



# Beloved

by Toni Morrison

## Teacher's Guide

Written By Mary Kay Wheeler

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Editor's note: Since the novel's parts are broken into unnumbered sections, the section numbers have been determined and provided along with the pagination for each section. Brackets are used to designate sections and pages without numbering.

## Synopsis

### Part I

#### [SECTION 1, P. 3]-23

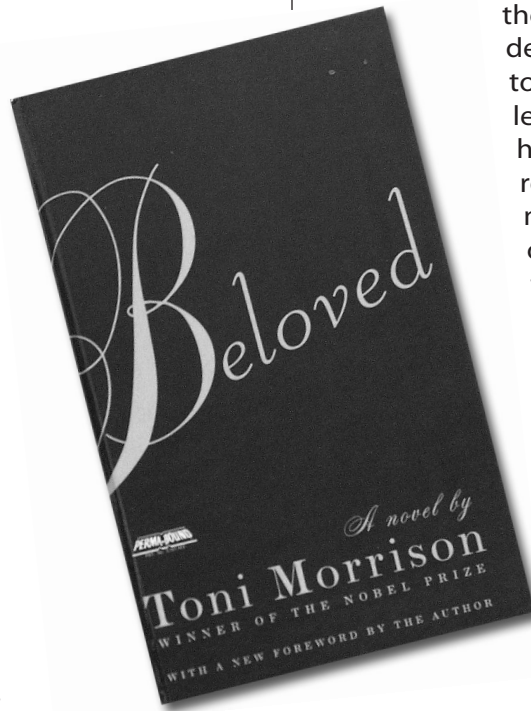
*Beloved* begins with a description of a house at 124 Bluestone Road, Cincinnati, Ohio in 1873. The house is occupied by Sethe, her daughter Denver, and the ghost of a murdered, infant girl; Sethe's sons, Howard and Buglar, have each fled the home because of the strange occurrences initiated by the ghost. Baby Suggs, Sethe's mother-in-law, died shortly after her two grandsons fled. Sethe and Denver attempt to summon the ghost, but it wouldn't appear; Sethe remembers how much she loved the girl and only being able to have one of the two words engraved on her gravestone. "Dearly Beloved" would have taken too much time.

The arrival of Paul D, a friend of Sethe's from the time she spent living at Sweet Home, sparks memories of their past, and Denver learns more about her family's history. When Paul D enters the house, he immediately feels the red light and the house's evil; Sethe describes the presence as 'sad.' Sethe had arrived at Sweet Home around 1848 when she was 13 years old; she had been purchased to replace Baby Suggs, whose son, Halle, had earned

her freedom by working five years' worth of Sabbaths. She had been purchased by a generous plantation owner named Garner. Sethe had taken Halle as her man, and Sethe became pregnant with four of his children. Sethe suspects Halle is dead; Paul D seems to know more about Halle's fate but does not reveal it. Denver tells Paul D that the ghost that haunts their house is that of her sister, and she recalls the time when the ghost so frightened their dog Here Boy, that he never came inside again. After inviting Paul D to spend the night, Denver breaks down describing their lack of friends or visitors and how badly she wants to leave the house. Sethe blames the house for people's fears; Denver lays responsibility at the feet of her mother. Sethe, who has had enough of running away, vows not to leave the house. Sethe describes an attack at Sweet Home while she was pregnant with Denver and while preparing to move north to join her children and Baby Suggs; she had sent the children with other blacks headed north and cautioned them to feed the baby milk with sugar in it. The boys of Sweet Home came for her milk, and when she told Mrs. Garner about it, schoolteacher had one of the boys beat her, leaving a scar in the shape of a tree. Paul D fondles Sethe, the ghost makes its presence felt again, Paul D and Sethe go upstairs, and Denver sulks on the porch eating bread and jelly.

#### [SECTION 2, P. 24]-33

After their night together, and while they remain in bed pretending to still be asleep, Sethe and Paul D each feel disappointment in their performance and in each other. Paul D recalls a tree he would sit under and called Brother and the exploits of Sixo, who would walk miles to meet a woman. Sethe recalls Baby Suggs' resentment of all her children



except for Halle. She also recalls that Sundays were the only days she and Halle actually saw each other; other times together were in early morning darkness or in evening darkness. She recalls asking Mrs. Garner for permission to marry Halle and the dress she made for the wedding. Sethe and Paul D remember, individually, when Sethe and Halle made love in a corn field thinking they were unseen, but Paul D and other Sweet Home denizens watched from the shade of Brother.

**[SECTION 3, P. 34]-51**

Denver recalls a boxwood bower where she would go as a child to play, then later, as a refuge from her brothers, and later still, as her own secret, private place. She remembers returning from the bower and seeing Sethe and a white dress. Denver 'steps into' the story of her own birth, a dreamy sequence: Sethe's tortured walk from Sweet Home to get her milk and her unborn child to Ohio, the feeling of being tortured inside and outside by an antelope, and her encounter with Amy on her own quest to Boston for velvet. Denver confronts Sethe about the dress, but it is unfamiliar to Sethe. Sethe relates the story of schoolteacher's arrival at Sweet Home with two boys; schoolteacher, Mr. Garner's brother-in-law, took over management of Sweet Home after the death of Mr. Garner. He carried a notebook and recorded whatever Sethe and the others told him; she explains that the contents of the notebook were what 'tore up' Sixo. Denver decides the appearance of the white dress has something to do the baby's ghost. Paul D thinks about finding Sethe's house and Sethe and remembers time spent wandering, in the war, and in a prison work-gang. He speculates to Sethe that Denver has plans that do not include him. Sethe tells Paul D that Denver is 'charmed' and always has been; she does not believe harm can come to Denver. She relates how schoolteacher had found them in Ohio, and that she chose jail over returning to life at Sweet Home.

**[SECTION 4, P. 52]-59**

Three days after Paul D's arrival, Denver asks how long he intends to 'hang around' rattling him and causing him to drop his coffee cup. An argument with Sethe ensues when he asks if she has the same question of him. He refuses to be gagged in a relationship; she refuses to not stand behind her

daughter. They reach an uneasy peace. The following Thursday, Paul D, Sethe, and Denver go to the carnival on the day set aside for 'coloreds.' Sethe watches their shadows which seem to be holding hands and takes that as a good sign. Denver attends the carnival reluctantly, but she enjoys being greeted by acquaintances. All the 'colored-people' seem to enjoy watching the strangest 'whitefolks' make spectacles of themselves. Eventually, even Denver has a good time.

**[SECTION 5, P. 60]-67**

A woman walks out of the stream near 124 Bluestone and is waiting, leaning against a tree stump and wearing new shoes, when Sethe, Denver, and Paul D return from the carnival. Sethe's initial reaction to seeing the woman is an uncontrollable bladder, and she barely makes it to the front of the privy before she must relieve herself. The raspy-voiced woman tells them her name is Beloved. She falls asleep while talking to them, and they help her to the keeping room and Baby Suggs' bed where she continues to sleep for four days. They decide she may have cholera; Denver attends to all Beloved's physical needs. Sethe asks the whereabouts of their dog Here Boy, but Denver assures her the dog will not be back. During the brief periods that Beloved is awake, she focuses on the orange patches of Baby Suggs' quilt. Beloved savors any type of sweet food. Sethe and Denver enjoy Beloved's presence in the house. They think Beloved moves like an old person who is strong but unable to hold up the weight of her head. Paul D wonders why she makes no mention of family or moving on and comments on Beloved's strength saying he and Denver had seen her lift a rocking chair with one hand; Denver denies having witnessed the event. Paul D realizes there will always be distance between himself and Denver.

**[SECTION 6, P. 67]-75**

Sethe is flattered by Beloved's constant attention. Sethe had always spoken of the past reluctantly, but she enjoys relating the past to Beloved, who delights in hearing it. Beloved asks where Sethe's diamonds are; Sethe relates a story a story of how she once had crystal earrings given to her by Mrs. Garner as a wedding present. Sethe recalls her disappointment when she learned there would not be a wedding ceremony or celebration. She

describes the wedding dress she stole bits of material for and made herself. She further relates her 'honeymoon' spent in the cornfield and watched by others from under Paul D's tree Brother. After giving birth to Denver, Baby Suggs pierced her ears. Sethe has a sudden, vivid memory of being told by a friend of her mother's that she had children before her; Sethe's mother had thrown them away because they had been fathered by the ship's crew or white men. She had not even named them, but Sethe she had kept and named for her father. Denver hates the stories of her mother's past without her; she begins to wonder how Beloved knows to ask the questions she asks that prompt those stories.

[SECTION 7, P. 76-86]

Paul D notices Beloved's 'shining' and does not like it. He wonders why Sethe and Denver do not see such an obvious sign of arousal. He asks her about family and how she came to find their house. Beloved claims a woman at the bridge told her how to find the house. Paul D risks the wrath of Sethe and Denver by continuing his questions; he knows she is different from every other black woman he has known. Just as he determines to find Beloved another place to live, she chokes on the bread pudding. Denver uses Beloved's choking to get the woman to move in the room with her, and she helps Beloved to her room. Sethe immediately questions Paul D about his grilling of Beloved. An argument ensues and Paul D tells Sethe that Halle never left her; he says Halle witnessed the boys when they 'stole' her milk from the hayloft and was never the same. Paul D tells her the last time he saw Halle, he was covered in butter sitting next to the churn. Sethe is furious Halle saw schoolteacher's boys attack her and had not tried to stop them. Sethe tries to forget the past; she needs to concern herself with Denver and Beloved. Sethe recalls how some slaves were made to wear an iron bit that held their tongue down and how the bit put wildness in those who wore it. Paul D tells Sethe about cracking open an abandoned egg and saving the life of a mean rooster called Mister. Mister had a dignity Paul D could never have after wearing the bit. Sethe soothes and quiets Paul D, then goes to work and kneads bread.

[SECTION 8, P. 87-100]

After Denver and Beloved dance around their room, Denver asks her about her home. Beloved tells her she's from a small, tight, dark place, and her name in that place was Beloved. She came to 124 Bluestone to see Sethe. Denver begins to realize who Beloved is, and tells her not to tell Sethe. Beloved tells Denver to never tell her what to do. Denver describes her birth: how Amy Denver had rubbed Sethe's feet, how Amy had been the first to call Sethe's scars a tree, how she treated Sethe's back with spiderwebs. Amy makes Sethe shoes by filling scraps of her shawl with leaves. Sethe agrees to share Amy's story with Denver as she grows up.

[SECTION 9, P. 101-124]

Sethe realizes it is time to follow Baby Suggs' advice and 'lay it all down' by putting her memories of Halle and everything else bad behind her. She needs to go to the Clearing, the place where Baby Suggs had preached her own gospel of love, laughing, crying, and touching. Sethe has Denver and Beloved don their shawls, and they head for the Clearing, Sethe intending to honor Halle a final time. Her sweating reminds her of the time after Amy had gone when she and her newborn had trudged northward to find her family; she remembers how thirsty she had been when she found Stamp Paid who ferried her across the river. On the Ohio side of the river, Ella hurries Sethe along after learning she had been helped by a white girl. Ella tends the baby's navel and slits a pair of men's shoes to fit Sethe's swollen feet. When Sethe reaches 124 Bluestone, Baby Suggs treats her wounds and bathes her. She remembers her delight in seeing her two boys and her baby girl who was crawling already. After lying to her sons about the coming of their father, Sethe nurses her oldest daughter. She considers each of her 'rememories.' As Baby Suggs gathers Sethe's discarded clothing to throw away, she finds Mrs. Garner's crystal earrings and agrees to pierce Sethe's ears. The earrings delight Sethe's oldest daughter.

At the Clearing, Sethe sits on Baby Suggs' preaching rock where she feels Baby Suggs' gentle touch. She remembers Halle and thinks about what Paul D has brought to her life. Baby Suggs' touch becomes a stranglehold, and Sethe falls from the rock gasping; Denver and Beloved rush to her side.

As Sethe considers what Paul D has brought back into her life, she dreads what else he might tell her about their past and friends, and especially Halle. Beloved kisses Sethe's neck over and over, like a two-year-old, before Sethe grabs her by the hair and pulls her off, telling her she is too old for that behavior; she also sees the terror in Denver's eyes. As she pulls Beloved's head from her neck, she notices the smell of 'new milk.' Knowing Baby Suggs would not have tried to strangle her, Sethe wonders if Paul D's presence had caused the house's ghost to flee to the Clearing. When Sethe returns to the house, Paul D meets her; Beloved hears their noises as soon as she enters the house, and her resentment of Paul D intensifies. When Beloved flees the house, Denver confronts her saying she had seen her try to strangle Sethe. Denver remembers Lady Jones teaching her to read and write until Nelson Lord asked the questions that made her flee Lady Jones' classes; she suddenly realizes that Buglar and Howard left as much because of their mother as the antics of the house's ghost. She remembers asking Sethe Nelson's questions but not hearing a response, or anything else, for two years until hearing the sound of a baby crawling up the stairs. From then on, the ghost became more spiteful; it infuriated Buglar and Howard and sent Baby Suggs to her bed craving only color, any color but white, the color of 'whitepeople.' Denver had refused to hear anything after asking Sethe if she had gone to jail for murder, and then Nelson's second question, if Denver had spent those years in prison with her. Denver knows the arrival of Paul D is what has caused the resurrection of Beloved. Denver is joined by Beloved at a stream where they watch mating turtles.

**[SECTION 10, P. 125]-133**

Paul D looks around Sweet Home a final time as Brandywine, to whom he was sold by schoolteacher, coffles him and secures him to a wagon. He remembers being caged after trying to murder Brandywine. Paul D remembers the indignity of prison in Alberta, Georgia and their daring escape under the leadership of Hi Man while a mudslide claimed their submerged cells; he remembers the Cherokee who had also fled the white man but helped the escaping Buffalo Men, called that because of their hair. The Cherokee direct Paul D north, following tree flowers, to Delaware and the weaver lady.

**[SECTION 11, P. 134-138]**

Paul D begins sleeping in a rocking chair near the stove until he moves into Baby Suggs' room; he and Sethe maintain their daily times alone. From Baby Suggs' room Paul D moves to a shed outside. He knows a woman is moving him out of the house, further away from Sethe. Beloved comes to him there; she wants him to call her by her name and to touch her 'inside part.' Initially, he resists, but eventually calls her Beloved; the noise they make as he touches her 'inside part' awakens both Paul D and Denver.

**[SECTION 12, P. 139-146]**

Denver savors Beloved's attention; she knows she would give Beloved anything she needed. Growing increasingly suspicious, Sethe asks Beloved about her family. Beloved recalls she had her own woman and a white woman who had snatched her away. Sethe confides to Denver that Beloved may have been locked up and used by white men, like Ella who had helped her after she crossed the river. Sethe believes this may account for Beloved's dislike of Paul D. Denver does not believe her mother's story as she is certain Beloved is the white dress she had seen holding Sethe in the keeping room, the ghost she had lived with all her life. Denver and Beloved enter Paul D's dark shed; when the door slams closed, Denver realizes she is alone and how easily she had been trapped. Beloved mysteriously reappears, and she and Denver sit on Paul D's pallet in the dark. Beloved sees her own face in the darkness, and it makes her laugh.

**[SECTION 13, P. 147-156]**

Paul D remembers life at Sweet Home; how Mr. Garner had trusted his slaves, believed in them, treated them in ways that showed them they mattered and how all that changed with the arrival of schoolteacher. He is humiliated by his behavior with Beloved, and knows that it is she who is in control. Paul D knows he cannot be free of Beloved without Sethe's help, and to get that help, he will have to confess his behavior. When he is unable to hurt her, the way he knows his confession will, he asks her instead to get pregnant with his child. They laugh and flirt in the snow on the way home from the restaurant until an unexpected encounter



with Beloved. She had come carrying a shawl for Sethe, who instead wraps it around her shoulders. When they enter the house, Paul D wonders whose ally Denver is. When Sethe invites him back to her room to stay, Paul D can feel the malice coming from Beloved. While they lay in bed, Sethe knows she will not have another child and speculates about his reasons for wanting one.

**[SECTION 14, P. 157-158]**

Beloved tries to enlist Denver's help in making Paul D leave. She pulls out her own back tooth, and when Denver asks why she does not cry from the pain, she cries. Upstairs, Paul D and Sethe hear nothing.

**[SECTION 15, P. 159]-173**

Baby Suggs wants to celebrate when Halle and Sethe's three children are delivered to her door; she knows until Halle and Sethe are also there, it is too early for that celebration. When Sethe and Denver arrive, Stamp Paid gathers enough berries for several pies; to the horror of Baby Suggs, he feeds a berry to baby Denver. He collects so many, they have a feast for ninety people. Their neighbors eat so much, have such a feast, that they get angry, jealous of Baby Suggs' abundance. They were angry because Baby Suggs had not been through everything they had been through: she had been bought out of slavery by her own son, delivered to her new home by her former owner, Mr. Garner, and rented a two-story house from the Bodwins, a white brother and sister who hated slavery and provided for their needs. Working in the yard the next day, Baby Suggs smells her neighbor's disapproval. Baby Suggs smells another danger as well; she does not know what it is, but she knows it is coming. She remembers life at Sweet Home, and Halle, the child she had been determined not to know because of the pain of losing him like her other seven children. On the way to Ohio, Baby Suggs asks Mr. Garner why he always called her Jenny; he tells her that was the name on her 'sales ticket.' Baby had always called herself by her husband's name so he might find her after they had each escaped to freedom.

**[SECTION 16, P. 174]-180**

The apocalyptic arrival of four horsemen brings schoolteacher, one of his nephews, a slave catcher, and the sheriff to the house on Bluestone Road in a search for run-away slaves to return to Kentucky. They enter a shed and find two black boys bleeding and a black woman holding a blood-soaked child in one hand an infant in the other. The woman tries to swing the infant against the wall but is stopped by the entry of a black man. Schoolteacher realizes there is now nothing for them to claim; he blames the nephew who beat the black woman and punished him by not letting him be part of the "hunt." The sheriff attempts to take the black woman into custody.

Baby Suggs enters the shed. While the sheriff sends for a wagon, Baby Suggs and Stamp Paid get the boys, the infant, and Sethe holding the little girl with the nearly-severed neck back inside the house. Baby attends to the wounds of the boys then trades Sethe her baby for the dead little girl. Sethe begins to nurse Denver. The sheriff returns and takes Sethe and Denver away in the wagon. As Baby runs to retrieve Denver, two white children arrive with shoes for her to repair.

**[SECTION 17, P. 181-186]**

While Stamp Paid and Paul D move pigs from barge to slaughterhouse, Stamp Paid shares a newspaper clipping with a photograph of a black woman with Sethe's dark eyes, but Paul D claims the woman does not have Sethe's mouth. Stamp Paid relates the story of Baby Suggs' big feast, how he gathered berries and they had cooked all day, the party itself, and the arrival of the four horsemen the next day. Paul D keeps looking at the photograph and saying it cannot be a photograph of Sethe, the woman does not have Sethe's mouth. Stamp rereads the article without sharing its contents with Paul D, and he remembers how eighteen years earlier, a young slavegirl had recognized a hat, gathered her children, and rushed to a woodshed where she would kill her children.

**[SECTION 18, P. 187]-195**

Sethe tells Paul D how her baby girl was crawling when she arrived at Bluestone, and that there was much she did not know about being a mother. She

had never spent much time with other women, and Mrs. Garner had never had children. She tells him how filled with love for her children she was when she arrived at Bluestone. When school-teacher and the others arrived at Bluestone, she did the only thing she could do, the thing she had to do—she did what would protect her children from him; she would not let them grow up as slaves. Paul D tells Sethe her love had been ‘too thick’ to which she replies ‘thin love ain’t love at all.’ Paul D knows he is being watched from above while talking with Sethe; he knows a woman is watching him. Paul D leaves. Sethe thinks after all she’s been through, Paul D did not think she could handle hearing him say good-bye. She says, in his absence, ‘so long’ as if from somewhere else.

## Part II

### [SECTION 1, p. 199]-235

As he approaches the loud house at 124 Bluestone, Stamp Paid wonders if he did the right thing in telling Paul D about Sethe and her children. He is torn that as the man who led her to freedom, he was also the man who may have prevented her from having happiness and a relationship with a loving Paul D. He ponders his fondness for Denver and how he had given her the first of the berries he’d picked for Baby Suggs’ feast. He remembers it is the first time he’s been to the house since Baby Suggs’ death, and long before that, the Misery (his word for Sethe’s encounter with the Fugitive Bill and its aftermath). Law had prevented Baby Suggs’ burial in the Clearing, so she was buried next to Sethe’s baby. He remembers the irony of Baby Suggs’ funeral, a woman who had done so much to bring people together, remembered at a service where there was such hostility between her friends and acquaintances and her family. Stamp Paid approaches Sethe’s door for the sixth time in as many days, does not know what he’ll do if the door’s opened, and he leaves.

Meanwhile, Sethe decides to take Baby Suggs’ advice and put the past behind her. She finds old skates and takes Denver and Beloved skating on the frozen creek. Sethe takes a fall, and they laugh until they cry, Sethe a little longer than the girls. When they return to the house, Beloved begins to hum a song Sethe had made up and sang to her children. The girls spend the night sleeping in front of the fire.

Stamp Paid approaches the house again remembering the time when Baby Suggs seemed to give up, retiring to her bed to consider colors. His encouragement to Baby to resume her preaching fell on indifferent ears. He realizes it is Suggs’ inability to either approve or condemn Sethe’s behavior in the shed that turned her friends, her congregation, against her. He remembers finding a red ribbon in the river, a red ribbon attached to a piece of scalp and a curl.

Sethe wakes late and realizes she’ll be late for work for the first time and begins the girls’ breakfast. She assures Denver that she’ll see Beloved before she leaves for work. When she leaves the house, she does not hear all the voices swirling about it that Stamp Paid had heard. She remembers Baby Suggs visiting her in prison, Mr. Bodwin visiting the judge on her behalf, and the Colored Ladies of Ohio petitioning the court to prevent her being hanged. She remembers: being allowed out of jail for the burial of her daughter but not for the funeral; Howard and Buglar avoiding her touch at the burial and how they always seemed to hold hands; hearing Reverend Pike say “Dearly Beloved” and knowing that was how she regarded her dead daughter. Stamp Paid approaches the house, the only house of colored people he knew of where he was not welcome, and he sees Denver and Beloved sleeping on the floor. His knock goes unanswered and he goes to visit Ella and John. Ella and Stamp debate after she questions his visit to the house on Bluestone. Ella does not know who is sharing their house, as no one but Stamp Paid and Paul D have been there since the burial. She tells him Paul D is staying at the church, and they debate again, this time about why a good man like Paul D has not been invited in by anyone. Stamp knows the reason, as no one will have anything to do with Paul D because of Sethe. Stamp Paid confesses he told Paul D about Sethe’s past, and that was reason he had left the house on Bluestone. Ella’s opinion of Paul D changes; she had been unaware that Paul D had known Sethe and Baby Suggs at Sweet Home. Stamp goes searching for Paul D to learn the identity of the guest at Bluestone.

While Sawyer shouts at her for being late, Sethe considers Halle’s face covered in butter after the boys came for her milk, the iron mouthpiece Paul D had been forced to wear, Sixo being burned alive, and her mother’s hanging. She considers how Paul

D had restored her faith in people but then left without saying goodbye. She considers how she had lost her faith in 'whitefolks.' She is ashamed of stealing from Mr. Sawyer and remembers how Sixo had been beaten for stealing, butchering, and eating a shoat. On her walk home, she recalls events at Sweet Home as if she were relating them to Beloved. She remembers a discussion with Halle and learning schoolteacher had forbidden him from leaving Sweet Home to do other work making it impossible to pay off his debt for Baby Suggs. Halle had asked Sethe what he had left to sell or be sold to repay his debt. Something Halle had said awoke her abruptly—'while the boys is small.' With Paul F having been sold off, she knew her family could meet the same fate. Halle told her about the 'train' (the Underground Railroad) which he had learned about from Sixo. Because of her pregnancy, the plan of Sixo, Halle, and Sethe to meet the 'train' was delayed, just long enough to get Sixo burned alive, land Paul D in an iron mouthpiece, and Halle's face clabbered. When the time came, Sethe was only ready to send the children on the train; she had no idea Paul A had been hung, and that their plan had been discovered.

After failing to gain entry, Stamp Paid walks away and considers the voices that whirled inside and outside the house on Bluestone.

**[SECTION 2, p. 236]-241**

Sethe realizes Beloved is her own daughter come back to her, how Paul D's arrival had run the ghost off and forced Beloved to come back to her in the flesh. Sethe knows she'll be able make Beloved understand everything that has happened in their lives. She remembers telling Mrs. Garner about her beating and how Mrs. Garner had cried. She remembers giving the children to the woman from the 'train' and returning to Sweet Home. She thinks about her brutal beating done in a way that would not jeopardize her unborn child. She remembers Baby Suggs' fascination with color and begins to understand that interest. She remembers the night she took her children to meet the 'train' and the ferocity of the beating when she returned. She considers how she would have recognized Beloved immediately had it not been for Paul D. Sethe remembers her plan to take herself and her children to the other side, where her own ma'am was, rather than allow any of them to be returned to

the lives of slavery. She had only been able to make sure Beloved got there. She would have even worked like the 'slaughterhouse girls' who made their rounds on payday before letting her children do without. She had traded her body once, for Beloved's one-word gravestone, she could have done it again. But Beloved came back to her, and Sethe was Beloved's, and Beloved, hers.

**[SECTION 3, p. 243]-247**

Denver's thoughts address Beloved. She recalls her fear of her mother after learning of Beloved's murder, and how Buglar and Howard had runaway rather than continue to face Sethe and the ghost that haunted the house. Denver has not left the house alone since learning of Sethe and the shed from Nelson Lord at Miss Lady Jones' school. When Denver learned the truth about her mother, she directed herself inward, allowing access to Beloved, someone with whom she could share her silence. Denver felt safe while Baby Suggs still lived; she had waited for the return of her father, and got Paul D instead. She knows of her father's ability to do math and read and his love for runny fried eggs. Denver recalls her fear of Sethe when Sethe would punish the boys for the actions of the ghost. Denver had always known Beloved would return, and together they would wait for the return of their father. Baby Suggs had warned Denver the ghost would never hurt her, but that the ghost was greedy. Denver is certain Beloved is hers.

**[SECTION 4, p. 248-252]**

In a poetic, dream-like sequence, Beloved recalls the time spent without a face, the time when she could not see herself, only the dead and dying around her. She longs to get back to her face, Sethe's face, her own.

**[SECTION 5, p. 253-256]**

Beloved remembers the last time she saw Sethe. Sethe and Beloved's thoughts are of their love for each other. Denver and Beloved's thoughts are of time spent playing at the river and Denver's know their father will return. Sethe, Denver, and Beloved's thoughts are of each other, how each is committed to the other, and how each possesses the other.

**[SECTION 6, p. 257-269]**

Paul D sits with his hands between his knees on the porch of the church where he lives. He recalls life at Sweet Home with both Mr. Garner and schoolteacher. He questions the real differences between the two men. He remembers how he had to will himself to live after Sweet Home and finding Sethe. He remembers Sixo's telling him about a plan to head north with Thirty-Mile Woman, and the Paul's delay in making their decision to go. He remembers being caught and Sixo's time in the fire laughing and singing until he was shot. After the capture, Paul D had been placed in an iron collar that would prevent him from laying his head down and Sethe coming to him that night in search of Halle.

**[SECTION 7, p. 270]-277**

Stamp Paid calls on Paul D at the church to apologize that no one had offered Paul D a place to stay and that Paul D would be welcome at the home of Cincinnati's colored. Stamp relates to Paul D how his name had once been Joshua, until his wife Vashti, who would wear the ribbon he was fingering returned after time spent with their young owner, and how instead of killing either of them, he'd made sure the young man's wife knew of the rendezvous, and how he had fled and changed his name instead. They argue when Stamp tells Paul D that he had been there the day Sethe killed her baby and how she had loved her children. Paul D tells Stamp about Beloved's arrival at Bluestone.

**Part III****[SECTION 1, p. 281-309]**

After Sethe sees Beloved's scar, Denver begins to feel herself being shut out as Sethe increasingly devotes her time, effort, attention, and food to Beloved. Sethe has lost her job at the restaurant. Denver and Sethe each begin to wither as Beloved grows larger. Beloved becomes increasingly demanding. Denver knows she must get help for her mother but does not know where or to whom to go for it. Denver hears Baby Suggs clearly telling her to get off the porch and go for help.

Denver goes to the house of Miss Lady Jones and offers to work for food. Parcels of food begin to arrive at Denver's house, and she makes the effort to thank every donor she can identify and return their plates; many of the donors share stories of Baby Suggs. To Denver it seems Sethe is asking for Beloved's forgiveness but not expecting it, while Beloved obliges her by withholding her forgiveness. Denver goes to the Bodwins looking for work, and a chance greeting from Nelson Lord fills her with hope for the future. After making Denver describe what was happening to Sethe, the Bodwins' maid agrees to convince the Bodwins they needed additional help. The maid thinks Sethe is finally losing her mind. As Denver leaves the Bodwin house she sees a bank made to resemble a 'blackboy' with a racist slogan written on it. The maid spreads the word about Sethe, Denver, and Beloved. Ella, who understands Sethe's reason for what she had done eighteen years earlier but not Sethe's reaction, organizes an intervention. Denver is waiting for Mr. Bodwin and her first night's employment in his house when Ella's group arrives. Ella's group of thirty women arrives remembering a time years earlier and Baby Suggs' celebration. Ella remembers the child she had been forced to carry but could not be forced to nurse. Mr. Bodwin also approaches 124 Bluestone remembering his childhood in the house and a time eighteen years earlier when he and the Society had used the issue of infanticide in their abolitionist crusade. As Sethe chips ice to cool Beloved, they each hear the singing of the women outside. Sethe, still carrying the ice pick, and Beloved move onto the porch as the women and Mr. Bodwin approach. Beloved is naked and her stomach is large and protruding. Sethe sees the white man coming and thinks he is there to take her 'best thing' just like in the past. She charges Mr. Bodwin and the group of women fall upon her to prevent another tragedy. Beloved sees Sethe leaving her again, leaving her alone, and a man without skin carrying a whip looking at her.

**[SECTION 2, p. 310-322]**

Paul D returns to 124 Bluestone, sees that Here Boy has returned, and knows that Beloved is gone. Mr. Bodwin plans on selling 124 Bluestone. Stamp tells Paul D that it was Mr. Bodwin who had saved Sethe from hanging eighteen years earlier. Paul D had greeted Denver, and she him, as she left the



Bodwin's house after her first night of working there. Stamp tells Paul D he is proud of her. Denver tells Paul D he can stop by the house, but he had better be careful what he says to her mother. Paul D searches the house and finds Sethe in the keeping room, Baby Suggs' room. Sethe tells Paul D her 'best thing' had left her, and Paul D, remembering their past, both at Sweet Home and 124 Bluestone, assures her that she, Sethe, is the best thing.

[SECTION 3, P. 323-324]

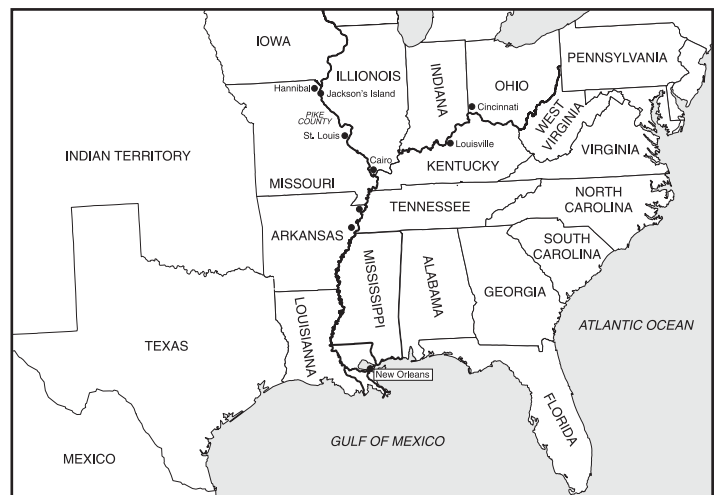
An unspecified narrator reminds the reader of the claims the child had against the world and further reminds the reader that hers is not a story to be passed on.

**Timeline**

Slavery became a complex problem in America from 1800 till the start of 1865. The circumstance of servitude and the status of African people were at stake. Defining the legal grounds of those of African descent put America in a sticky situation. Would free Africans be allowed to live in this Democracy? During the years between 1800 and 1865, racial differences and the condition of servitude became issues in the African's strive for freedom.

- 1800** Gabriel Prosser attempts a slave rebellion in Virginia.
- 1807** British Parliament stops shipping and trading African slaves.
- 1808** Congress of the United States made it illegal to bring slaves into the country. Still, the smuggling of Africans continued. Slave trading within the states continued until Emancipation Day in 1863.
- 1812** The British offer Africans free land if they fight with them against American colonists in the War of 1812.
- 1819** Canada refuses the American government access to pursue escaped slaves living in Canada.
- 1820** The Missouri Compromise. Missouri enters the Union as a slaveholding state and Maine as a freebearing state. The Missouri Compromise kept the number of free states and slave states balanced.
- 1822** Denmark Vessey arrested for planning a slave rebellion in South Carolina.

- 1831** Nat Turner leads a slave rebellion in Southampton, Virginia.
- 1833** The American Anti-Slavery Society was established in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The British Parliament abolished slavery throughout the British Empire during this year.
- 1839** The *Amistad* Insurrection.
- 1850** The Compromise of 1850 again considered the issue of slavery. California entered the Union as a free state. New Mexico, Utah, and Texas were given the choice to be a slave or a free state. The Fugitive Slave Law was put into effect.
- 1852** Harriet Beecher Stowe published her novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, a major influence for the Anti-Slavery Movement.
- 1854** The Dred Scott Case.
- 1859** John Brown broke into the Federal Armory at Harper's Ferry, Virginia.
- 1860** Abraham Lincoln is elected president.
- 1861** Formation of the Confederate States of America.
- 1861-1865** The Civil War.
- 1865** February 1, 1865, Lincoln ratifies the 13th Amendment outlawing slavery. Two months later John Wilkes Booth assassinates Lincoln on April 15, 1865.



## Author Sketch

Chloe Anthony Wofford was born in Lorain, Ohio on February 18, 1931. She was the second daughter of George Wofford, a shipyard welder and Ramah Willis Wofford. Her parents moved to Ohio from the South to escape racism and to find better opportunities in the North.



Chloe Wofford was an excellent student at Lorain High School and participated in many organizations including the drama club, National Honor Society, and served as student body Treasurer. In 1949 left Lorain to attend Howard University where she became a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha and joined the theater group, the Howard University players. Because many could not pronounce her first name correctly she changed it to Toni, a shortened version of her middle name. Toni Wofford transferred to Cornell University and earned a master's degree in English in 1955. From 1955 to 1957 she taught introductory English at Texas Southern University and then at Howard University from 1957 to 1964. While at Howard University she met and married Harold Morrison, a Jamaican architect. They had two sons, Harold and Slade. After six years of marriage the couple divorced in 1964.

After leaving Howard University she began work as an editor at Random House, first in Syracuse, New York, then New York City. It was during this time that she began to write mostly for relaxation. Her first novel, *The Bluest Eye*, published in 1970, was a short story she wrote for a writing group she attended.

*Beloved*, published in 1987, was influenced by a published story about a slave, Margaret Garner, who in 1851 escaped with her children to Ohio from her master in Kentucky. *Beloved* was a bestseller and in 1988 won the Pulitzer Prize for fiction. In 1993, Toni Morrison was the first black American to win the Nobel Prize in Literature. As the recipient of these honors she has broken down barriers and inspired writers across the field. On writing she has said "I'm sometimes frightened of what I write, but can't look away. I will not look away. That's the one place where I'm going to, you know, make eye con-

tact. It's a free place for me. It's not always safe, but that's the one place where all my little vulnerabilities, and cowardice, cannot come to the surface."

## Critic's Corner

Morrison has received many awards for her works. Besides being the first Black American to win the Nobel Prize in literature she received the National Book Award and Ohioana Book Award in 1975 for *Song of Solomon*. She was appointed to the National Council on the Arts in 1980 by President Jimmy Carter. The first black woman to publish a Book-of-the-Month-Club focal selection, she also won commendation from the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, the New York State Governor's Arts Council, City College of New York Langston Hughes Festival, the Anisfield Wolf Book award, and three consecutive Public Library's Books for the Teen Age. In 1987 she won the Pulitzer Prize for *Beloved*, which remained on the bestseller list for eighteen weeks. Morrison became the eighth woman to receive a Nobel Prize for literature and the first American to receive the award since John Steinbeck in 1962.

### Other Awards Include:

Melcher Book Award  
Robert F. Kennedy Book Award  
Tanner Lecturer at the University of Michigan  
Robert Goheen Professorship in creative writing  
African studies at Princeton  
Peggy V. Helmerich Distinguished Author Award  
City of New York Mayor's Award of Honor for Art and Culture  
Elmer Holmes Bobst Award in Arts and Letters  
MLA Commonwealth Award

### Doctorates include:

Spelman  
Oberlin  
Dartmouth  
Bryn Mawr  
Columbia  
Yale

## Other Books By The Author

*The Bluest Eye* (1970)  
*Sula* (1973)  
*Song of Solomon* (1977)  
*Tar Baby* (1987)  
*Jazz* (1992)  
*Paradise* (1998)  
*Love* (2003)

### Non-Fiction

*Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* (1992)  
*Remember: The Journey to School Integration* (2004)

### For Children, with son Slade Morrison

*The Big Box* (1999)  
*The Book of Mean People* (2002)  
*The Lion or the Mouse?* (2003)  
*The Ant or the Grasshopper?* (2003)  
*The Poppy or the Snake?* (2004)

## Bibliography

- Gillespie, Marcia Ann, "Toni Morrison," *Ms.*, January 1988, 60-61.
- Hevesi, Dennis, "Toni Morrison's Novel *Beloved* Wins the Pulitzer Prize in Fiction," *New York Times*, April 1, 1988, 1, 13.
- Ralph, Eleanor, "Morrison Novel *Beloved* Wins Pulitzer Prize," *Washington Post*, April 1, 1988, A1, A14.
- A Nation in Crisis: The Slavery Timeline  
[www.cwpost.liunet.edu/cwis/cwp/library/aaslavery.htm#timeline](http://www.cwpost.liunet.edu/cwis/cwp/library/aaslavery.htm#timeline)
- Civil War for Kids  
<http://www.2lhric.org/pocantico/civilwar/cwar.htm>
- Toni Morrison  
[www.empirezine.com/spotlight/toni-morrison/toni-morrison.htm](http://www.empirezine.com/spotlight/toni-morrison/toni-morrison.htm)
- Nobelprize.org  
<http://nobelprize.org/literature/laureates/1993/morrison-bio.html>
- Distinguished Women of Past and Present  
<http://www.distinguishedwomen.com/biographies/morrison.html>

## General Objectives

1. To assess the value of foreshadowing in a complex novel
2. To describe relationships between owner and slave
3. To evaluate themes of motherhood, healing, and nurturing
4. To account for the continued self-denigration of former slaves
5. To sympathize with the main character's plight
6. To find examples of compassion
7. To comment on the individual's need for acceptance and security
8. To express the abolitionist's outrage at slavery
9. To characterize alienation, grief, and loss
10. To compose a list of major events in time order

## Specific Objectives

1. To contrast the parting of Sixo and Patsy with that of Sethe and Halle
2. To assess Baby Suggs' value to the plantation, family, and community
3. To account for Sethe's choice of name for Beloved
4. To describe the chain of communication of manacled convicts in the workcamp
5. To explain the creation of a feast from a bucket of berries
6. To assess Stamp Paid's value to the community
7. To predict how Sethe will cope with the ghost's absence
8. To explain why Baby Suggs asks her congregation to touch their limbs, bodies, and hearts
9. To enumerate ways in which slavery harms society
10. To compare and contrast different relationships and explain how love helps runaway slaves heal their damaged self-esteem

## Literary Terms and Applications

For a better understanding of Toni Morrison's style, present the following terms and applications to the novel:

**Figurative Language:** words and expressions not meant to be taken literally. Figurative language uses words in fresh, new ways to appeal to the imagination. Figures of speech include similes, metaphors, extended metaphors, and hyperbole, and personification. Morrison uses many figures of speech to create a rich style. This is evident on page 79, when personifying the Klan as: "Desperately thirsty for black blood, without which it could not live, the dragon swam the Ohio at will."

**Foreshadowing:** clues that hint at what will happen later on in the story. Writers use foreshadowing to create suspense and link related details. Morrison foreshadows the arrival of an unexpected guest on page 35, when Denver says "What was unusual (even for a girl who had lived all her life in a house peopled by the living activity of the dead) was that a white dress knelt down next to her mother and had its sleeve around her mother's waist."

**Historical Fiction:** a story based on real events. *Beloved* takes place during the chapter in American history known as Slavery. Although all the characters are fictional many of the events in the story are based on actual historical accounts. For example, Stamp Paid is a fictional character who worked as an agent for the Underground Railroad, which was real.

## Cross-Curricular Sources

### Books

Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*  
Harriet A. Jacobs, *Incident in the Life of a Slave Girl*  
John W. Blassingame, *The Slave Community: Plantation Life*  
Ji Li Jiang, *Red Scarf Girl: A Memoir of the Cultural Revolution*  
Lois Lowry, *Number the Stars*  
Anne Frank, *Diary of Anne Frank*  
Alice Walker, *The Color Purple*

### DVDs and Videos

*Beloved* (1999)  
*Diary of Anne Frank* (1959)  
*Roots* (1991)  
*The Color Purple* (1985)

### Audio

*Beloved*  
*Diary of Anne Frank*

### Internet

Unchained Memories: Slave Narratives and Uncle Tom's Cabin  
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part4/4p2958.html>

Black History Month  
<http://html.ibsys.com/sh/news/idi/bhm/index.html>

## Themes and Motifs

A study of the central issues and situations on Toni Morrison's *Beloved* should include these aspects:

### Themes:

- survival
- history
- tragedy
- slavery
- generosity
- secrecy
- kindness
- love
- coping skills
- race relations

### Motifs:

- willingness to sacrifice yourself for others
- learning the history of African Americans
- surviving the loss of family and friends
- fighting prejudice
- dealing with great adversity even abuse
- learning the value of family
- coping with being different
- showing love
- recognizing good and bad in people
- surviving a time enveloped in hatred and fear



## Meaning Study

Below are words, phrases, sentences, or thought units that have a particular meaning in the book. Explain the meaning of each. Chapter and page number indicate the context from which the item is taken.

1. It was one thing to beat up a ghost, quite another to throw a helpless coloredgirl out in territory infected by the Klan. (Part I, Sect. 7, p.79)  
*(Paul D wanted to remove Beloved from the house but knew that times were unsettled, even in free states, and blacks, especially nubile "coloredgirls" were not safe because of the Klan.)*
2. When the busy day is done/ And my weary little one/ Rocketh gently to and fro...In such soothing tender wise/ Cometh Lady Button Eyes. (Part I, Sect., 8, p. 95-96)  
*(Amy Denver, who served an indentured position left by her mother, retains little of her mother and nothing of her father. Oral tradition preserves this scrap of her mother's voice singing a Renaissance lullaby as a reminder that her maternal background contained some shreds of gentility, love, comfort, and imagination.)*
3. The effort to handle chalk expertly and avoid the scream it would make; the capital W, the little i, the beauty of the letters in her name, the deeply mournful sentences from the Bible Lady Jones used as a textbook. (Part I, Sect. 9, p. 120)  
*(Denver's excitement at learning the alphabet satisfies a longing to be free of the ghost and gives her some normality in her life. The short period of schooling helps prepare her for a later encounter with a woman she likes and respects enough to ask for help when her family nearly starves.)*
4. More than the rest, they killed the flirt whom folks called Life for leading them on. Making them think the next sunrise would be worth it; that another stroke of time would do it at last. Only when she was dead would they be safe. (Part I, Sect. 10, p. 128)  
*(While working on the chain gang the men would curse life for teasing them and giving them hope. The tease that a new sunrise would find them free and that it was worth it. With hope but resignation they believed that if enough time passed they would be free to live the life they desired. It was that hope that life instilled in them that they hated and wanted dead. Hope*

*dangled freedom in front of them and the desire to run away. Only with the death of hope would they be safe.)*

5. Decimated but stubborn, they were among those who chose a fugitive life rather than Oklahoma. (Part I, Sect., 10, p. 131)  
*(The Cherokees refuse to join the forced exile of Creek, Choctaw, and their own tribe, to Indian Territory, an exodus later named the Trail of Tears. These marches began October 1838 and continued through March 26, 1839. The oldest, youngest, and weakest died of exposure, disease, and starvation. The few who refused to obey government orders maintained a band in the Blue Ridge Mountains that formed the nucleus of North Carolina's Qualla Reservation.)*
6. It went on that way and might have stayed that way but one evening, after supper, after Sethe, he came downstairs, sat in the rocker and didn't want to be there. (Part I, Sect. 11, p. 135)  
*(Paul D thinks of food and sex as regular rhythms of daily life until the ghost drives him from the Sethe's bed to the downstairs, to the pallet in the storeroom, and eventually to the cold house. He realizes that he didn't move voluntarily, he was being driven out.)*
7. Now to take two buckets of blackberries and make ten, maybe twelve, pies; to have turkey enough for the whole town pretty near, new peas in September, fresh cream but no cow, ice and sugar, batter bread, bread pudding, raised bread, shortbread- it made them mad. (Part I, Sect. 15, p.161)  
*(Baby Suggs wanted to celebrate the arrival of her son's wife and children. Her effort to be generous ended in anger because the community viewed her as being proud. "Her friends and neighbors were angry at her because she had overstepped, given too much, offended them by excess." But Baby Suggs questioned whether that was all that was wrong. "Suddenly, behind the disapproving odor, way way back behind it, she smelled another thing.")*
8. But suddenly she saw her hands and thought with a clarity as simple as it was dazzling, "These hands belong to me. These my hands." Next she felt a knocking in her chest and discovered something else new: her own heart-beat. (Part I, Sect. 15, p. 166)  
*(Halle buys Baby Suggs out of slavery and makes arrangements for her to work for the Bodwins. Even though she finds it difficult to leave her remaining child she agrees to go across the river. She wonders, "What does a sixty-odd-year-old slave*

woman who walks like a three-legged dog need freedom for?" Suddenly, looking at her hands she realizes that her hands truly do belong to her and no one else. With that her heart starts to beat faster and she bursts into laughter from realization she is free.)

9. You will never leave me again/You went in the water/I drank your blood/I brought your milk/You forgot to smile/I loved you/You hurt me/You came back to me/You left me (Part II, Sect. 5, p. 256)  
(*Beloved* reveals her knowledge of the phases of her life both as fetus, human infant, baby, cadaver, and ghost. Her familiarity with the world before birth and life after death is evident in this narrative of the time that she lived off the blood of Sethe's placenta, nursed at Sethe's breast, and was threatened with a handsaw. *Beloved* refers to murder simply as "hurt" and stresses her return to Sethe, whom she intends to possess when she says, "She smiles at me and it is my own face smiling. I will not lose her again. She is mine." Her thoughts commingle with those of Sethe and Denver, whose lives are entirely consumed in her own, and hers in theirs.)
10. With those assurances, Denver left but not before she had seen, sitting on a shelf by the back door, a black boy's mouth full of money. (Part III, Sect. 1, p. 300)  
(Although altruistic, the Bodwins still harbor some feelings of racism. This is displayed by the statue of the black boy holding coins in his mouth. The statue and the black iron stable boy holding a lantern at the gate were common knick-knacks of the time. The fact that the Bodwins owned a statue shows they were indifferent to the feelings of the blacks in some way.)

## Comprehension Study

### Questions 1-5 (Literal Level)

1. When and where does the story take place? Why is the setting important?  
(The story takes at 124 Bluestone Road, Cincinnati, Ohio in the middle to late 1800s. The setting is important because even though Sethe and her daughter live in a free state they are still subject to the Slave Law and the indifference of the white people.  
*Memories of other significant events involve life at the Sweet Home plantation in Kentucky, and Paul D's imprisonment and wanderings in Alberta, Georgia, and New England.*)
2. What kind of life do slaves enjoy at Sweet Home?  
(Slaves receive unusually humane treatment from Mr. Garner

and his wife. Things change for the worst when Mr. Garner dies and his brother-in-law, schoolteacher, arrives to takeover.)

3. What does Baby Suggs do for her community?  
(Baby Suggs is considered a spiritual leader in her community. She instructs her people to love themselves and wash away slavery. She is revered and called "Baby Suggs, holy".)
4. What is Paul D's role in saving Sethe?  
(Paul D refuses to let Sethe die as Baby Suggs did. Paul D, who "wants to put his story next to hers," insists on a tomorrow. He reminds Sethe, "You your best thing. You are.")
5. Why is sisterhood a significant theme in the novel?  
(Baby Suggs is the initiator of the sisterhood. When Denver reaches out for help it is the reunited group that not only saves Baby Suggs' grandchild but exorcizes the ghost, *Beloved*.)

### Questions 6-8 (Interpretive Level)

6. How does Denver change as the book progresses?  
(Although lonely at first and then happy for the companionship of *Beloved*, Denver realizes that she and her mother can no longer go on catering to the wants of *Beloved*. She forces herself to leave the house and find help. Her venture outside the house alone and her turning to people she does not know, and in doing so, saving what is beloved to her, Sethe, demonstrate her growth.)
7. What is Denver's relationship with *Beloved*?  
(At first she is jealous of anyone who comes near *Beloved*. She won't let anyone do anything for her. But that changes when she begins to see the changes in her mother. Denver realizes that *Beloved* wants to possess Sethe.)
8. Why is Sethe so fascinated with the ghost?  
(Sethe feels guilty over the death of her child at her own hands. When the crawling visitor mounts the stairs, Sethe is reminded of her "crawling already" baby and considers the ghost a second chance at caring for her *Beloved*.)

### Questions 9 and 10 (Critical Level)

9. Why are the Garners and the Bodwins important to the novel?  
(Both the Garners and Bodwins are important to the novel to show that even though they could be fair, and at times were altruistic in behavior, they still owned their slaves or held on to other racist ideas. The Garners held and sold their slaves and at times treated them as lesser individuals. The Bodwins kept a statue of a slave with his mouth open full of coins showing a

*lack of any true respect for the race. This was not unusual treatment for the time, even in free states.)*

10. Why is the music of the time important?  
*(Many of the slaves lost contact with family and friends either through sale or trade from one plantation owner to the next. Music was a way of telling a tale or a history of their life. As with Amy Denver her lullaby told of a gentler time in her life and of a mother who loved her.)*

**Questions 11 – 12 (Creative Level)**

11. Compose a letter to a character in the story expressing your delight in Paul D’s success at nursing Sethe back to health. Comment on the role of the sisterhood in enabling Sethe’s family to survive.
12. Create a glossary of terms that require more explanation: Cherokee, buffalo man, neck jewelry, Fugitive Bill, Dred Scott, North Star, Lot’s wife, and hazelnut stranger.

**Across the Curriculum**

**Art/Music**

1. Make a model of 124 Bluestone Road. Note the single door to the house, plank road, creek and makeshift ice skating rink, clearing where Baby Suggs preached and ministered to her neighbors, Lady Jones’s house and school, Sawyer’s restaurant, Bodwin’s house, and the Ohio River.
2. Stitch a quilt and add orange squares like Baby Suggs’ blanket.
3. Using scenes from *Beloved*, create a mural of the main events.
4. Create a timeline of pro-Confederacy and abolitionist music.
5. Draw a map of the Underground Railroad.

**Language Arts**

1. Write a newspaper article telling of the former slave who killed her child.
2. When Sethe meets Amy Denver she is singing a lullaby. Create a scene about what Amy is singing.

3. List phrases that underscore the significance of the themes of bondage, sharing, nurturing, loss, physical and spiritual wholeness, and family unity.
4. Discuss chapters in which Sethe sinks into “rememory” of the slave past. Elaborate on how punctuation, rhythm, poetic devices, and grammar contribute to the spell.
5. Explain the communication the convicts had when escaping the workcamp.

**Historical/Social Studies**

1. Describe the role of Quakers and Mennonites in ending the slave trade and promoting abolition of slavery. Discuss why other denominations did not join this cause.
2. Prepare a timeline of the end of slavery in the Western Hemisphere.
3. Describe the effect of the Fugitive Slave Law in *Beloved*.
4. Contrast the female characters and their attitudes toward self, family, and compassion.
5. In a brief theme, argue whether Baby Suggs does or does not deserve the name “Baby Suggs, holy.”

**Science/Math**

1. Explain why phrenology proved to be a false science.
2. Describe why breastfeeding is a significant topic in the novel? Explain why Sethe’s separation from Beloved forces her to hurry to Cincinnati.
3. Describe the symptoms of aging that force Baby Suggs to withdraw from family and community responsibilities and to embrace death.
4. Describe why the prisoners have no choice in their flight from the chain gang. Elaborate on the risks they take by living with the Cherokee.

5. Discuss the value the plantation owner put on Paul D, Sethe, and Baby Suggs. Explain how plantation managers arrived at those figures.

**Speech/Drama**

1. Write a scenario in which various local women describe the disappearance of the ghost on the porch.
2. Lead a discussion of the events that open Paul D's heart to love, particularly his sympathy with the "tree" that grows on Sethe's back.
3. Select a literary work describing the mid-1800s and compare it with *Beloved*. For example *Roots*, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, or *Gone with the Wind*.
4. Explain why the community of women is important to Baby Suggs, Sethe, and Denver. Discuss Lillian Garner's need for female companionship. Explain why Lady Jones marries a markedly black man and why Ella chooses to love no one.

**Alternate Assessment**

1. Discuss the role of numerology in the story. Consider the house number on Bluestone Road. Is it significant that the number three is missing? Why is seven traditionally considered lucky?
2. List scenes that depict conflict, particularly Sethe's attack with the ice pick, *Beloved's* removal of the tooth, and Nelson's questions about the murder.
3. Compose brief definitions of compassion as they apply to the Bodwins, Ella, Lady Jones, Stamp Paid, Denver, Lillian Garner, Halle, Reverend Pike, the sheriff, and Paul D.



## Vocabulary

Write in the blank the letters of the definitions which best match the words below:

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. abolitionist  
 A.) someone opposed alcoholic consumption  
 B.) someone opposed to slavery  
 C.) someone opposed to abolition  
 D.) someone opposed to anything
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. brimstone  
 A.) rock falling from the brim of a crater  
 B.) a birthstone  
 C.) torment of damnation  
 D.) rock used to cover and smother a fire
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. chamomile  
 A.) a fragrant plant or its dried leaves  
 B.) finely ground food for lizards and small reptiles  
 C.) a leather cloth used in polishing cars  
 D.) a reptile that changes color to match its surrounding
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. intricate  
 A.) full of intrigue  
 B.) fearless  
 C.) callous  
 D.) complicated
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. coax  
 A.) bully  
 B.) a type of computer cable  
 C.) entice  
 D.) defend
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. wrought-iron  
 A.) distressed metal used to look old  
 B.) easily forged form of iron  
 C.) appliance for smoothing wrinkled clothing  
 D.) horse shoe
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. simulate  
 A.) a derogatory word implying 'ape'  
 B.) stutter  
 C.) said at the same time  
 D.) create a likeness
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. trundle  
 A.) roll along  
 B.) sing in a strong voice  
 C.) apply pressure to a wound  
 D.) signal
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. carmine  
 A.) carbon mine  
 B.) rifle with a short barrel  
 C.) purplish-red color  
 D.) hacksaw
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. bustle  
 A.) a pad or frame worn under a woman's skirt  
 B.) a belt worn by a man or a woman  
 C.) a serving of grits  
 D.) a pew in a small church
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. bramble  
 A.) shout instructions  
 B.) walk with a limp  
 C.) prickly shrub  
 D.) button
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. glazing  
 A.) hunting  
 B.) installing glass in a window  
 C.) napping  
 D.) replacing wheels on carts
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. sullenly  
 A.) quickly  
 B.) off-handedly  
 C.) in a sneaky manner  
 D.) showing irritation or bad humor
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. barker  
 A.) a saloon keeper  
 B.) someone who promotes a sideshow  
 C.) someone who calls a court to order  
 D.) someone who inserts corks in bottles
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. sorghum  
 A.) a grass or the syrup made from it  
 B.) a bad loser  
 C.) a one-room school  
 D.) pure alcohol
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. cholera  
 A. the collar worn by Catholic priests  
 B. hard, dry skin or callous  
 C. disease marked by vomiting and diarrhea  
 D. a holy war
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. flax  
 A.) spray of buckshot  
 B.) handful of flakes  
 C.) rose color  
 D.) plant grown for its fiber and seed
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. profound  
 A.) loud  
 B.) deep or wise  
 C.) in favor of  
 D.) superficial
- \_\_\_\_\_ 19. zealot  
 A.) mythical animal  
 B.) a corrupter of youth  
 C.) fashion-conscious person  
 D.) fanatic
- \_\_\_\_\_ 20. silhouette  
 A.) dark image against a light background  
 B.) a French dance popular during the Civil War  
 C.) a small silo or grain-storage bin  
 D.) a braid

## Comprehension Test A

### Part I: Matching (20 points)

Match each description with a name from the list. Place the letter of your answer in the blank provided at left.

- |               |                   |                  |          |               |
|---------------|-------------------|------------------|----------|---------------|
| A. Amy        | C. Lillian Garner | E. Paul D        | G. Patsy | I. Sawyer     |
| B. Lady Jones | D. Halle          | F. schoolteacher | H. Sethe | J. Stamp Paid |

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. measures Sethe with a string.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. is amused by Sethe's wish for a real wedding.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. marries the blackest man she can find.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. fires Sethe for being late for work.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. refuses to believe that Mr. Buddy is her father.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. describes her scar as a tree growing out of her back.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. grows weary of the "weaver lady."
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. shows Paul D the article about the murder.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. is nicknamed the Thirty Mile Woman.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. builds a device to ease hip pain

### Part II: Identification (20 points)

Briefly describe each person, place or thing and explain why it is important in the story.

- 1. Paul D
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 2. Stamp Paid
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 3. Cold house
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 4. Red pulsating light
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 5. Lady Jones

## Comprehension Test A (Page 2)

### Part III: True/False (20 points)

Mark the following statements either T for true or F if a part is false.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. At 124 Bluestone Road, Baby Suggs fixes shoes and soothes troubled people.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Sethe is reduced to standing up with the prostitutes at the slaughterhouse to earn Money for food.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Stamp Paid gives Sethe his jacket to wrap around Denver.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Beloved returns from the dead wearing a white dress, bustle, and Sethe's crystal earrings.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Sweet Home has a more humane atmosphere than most plantations.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. The Cherokee advise Paul D to follow the blooming flowers as he travels north.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Reverend Pike confers with the stone carver and names the infant Beloved.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. After Baby Suggs' death, Denver is lonely until Beloved comes to be her sister.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. When Ma'am dies in the indigo field, Sethe recognizes the mark under her breast.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. At Lillian Garner's death, Mr. Garner asks schoolteacher to run Sweet Home.

### Part IV: Essay (40 points)

Chose two and answer in complete sentences.

- 1. Give evidence that the grown "visitor" is still a baby.
- 2. Discuss how Sethe treats her daughters.
- 3. Describe the local reaction to the murder of Beloved.
- 4. Compare Paul D's anger at the work gang overseer with Sethe's hatred of schoolteacher and the "mossy teeth."

## Comprehension Test B

### Part I: Fill in the Blank (20 points)

Underline the word or phrase that best completes each of the following statements.

1. On the bill of sale, Garner's slave is named **(Nan, Jenny)**.
2. The words of **(Ella, Reverend Pike)** become Beloved's name.
3. At one time, 124 Bluestone Road was **(the Bodwin home, Lady Jones school)**.
4. With the simple words "I'm back," **(Patsy, Vashti)** ends a period of separation from her husband.
5. Semi-conscious with pain and trauma, Sethe sinks into happiness at the touch of **(Baby Suggs, Denver)**.
6. Sethe compares her fourth child to **(an antelope, a "hot thing")**.
7. As self-defense against grief, **(Lady Jones, Ella)** warns, "Don't love nothing."
8. The corpse of **(Ma'am, Brandywine)** is too mutilated to be identified.
9. Baby Suggs is aware of **(Sethe's pregnancy, Stamp Paid's rescue of Howard and Buglar)**.
10. Denver opts for a job at the shirt factory rather than **(skating on the frozen creek, enrollment at Oberlin)**.

### Part II: Identification (20 points)

Briefly describe each person, place, or thing and explain why it is important in the story.

1. Ella
2. Quilt
3. Denver's boxwood room
4. Amy Denver
5. 124 Bluestone Road



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## Comprehension Test B (Page 2)

### Part III: Matching (20 points)

Complete each of the following descriptions with a name from the list that follows. Place the letter of your answer in the blank provided at left. Use each name only once.

- |                                                            |                   |
|------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| _____ 1. Who gives Sethe crystal earrings?                 | A. Dearly         |
| _____ 2. Who gives perfume and oranges as Christmas gifts? | B. Janey Wagon    |
| _____ 3. Who buries a watch at 124 Bluestone Road?         | C. Miss Bodwin    |
| _____ 4. Who stands naked on the porch?                    | D. schoolteacher  |
| _____ 5. What object replaces Paul D's heart?              | E. clipping       |
| _____ 6. Who sets Here Boy's displaced joint?              | F. Lillian Garner |
| _____ 7. What does Stamp Paid give Paul D to read?         | G. Beloved        |
| _____ 8. Who comes with the sheriff to 124 Bluestone Road? | H. Sethe          |
| _____ 9. What first name did Sethe want for Beloved?       | I. tobacco tin    |
| _____ 10. Who introduces Denver to maids work?             | J. Edward Bodwin  |

### Part IV: Essay (40 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

1. Explain why Joshua changes his name.
2. Describe Baby Suggs' kindness to family and strangers.
3. Analyze the change that comes over Sethe after Beloved arrives.
4. Account for the degradation slaves must overcome after emancipation.

# Answer Key

## Vocabulary

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

## COMPREHENSION TEST A

### Part I: Matching (20 points)

- |      |       |
|------|-------|
| 1. F | 6. H  |
| 2. C | 7. E  |
| 3. B | 8. J  |
| 4. I | 9. G  |
| 5. A | 10. D |

### Part II: Identification (20 points)

1. Paul D not only throws the ghost out, he becomes Sethe's savior. He reminds her that she is her best thing.
2. Stamp Paid is the eyes and ears of the Underground Railroad. He performs many tasks and is a valued member of his community.
3. The cold house symbolizes Beloved's distaste for the one who threw her out of 124 Bluestone Road. In retaliation, Beloved literally throws him out in the cold.
4. Suggests the power Beloved has over the house and everyone in it; reproduces the womb.
5. Lady Jones was not only there to help Denver learn to read and write, she was there to help Denver when she most needed help.

### Part III: True/False (20 points)

- |      |       |
|------|-------|
| 1. T | 6. T  |
| 2. F | 7. F  |
| 3. F | 8. T  |
| 4. F | 9. F  |
| 5. T | 10. F |

### Part IV: Essay (40 points)

Answers will vary.

## COMPREHENSION TEST B

### Part I: Fill in the Blank (20 points)

- |                    |                           |
|--------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Jenny           | 6. an antelope            |
| 2. Reverend Pike   | 7. Ella                   |
| 3. the Bodwin home | 8. Ma'am                  |
| 4. Vashti          | 9. Sethe's pregnancy      |
| 5. Baby Suggs      | 10. enrollment at Oberlin |

### Part II: Identification (20 points)

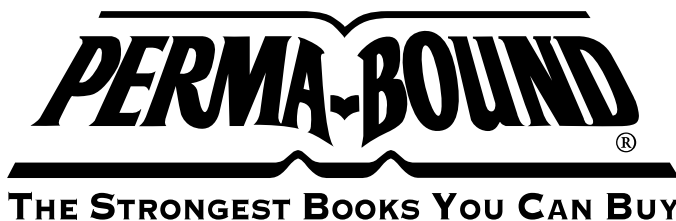
1. Ella was the one who convinced the others that rescuing Sethe was in order. She understood Sethe's rage in the shed, but not her reaction to it.
2. Baby Suggs retired to her bed to concentrate on colors. The quilt had two orange squares that represented the only brightness at the end of Baby Suggs' life.
3. Denver felt protected and hidden in these boxwood walls, safe in an unsafe world. A place where she felt, "Ripe and clear, and salvation was as easy as a wish."
4. Amy Denver is an indentured runaway on her way to Boston. She meets Sethe along the way and tends to Sethe's wounds and with the birth of Denver. She is Denver's namesake.
5. The house is a waystation and message center for runaway slaves.

### Part III: Matching (20 points)

- |      |       |
|------|-------|
| 1. F | 6. H  |
| 2. C | 7. E  |
| 3. J | 8. D  |
| 4. G | 9. A  |
| 5. I | 10. B |

### Part IV: Essay (40 points)

Answers will vary



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