter 28

1. What view of prejudice does Maya provide in the opening paragraph of this chapter?

Maya says that the girls in her new high school are "more prejudiced" than the girls in her previous school in Stamps, and one might think that she is introducing another example of white racism. As it turns out, however, the "prejudiced" girls are loud and brash blacks and Mexicans, and the white girls are the ones who are intimidated.

2. Why does Maya suggest that her time in George Washington High School "might have been time lost"?

Maya admits that she is not the brightest student—or even nearly the brightest student—in the school. She also does not have the confidence the white students have. While she must have every fact in order and be certain that she is right before speaking up in class, the white students were not afraid to be wrong. Maya would quickly have become unseen and unheard in such a school, and her education would have amounted to nothing.

3. What made Miss Kirwin so memorable to Maya?

Miss Kirwin was one of the first people to treat Maya like she was just anybody else. She treated all of the students in the same manner and never gave them special treatment, positive or negative, regardless of race. Maya felt that she could just blend in, not stand out or feel like she did not belong in the manner that she had for her whole life.

Chapter 29

1. What does Daddy Clidell represent for Maya?

Daddy Clidell becomes the father that Maya never really knew.

2. The Black Underground, to which Maya has access through Daddy Clidell's associations, reinforces what motifs for Maya?

Through her associations with the Black Underground, Maya is able to build her self-esteem. Through their stories, she is able to be proud of her race because of their ingenuity and persistence. Also, she builds on her defiance of racism. Most of the stories are about black people tricking white people, righting some of the wrongs faced by their people throughout history.

3. Explain why Maya so easily accepts the stories of the men with little to no reproach for their illegal and unethical actions.

Maya sees the stories told by the members of the Black Underground as ingenious and courageous to take back some of what was stolen from them in the past. They are able to turn the tables and accept what is offered to them by society and make it better for themselves. Maya indicates that it was an issue of black people being persecuted for their whole lives, but now there is an opportunity for justice and reclamation of what should have rightfully been theirs.

Chapter 30

1. Structurally, why does this chapter immediately follow the previous one?

The previous chapter began to explore Maya's new home life with her mother and stepfather. The home is relatively stable and loving, and Daddy Clidell is a positive factor in Maya's life. This chapter now presents the contrast of what life will be like in the household of her father and Dolores. Here, the parent figures are selfish and phony. Instead of feeling loved and supported, Maya again feels alienated, abandoned, and threatened.

2. What does Maya mean when she says of Dolores, "she had all the poses of the Black bourgeoisie without the material basis to support the postures"?

Maya is saying that Dolores knows how to put on airs and can play the part of a black woman of some means—like Mother—but she is poor.

3. Why is Maya "another link in a long chain of disappointments" for Dolores?

Dolores's entire relationship with Bailey, Sr., was one disappointment after another, from where they lived, to when (and whether) they were going to be married, to the fact that she expected

the tall and awkward Maya to be “eight...years old and cute as [a] button.”

4. What is the significance of Maya's trip to Mexico with her father?

First, the trip affords Maya the opportunity to make Dolores jealous, which, to her, is a benefit.

Second, Maya has the opportunity to see her father as he really is when he is not anxious to make an impression and seem more important than he really is.

Finally, Maya has the opportunity to see her father's selfishness. When he “disappears,” she again feels anxious and abandoned. When he expresses no pride in her accomplishment—driving them safely back to the United States—she begins to recognize his utter selfishness.

Chapter 31

1. How does the account of Maya's altercation with Dolores show her to be Vivian's daughter?

Maya's reaction to Dolores seems to be influenced largely by Vivian. Maya fights back—as Vivian would do—to protect a family member's honor. She refuses to tolerate any cruel words or abuse from Dolores.

2. What is implied about Bailey, Sr.'s character through the chapter?

This chapter implies to the reader that Bailey, Sr. is a weak man, unable to stand up for his daughter even when she is injured.

Chapter 32

1. What two qualities is Maya able to develop as a result of living with the homeless youth?

Maya is able, finally, to develop her self-esteem. She can survive on her own and become a full, contributing member of her society. Also, she is able to develop a respect for persons of other races. Prior to this month, she had had only limited exposure to other races and was aware mostly of racial tensions. With the homeless teenagers, she is able to see cooperation among various races and cultures.

2. What is the most important feeling that Maya has while wandering and living in the junk yard? Why is this such an important feeling to her?

The most important feeling that Maya experiences while at the junk yard is freedom. For once in her life, she is in control and she can do as she pleases without fear of hurting someone she

loves or falling below someone's expectations.

3. "Dolores was a fool and, more important, a liar." Explain why Maya felt this.

Dolores has the opportunity to really pay Maya back and show her how much she hates her. Instead, Dolores lies to Vivian about where Maya is. This protects Maya, but it also protects Dolores from Vivian's wrath.

Chapter 33

1. Why does home seem different to Maya?

Maya has grown up. She has learned to survive independently, and she is not as naïve and idealistic as she once was.

2. What is the ultimate source of the tension between Bailey and Vivian?

Bailey craves his mother's approval so much that he imitates her. When she recognizes herself in her son, she is appalled, and they fight.

3. What does Bailey's use of the term "Mother Dear" express?

Harking back to Bailey and Maya's first introduction to their mother, "Mother Dear" is an insult, an indication that their mother was a phony and no more accessible to them than a movie actress. Bailey's use of the term is both a sarcastic insult, and a suggestion that the hurt and abandonment he felt as a child still remain.

Chapter 34

1. What can the reader assume are the reasons for Maya not being furious when she is first told streetcars do not accept colored people for conductorette jobs?

Maya is so used to racist attitudes and rules dictating societal norms that she just accepts it without question. It does not occur to her at first to be angry at the prejudice. She is only angry that she cannot have her way.

2. What does Maya mean when she says, "The miserable little encounter had nothing to do with me"? What does this realization do for her?

As a maturing young woman, Maya is finally coming to realize that she has not been rejected. The rejection is institutional, and any black woman who had applied for the position would have been rejected. The realization allows her to accept that the receptionist was not personally responsible for her treatment of Maya. She, too, was trapped in a corrupt institution. Thus,

Maya is able to rise above her own personal disappointment and anger and find a common humanity between herself and someone who might have been mistaken for her opponent.

3. Why does Maya insist that she must have this job?

Maya wants to defy the racist attitudes, which had governed her life thus far.

4. According to Maya Angelou, why should the success of a Black woman be regarded with enthusiasm rather than “belligerence” and “amazement”?

Black females must overcome myriad troubles in order to succeed. They must overcome both sexism and racism. For a black woman to succeed should be a celebration of wonder, not a hostile reaction to success.

Chapter 35

1. Why would Maya sympathize with lesbians more readily than with others?

Maya sees lesbians as persecuted and ostracized by circumstances beyond their control. She too has been affected by events beyond her control for most of her life.

2. What simple factor in Maya's life leads to her decision to seek a sexual relationship with the boy in the neighborhood?

Maya wants to have control over something. Her entire life has been determined for her by others.

Chapter 36

1. What moral distinction does Maya make between the previous calamities in her life and her current situation?

Maya recognizes that, whereas in the past she blamed fate and forces beyond her control for her problems and failures, she has to be honest with herself this time and admit that her pregnancy is a situation she brought on completely by herself.

2. What is significant about the distinction Maya sees between a lie and deceit?

Maya does not lie—does not deny being pregnant, does not claim to be only a schoolgirl approaching high school graduation. She does, however, deceive her family and almost herself by continuing her life and activities as if nothing were different.

3. How does Vivian Baxter show redeeming qualities despite the other negative portrayal of her throughout the book?

Vivian does not get angry over Maya's pregnancy, nor does she force Maya into decisions concerning her life or that of the baby. She helps Maya after the baby arrives, and forces her to be strong and confident in her abilities. By forcing Maya to care for her new baby, she helps Maya build her self-esteem. Vivian states, "See, you don't have to think about the right thing. You do it without thinking."

I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings

Preface

1. What motifs are introduced in the opening of the novel?

2. Maya feels that she is truly a beautiful white girl who has been transformed into an ugly black girl by a jealous fairy. What does this indicate about Maya?

Chapter 1

1. What mood is established by the first two paragraphs of the chapter?

2. Does the Black Community aggravate the feelings of displacement felt by the siblings? Why?

3. Why is the Store written with a capital "S"?

4. What is learned about Momma, and why was she an anomaly in the community?

5. Compare the Store in the AM and the PM during picking season. What is the reason for the difference?

Chapter 2

1. How does Uncle Willie control the children despite his disability?

2. Explain why Momma is determined to let others know that Uncle Willie's disability was caused by a caretaker and was not a condition incurred upon birth.

3. What is implied about Uncle Willie's self-esteem through the description of the visit from the strangers?

Chapter 3

1. What racist belief that society holds is expressed in the description of “used-to-be-sheriff”?

2. Who are “the boys?” Why is the use of this term a misnomer?

3. What is the “used-to-be-sheriff’s” warning?

4. What does Maya believe is the “used-to-be-sheriff’s” motivation for giving them the warning?

5. How is Maya being sarcastic when she says, “Without waiting for Momma’s thanks, he rode out of the yard, sure that things were as they should be and that he was a gentle squire, saving those deserving serfs from the laws of the land, which he condoned.”

Chapter 4

1. What are some clues in this chapter that reveal and reinforce Maya's poor self-esteem and displacement issues?

2. In what ways does Bailey try to alleviate Maya's feelings of displacement?

3. Maya turns Bailey into a hero, saying he is "such good fortune that it made me want to live a Christian life just to show God that I was grateful." Is Bailey really a hero? Why or why not?

4. What distinctions does Maya draw between "white folk" and black people?

5. Based on the details provided in this chapter, what are the effects of segregation has on children?

Chapter 5

1. How does religion affect Maya's life?

2. According to Maya, in what ways are expectations different for white children and black children?

3. What is ironic about the expectations for white children and the expectations for black children?

4. In what ways does Momma show the "powhitetrash" children her dominance?

5. What bigger significance do Momma's actions have?

6. What are some clues that indicate Momma is offended by the girls' behavior?

7. Why would Momma still call the girls “Miz” despite the indignities she is made to suffer by the girls’ rude behavior?

8. When Momma tells Maya to wash her face, she sings a hymn to herself and says, “Glory, glory hallelujah, when I lay my burden down.” What is the significance of this hymn?

Chapter 6

1. How does Maya view Reverend Howard Thomas?

2. What does Reverend Thomas's obesity represent?

3. Why does the Book of Deuteronomy appeal to Maya? What is happening in Maya's life that makes this book important to her?

4. In the passage about Sister Monroe, how does Angelou use repetition to convey humor?

5. In the same passage, how does Angelou use irony to convey humor?

6. What is the purpose of the story about Sister Monroe?

Chapter 7

1. Why does Momma instruct Maya and Bailey to be deferential to white people?

2. How does this teaching go against Momma's character?

3. How does this contradiction between Momma's values contribute to the theme of the helplessness of black people in the American South?

Chapter 8

1. What is the author attempting to show by naming towns in other states?

2. Explain the use of the following simile about the Depression: “[It] must have hit the white section of Stamps with cyclonic impact, but it seeped into the Black area slowly, like a thief with misgivings.”

3. How is the Black Community affected by the Depression?

4. In what ways does Momma continue to show strength and ingenuity in the face of adversity? How does this affect Bailey and Maya?

5. Explain why the Christmas presents from her parents affect Maya in a way contrary to what the reader would expect.

6. In what way does Bailey assume the role of hero once again?

Chapter 9

1. Why does Maya create an alternate reality of her father?

2. Why is Maya initially so proud of her father?

3. How does Bailey, Sr.'s success change Maya's understanding of the limitations placed on African-Americans?

4. How might successes like Maya's father's have contributed to the Civil Rights Movement?

5. In what ways does Bailey, Sr., hurt Maya's self-esteem?

6. When Maya learns that Bailey, Sr., wants to bring her to California, she goes to the pond to think. She asks herself, "Should I go with my father? Should I throw myself into the pond, and not being able to swim, join the body of L.C., the boy who had drowned last summer?" What do these thoughts say about Maya's mental state? Why does she feel this way?

7. The conversation in Pig-Latin that Bailey, Sr., and Maya have in the car translates to the following:

Maya (to Bailey, Jr., in Pig-Latin): Do you think this is our father, or do you think we are being kidnapped?

Bailey, Jr., (in Standard English): My, we're in St. Louis, and we're going to see Mother Dear.

Bailey, Sr., (in Pig-Latin): Who would want to kidnap you? Do you think you are Lindbergh children?

When Bailey, Sr., mentions Lindbergh children, he is referring to the Lindbergh case, in which the infant son of aviator Charles Lindbergh was kidnapped from home and held for ransom. What are some of the implications of the comparison of Maya and Bailey to the Lindbergh baby?

8. How does the reunion with Vivian—Maya and Bailey's birth mother—differ in expectation and reality?

Chapter 10

1. According to Maya's description, how is life in the North different from life in the South?

2. Does Maya view one way of life better than the other? Explain your answer.

3. How does Maya feel about her new teachers? How does her diction and imagery convey this opinion?

4. How does the behavior of the teachers illustrate a distinct class system within the Black Community living in St. Louis?

5. Grandfather Baxter tells his sons, "if you ever get in jail for stealing or some such foolishness, I'll let you rot. But if you're arrested for fighting, I'll sell the house, lock, stock, and barrel, to get you out!" Why might Grandfather Baxter feel stealing is worse than fighting?

6. How does Uncle Tommy raise Maya's self-esteem? How does this affect the woman she becomes toward the end of the novel?

7. What is the significance of Maya's name?

Chapter 11

1. How does Mr. Freeman separate himself from the children?

2. Why does Mr. Freeman act this way?

3. In what ways is Maya susceptible to Mr. Freeman's assault?

4. What purpose does literature serve for Maya at this time in her life?

Chapter 12

1. What contributes to Mr. Freeman's escalating his abuse of Maya?

2. What does the reader assume happens to Mr. Freeman?

Chapter 13

1. Why does Maya lie about the previous incidents of molestation when she is testifying?

2. What does the reader have to assume happens to Mr. Freeman?

3. What is significant about Maya's hiding in mutism? What is the ultimate result of her refusal to speak?

Chapter 14

1. “Their decision to be satisfied with life’s inequities was a lesson for me.” How does Maya apply this to her life?

2. How does Bailey deal with the abandonment?

Chapter 15

1. Why does Mrs. Flowers stand out in the community of Stamps, Arkansas?

2. Why would Momma's term of "Sister Flowers" be embarrassing to Maya?

3. Why is Mrs. Flowers's calling Maya "Marguerite" so important to Maya?

4. Why would it be important to speak what is written and how would this contribute to Maya?

5. What is the distinction between the terms "ignorance" and "illiteracy"?

6. How does Mrs. Flowers instill a sense of pride in Maya for their people?

7. Analyze the difference between what Maya says and what Momma understands when she is punished upon her return from Mrs. Flowers. What is the underlying cause of the reaction?

Chapter 16

1. How does Maya relate her experiences in life to those of white girls of the same age?

2. What is Glory's reason for not letting Maya insult Mrs. Cullinan?

3. Why could Maya forgive Mrs. Cullinan's calling her "Margaret" but not Mrs. Cullinan's calling her "Mary"?

4. Describe Maya's way of dealing with Mrs. Cullinan's insulting treatment of her. Why is it so successful?

Chapter 17

1. Why would the fact that Bailey is late on a Saturday be so worrisome to the family?

2. In what ways does Maya show her immaturity as she walks with Momma to try to meet Bailey?

3. What indicators are provided in the narrative that Bailey is suffering a great deal by what has happened to him?

4. Analyze Maya's reaction to seeing the movie *Mother Dear*.

5. On what note does this chapter end?

6. What is the effect of the narrator's intrusion into the narrative at the end of this chapter?

Chapter 18

1. What irony of human nature does the narrator make in this chapter?

2. What lessons about self-respect is Maya learning from observing her neighbors?

3. What is Maya realizing when she states that her “race may be masochists.”

4. How does the narrative about the revival give the reader insight into Momma?

5. Overall, what attitude does the narrator seem to display in this section about the role of religion in the lives of the people?

Chapter 19

1. Why is Joe Louis a hero?

2. Why would hopes and dreams either be built or dashed on Joe Louis's success or failure?

3. "It wouldn't do for a Black man and his family to be caught on a lonely country road on a night when Joe Louis had proved that we were the strongest people in the world." What is implied by this quote?

Chapter 20

1. What is the narrator suggesting at the beginning of this chapter by expressing Maya's fear of being thought "womanish"?

2. Explain the significance of Louise on Maya's life.

3. In what ways is Maya affected by her past?

4. What does Tommy provide Maya?

Chapter 21

1. How does Joyce use Bailey? What emotional impact does she have on him?

Chapter 22

1. What purpose do Maya's literary allusions serve?

2. How does the narrator create suspense at the beginning of this chapter?

3. Why is Maya distressed at the thought of Mr. Taylor telling about the appearance of his dead wife?

4. What narrative technique does the episode with Mr. Taylor allow the author to employ?

5. What impact does Sister Taylor's funeral have on Maya?

6. What does Maya illustrate by her reluctance to leave the circle of lamplight to fetch the fork for the potatoes?

7. What does the author mean when she says of Momma and Brother Taylor's conversation, "The sense of what they were saying became lost, and only the exercise remained"? How does she depict this in the book?

8. What does Maya learn about her grandmother from this episode?

Chapter 23

1. Why is the eighth grade graduation so significant in the lives of the community of Stamps?

2. What is Maya's tone when she describes the school she attended: "Unlike the white high school, Lafayette County Training School distinguished itself by having neither lawn, nor hedges, nor tennis court, nor climbing ivy"?

3. Explain the irony of Donleavy's using the word "praise" in his message to the graduating class.

4. What thought process is occurring in Maya's mind in the paragraphs beginning with "Graduation, the hush-hush magic" ending with, "we were an abomination. All of us"?

5. Maya relates, "I could have cried at the impertinence of 'I am the master of my fate, I am the captain of my soul.'" Why would she say this?

6. Why does the singing of "Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing" have the effect it has on Maya?

7. Maya states, “It may be enough, however, to have it said that we survive in exact relationship to the dedication of our poets (include preachers, musicians and blues singers).” Explain what she implies with this quote.

Chapter 24

1. What is significant about the difference in how Momma addresses the dentist and he addresses her? Why is this ironic?

2. What is so humiliating for Maya about Momma's referring to herself by her first name?

3. How does the author present Doctor Lincoln as both a racist and a hypocrite? Why doesn't the author use these words in her portrayal of the dentist?

4. In this passage, Maya provides two versions of the exchange between Momma and the dentist. How are the two versions different?

5. Why does Maya present the two versions?

6. What device does the author use to present to the reader the true account of the encounter? Why does she rely on this device?

Chapter 25

1. What is the purpose of the opening paragraph of this chapter?

2. Uncle Willie states “They don’t really hate us. They don’t know us. How can they hate us? They mostly scared.” What is Uncle Willie attempting to explain?

3. What thematic climax does the episode in the first part of this chapter point to? What plot event does this climax motivate?

4. What other theme is Maya emphasizing when she complains, “we were made to abide in a kind of limbo until white people we would never see, in offices we would never visit, signed and stamped and mailed the pass back to Momma”?

5. Why does Maya say she would not miss, of all people, Mrs. Flowers?

Chapter 26

1. What does Maya mean when she describes Momma as “too big and too black and very old fashioned”?

2. Why is Maya so anxious about meeting and living with her mother? What suggests that she finally overcomes this anxiety?

3. What does Mother teach her children through her lifestyle? How is life with Mother different from life with Momma?

Chapter 27

1. How does World War II present an ironic opportunity for Negroes? Why is it ironic? What does it indicate about human nature?

2. How does Maya find contentment against the backdrop of the war?

3. What is the point of the story with which Maya closes this chapter?

Chapter 28

1. What view of prejudice does Maya provide in the opening paragraph of this chapter?

2. Why does Maya suggest that her time in George Washington High School “might have been time lost”?

3. What made Miss Kirwin so memorable to Maya?

Chapter 29

1. What does Daddy Clidell represent for Maya?

2. The Black Underground, to which Maya has access through Daddy Clidell's associations, reinforces what motifs for Maya?

3. Explain why Maya so easily accepts the stories of the men with little to no reproach for their illegal and unethical actions.

Chapter 30

1. Structurally, why does this chapter immediately follow the previous one?

2. What does Maya mean when she says of Dolores, “she had all the poses of the Black bourgeoisie without the material basis to support the postures”?

3. Why is Maya “another link in a long chain of disappointments” for Dolores?

4. What is the significance of Maya’s trip to Mexico with her father?

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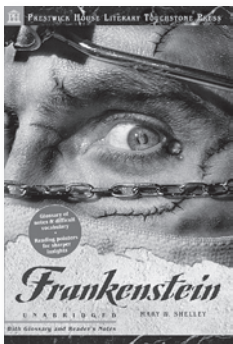
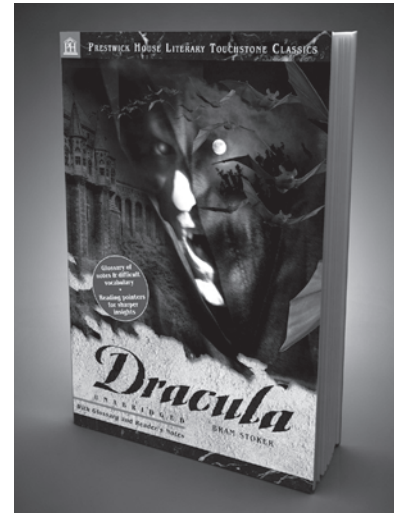
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We accept purchase orders and authorized orders charged to institutions. Personal orders not on a credit card must be accompanied by a check.

Signature _____

Telephone # _____

Exp. Date _____

Credit Card #

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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Because charges for air delivery are based on weight and distance, heavy packages can be expensive to ship air freight. Typographic and photographic errors are subject to revision. Prestwick House is the sole source of all proprietary materials listed in this catalogue. Please be sure to include a street address. FedEx ground/UPS will not deliver to a P.O. Box.

Subtotal \$ _____

Shipping 12% S&H (\$6.00 minimum) \$ _____

Total \$ _____

Shipping & Handling

For orders of \$50.00 or less, please add \$6.00 for shipping and handling charges. For orders from \$50.01 to \$799.99 add 12%. For orders of \$800.00 and more, add 10%.

Delivery Service

Most orders are shipped FedEx and you can expect delivery within 7-10 working days. Items in stock are usually shipped within one working day of receiving your order.

Expedited Delivery

for expedited delivery ask about the following options:

- Overnight Air
- 2nd day air
- 3 Day Select