

Literature Circle Questions

Use the questions and activities that follow to get more out of the experience of reading *Blizzard's Wake* by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor.

1. Why is Zeke Dexter getting out of jail? How long has he been there? Where is he going?
2. What is the connection between Zeke and Kate? How does Kate feel about Zeke?
3. What is "the bridge"? Why is it important to Kate?
4. Why can't Zeke reach his brother by phone? What doesn't he know? What problems will this make for him as he heads home?
5. How has Kate been affected by her mother's death? How has it changed her life?
6. List all the ways day-to-day life was different in 1941 from the way life is today. List all the ways it is the same.
7. Imagine you were Jake or Kate during the blizzard. How would you react to the appearance of Zeke Dexter? What would you do? Why?
8. On page 150 "Kate faced the bitter realization that her heart had been frozen solid, and spring would come to all but her." What does this sentence mean? What keeps Kate's heart so cold and what keeps it from warming?
9. War, from President Roosevelt's address to the nation to Kate's history teacher's lectures, is always in the background in this story. What do the war preparations have to do with the story symbolically?
10. Explain the title of the book. What does wake mean? What alternative meanings could the title have? What other titles could this book have had?
11. If Zeke had not ended up at the Sterling's house, how do you think Kate's life would have been different?
12. At the end of the book, Kate writes Zeke a letter. What do you imagine he thinks of it? What do you think he would have said if he wrote a letter back to her?
13. Was Zeke sufficiently punished for his crime? Why or why not?
14. Do you think Dr. Sterling should have behaved differently in any way? Explain.

Note: These questions are keyed to Bloom's taxonomy as follows: Knowledge: 1-3; Comprehension: 4-5; Application: 6-7; Analysis: 8-10; Synthesis: 11-12; Evaluation: 13-14.

Activities

1. Get together in a small group and talk about forgiveness. Is there anyone you can't forgive? Why? What was the hardest thing you've ever had to forgive someone for? What was the worst thing you've been forgiven for? Would you have forgiven Zeke Dexter if you were Kate?
2. Research drunk driving laws in your state and make posters for your classroom and school about the dangers of drinking and driving.
3. *Blizzard's Wake* is based on a real event, the Red River Valley Blizzard of 1941. Find some old newspapers from your community and find an event from long-ago to use as the basis for a story you write. Combine historical happenings with fictional creations.

Other Books by This Author:

How I Came to Be a Writer?, Aladdin, 2001

Jade Green, Atheneum, 2000

Reluctantly Alice, Aladdin, 2000

Sang Spell, Aladdin, 2000

Shiloh, Aladdin, 2000

Walker's Crossing, Aladdin, 2001