

Friendship and the Gold Cadillac

by Mildred D. Taylor

Classroom Favorites

Teacher's Guide by Kathy Sammis

A Perma-Bound Production

SYNOPSIS

The Friendship

This powerful story, set in rural Mississippi in the 1930s, is narrated by nine-year-old Cassie Logan. On a hot summer afternoon, Aunt Callie Jackson asks the Logan children—Cassie and her brothers, Stacey (age 12), Christopher-John (age 7), and Little Man (age 6)—to get some headache medicine for her. The children go to the nearby general store, run by John Wallace and his sons Thurston and Dewberry. The children are not supposed to come to this store because, their parents have explained, the white Wallaces do not treat black people like the Logans right.

Inside the store, the Wallace brothers angrily order Little Man to take his “filthy” (actually perfectly clean) hands off their glass case and make jokes (not funny to the little boy) about chopping his dirty hands off with an ax. Then Mr. Tom Bee, an elderly black man, comes into the store and pointedly, repeatedly calls the older Wallace by his first name. Thurston and Dewberry are outraged: “Daddy! How come you to let this old nigger disrespect ya this here way?” Blacks in the South of this era must address whites as “mister” or “missus”; whites invariably address blacks by their first names. Cassie knows this name business is very important to whites, but she does not understand why.

On the way to Aunt Callie's to deliver the medicine, Mr. Tom Bee tells the children how he had saved John Wallace's life years ago, nursing the white boy back to health. In return, Wallace promised he would always be “John” to this black man who had been like a daddy to him. But when Wallace came back to this area and opened his store, he insisted on all blacks, including Mr. Tom Bee, calling him “mister.” Now the elderly black man has decided to hold Wallace to his broken word.

Heading home with the children, Mr. Tom Bee goes back into the store to get some tobacco and defiantly continues to address Wallace as “John,” this time in front of a store full of whites. Pushed past his limit, Wallace blasts Mr. Tom Bee's leg open with a shotgun, declaring, “You gotta keep in mind you ain't nothin' but a nigger. You gonna learn to address me proper.” The horrified children watch as the old black man pulls himself down the road, shouting his answer: “John! John! John! Till the judgment day! John! John! JOHN!”

The Gold Cadillac

In this autobiographical story, set in 1950, the young narrator 'lois—who has grown up in a loving, secure, extended family in Toledo, Ohio,—describes her introduction to fear and prejudice during a trip to the South. One day, 'lois's daddy pulls up in front of the family home in a gold Cadillac. 'lois, her sister

Wilma, and the various aunts and uncles who live with them are all thrilled with this splendid car. But Mother-Dear is angry; Daddy has given up a perfectly good, almost new Mercury, and spent money on this Cadillac that should have been saved for the purchase of a new house. Mother-Dear refuses to ride in the Cadillac; Daddy waits for her to come around. Aunts, uncles, and neighbors chuckle at the stalemate.

But the laughing stops when Daddy announces he is going to drive the Cadillac to Mississippi to visit his parents. Everyone tells him not to do this, because it is terribly dangerous for a black man to drive an expensive car into the rural South. But Daddy insists that he worked hard to earn the money he spent on the car, so he has a right to drive it anywhere he wants. Mother-Dear says she and the girls will go with him. The uncles and aunts say they'll go too, in a family caravan, for group safety. The women prepare a great picnic to take along, and Wilma and 'lois are very excited.

When they reach Kentucky, 'lois is distressed to see signs that read: WHITE ONLY, COLORED NOT ALLOWED—on water fountains, restaurants, motels. Now 'lois understands why they brought all the picnic food along. In Memphis, Daddy gets separated from the rest of the family. Soon after he drives the gold Cadillac into Mississippi, the police stop him, frisk him, insist that he must have stolen such a car, and put him in jail. Mother-Dear and the two girls spend three anxious hours in the car before Daddy is released after paying a fine for speeding. The family sleeps in the car alongside a rural road that night; 'lois is so scared, she falls asleep clutching a long, sharp knife.

The next morning, Daddy drives the gold Cadillac back to Memphis and borrows a cousin's four-year-old Chevy for the drive to his parents' home in Mississippi. During their visit there, he tries to explain to 'lois about segregation, and how he hopes that some day they'll be able to drive down here in a fine car without seeing any of those signs and without being stopped by the police.

After the family returns to Toledo, Daddy sells the Cadillac (although Mother-Dear has told him to keep it). As he explains to 'lois and Wilma, as fine as the Cadillac had been, it had pulled the family apart for awhile. 'lois understands—but she will always remember the feeling of riding around in the gold Cadillac, and the ride South in it, and the signs, the policemen, and her fear.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Mildred Taylor was born in 1943 in Jackson, Mississippi. When she was three months old, her father moved the family to Toledo, Ohio, so his two daughters could grow up in an unseg-

regated (if still prejudiced) society. Each summer, though, the family would return to visit their many relatives in the South, and young Mildred would soak up the lively, proud storytelling of the family history. These trips provided the material for *The Gold Cadillac*. Taylor earned a degree in education in 1965 from the University of Toledo, then served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Ethiopia. After this, Taylor earned a master's degree from the University of Colorado, where she also worked to create a black studies program.

Relocating to California, Taylor began writing stories based on her oral family history. In her first novella, *Song of the Trees*, Taylor found an effective voice: feisty, proud, curious Cassie Logan, age nine. Taylor continued the Logan saga, with its themes of family unity and pride, love of the land, and racial injustice, in *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* (1976 and a Newbery Medal winner), *Let the Circle Be Unbroken* (1981), *The Road to Memphis* (1992), and *The Well* (1995). Other Taylor books and stories involve characters featured in the Logan series, such as *Mississippi Bridge*, creating a remarkably unified and critically praised body of work.

CRITICS' CORNER

Mildred Taylor has a mission in her writing. She did not find the black history and black people she was familiar with in her high school history books. So she decided to paint a picture of the black world she knew and that had been revealed to her through the rich source of family stories. That Taylor has succeeded fully in her aim is reflected in her legions of readers, admiring critics, and many awards, including the Newbery Medal.

Of *The Friendship*, *School Library Journal* wrote, "The characterization is very strong in this brief drama, and the events of this fateful afternoon will be unforgettable." *Horn Book* added, "Eloquent in both its brevity and understatement, the story underlines the author's skill in drawing from her family's experiences to enlarge her readers' understanding of a dark and still unresolved heritage."

Of *The Gold Cadillac*, *The New York Times Book Review* wrote, "In simple language, [Taylor] manages to capture both the ugliness of segregation and the strength and dignity it took to fight it. Her tale is a powerful one, gently told." *Horn Book* concluded, "Sure of herself, Taylor speaks softly but carries a big stick. She skillfully makes her point....[This is] a brief but important book, one that serves as a necessary reminder of how things used to be and how much remains to be done."

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

1. To develop an understanding of relations between blacks and whites in the rural South in the 1930s.
2. To gain an understanding of the realities of segregation in the South in the early 1950s.
3. To consider the sources and effects of racial prejudice.
4. To analyze the nature of friendship.
5. To examine the importance and role of family in one's life.
6. To explore the motivation that pride can provide.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To identify the reasons why 'lois's father buys the Cadillac, determines to drive it South, and ultimately disposes of it.
2. To note the reactions of various family members to the Cadillac.

3. To identify the aspects of Southern society that 'lois finds frightening and unsettling, and how this contrasts with 'lois's life in Ohio.
4. To analyze the motivations of the police officers who stop the Cadillac and harass Daddy.
5. To understand why Tom Bee insists on calling John Wallace by his first name, and why this is such a dangerous thing to do.
6. To analyze the differing characters of the children in *The Friendship*.
7. To consider the appropriateness of the term "friendship" as applied to the relationship between Mr. Tom Bee and Mr. John Wallace.
8. To identify common elements linking these two stories.

MEANING STUDY

Below are words, phrases, or sentences that have a particular meaning in the novel. Explain each as it relates to the book. Use the page numbers given in parentheses to reread the term in context if you wish.

1. [My parents] said the Wallaces didn't treat our folks right (p. 6)
(*"Our folks" means black people. This tells us, as the story opens, that the Wallaces are prejudiced and do not treat black people fairly, and that black people who go to the Wallace store can expect difficulty or trouble.*)
2. posters of a man called Roosevelt (p. 7)
(*The store walls feature pictures of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, helping to set the novel in the 1930s.*)
3. potbellied stove (p. 7)
(*A potbellied stove has a rounded or bulging body. Many old-time country stores—and schoolhouses—were warmed by potbellied stoves.*)
4. sharecropping (p. 10)
(*In the sharecropping system of farming, a tenant farmer gets credit for tools, seed, food, and living quarters from a landlord and in return works the land, receiving an agreed share of the value of the crop minus the charges that have accumulated. Sharecropping was common in the rural South of the 1930s; Mr. Tom Bee has been a sharecropper, but now that he's elderly, he doesn't do much farming any more.*)
5. "I loves fishin' cat." (p. 12)
(*Mr. Tom Bee does not farm much any more; he spends most of his days fishing for catfish. Today, he's got a string of catfish. He gives some to Aunt Callie, and gives some more to John Wallace at the store, saying, "These here for you, John"—deliberately using the white storekeeper's first name again.*)
6. He had seen the slavery days and he had seen the war that ended slavery. He had seen Confederate soldiers and he had seen Yankee soldiers. (p. 38)
(*Mr. Tom Bee is so old, he lived before the U.S. Civil War when slavery existed in the South. That war ended slavery. Confederate soldiers fought for the Confederate States of America—the South—and Yankee soldiers fought for the United States of America—the North.*)
7. "We got us a Cadillac!" (p. 55)
(*Owning a Cadillac has long been an emblem of status.*)

Cadillacs are among the most expensive of U.S.-made cars. The girls are very excited when their father comes home with a brand-new Cadillac—they must be rich! 'lois thinks.)

8. the duplex (p. 55)
(A duplex is a two-family house. The house where 'lois lives with her sister and parents is also home to various aunts, uncles, and cousins—so actually the house is more than a duplex.)
9. "Man, those white folks down south'll lynch you soon's look at you." (p. 68)
(In the U.S. South, blacks were in danger of being lynched—killed by a mob of whites, outside the law, for reasons as trivial as acting "uppity." Whites, an uncle warns, would be sure to consider a northern black driving an expensive car through the South as "uppity," so Daddy's planned trip South could put him at risk of being lynched.)
10. My father, my mother, Wilma, and I got into the Cadillac. My uncles, my aunts, my cousins got into the Ford, the Buick, and the Chevrolet. (p. 70)
(The other members of 'lois's family drive moderate-priced cars: Ford, Buick, and Chevrolet. These cars will not attract hostile white attention when driven by black people in the South.)

COMPREHENSION STUDY

Answer the following questions in your own words. There is not always a right answer. Your judgment is important, and you should be ready to defend your answers by referring to passages in the book.

Literal Level

1. Describe Little Man's unpleasant experience at the Wallace store.
(Little Man, entranced by a collection of shiny new belt buckles, locket, cuff links, and tie clips, braces himself with both hands against the glass counter holding these treasures. This enrages Dewberry Wallace, who hollers, "Get them filthy hands off-a-there!" Little Man calmly replies that his hands are quite clean, but Dewberry says Little Man's skin is so black, seeds would sprout out of it if planted there. Thurston Wallace tosses an ax to Dewberry and suggests that his brother chop those filthy hands right off the little boy. Stacey rescues Little Man, who is understandably deeply disturbed by this incident. He does not understand that the Wallaces were having fun at his expense, and he does not understand why they think his black skin is dirty.)
2. Why does Mr. Tom Bee call Mr. John Wallace "John"?
(Years ago, Mr. Tom Bee pulled the teenage John Wallace out of a swamp and then nursed him through a fever back to health. Wallace lived with the black man as "John" during this time. When he was well enough to leave at last, Wallace told Mr. Tom Bee, "I'm John t' you now, gonna always be John t' ya, cause you been like a daddy t' me an' I couldn't never 'spect my daddy to go callin' me mister." Although Wallace promised this, when he came back some years later to set up his store, he insisted that all the blacks, including Mr. Tom Bee, call him "Mister" John. Mr. Tom Bee went along with this for years, but now he is elderly and has decided it is time to make Wallace keep his word. So Mr. Tom Bee now calls the storekeeper "John" whenever he comes in to the store.)

3. What names were blacks and whites supposed to use when addressing each other in the rural South of the 1930s?
(Black people had to address whites with a "mister" or "missus" or "miss" before their names. White people called every grown black person only by their first names; sometimes they called old black women "aunty" to show their age some respect.)
4. Why does Daddy buy the gold Cadillac? Why does Mother-Dear object? How do the girls, Wilma and 'lois, feel about it?
(Daddy saw the Cadillac in the showroom and just could not resist buying such a beautiful, elegant car. He works hard for his money, and he's proud that he can afford such a luxury. Mother-Dear, though, is angry because they are supposed to be saving for a new house; they already had a perfectly good Mercury less than a year old, and the money Daddy spent on the Cadillac—without consulting her—could have stayed in savings for the house. The girls love the car, and they love riding in it, and the attention they get because of the car.)
5. Why does Daddy insist on driving South in the gold Cadillac? Why does the whole family decide to go along on the trip?
(He's proud that someone like himself from Mississippi could bring himself to a point in his life where he could afford to buy such an impressive car. He worked hard for the money he paid for the car, and he likes the car. He's tired of having to consider what white people think when he wants to do something. "It's my car, I paid for it, and I'm driving it south." Everyone is aware, though, that for a northern black man to drive an expensive car through the rural South is very dangerous; whites will think it is a northern black coming South to act "uppity" and lord it over poor whites. The aunts and uncles decide to go on the trip too, in their cars, making a family caravan for group support and mutual safety.)

Interpretive Level

6. Write a character sketch of each child in "The Friendship."
(Stacey, age 12, is responsible, looking out for his younger siblings; he also has bouts of preadolescent moodiness. Cassie, age 9, narrates the story; she is old enough to know how things work in her society—the protocol of name-calling, for example—but she's too young to understand why things are the way they are. Christopher-John, age 7, is the sensitive one, always sympathizing with other people's feelings; he also has a mighty sweet tooth. Little Man, age 6, loves shiny new things and takes great pride in being clean. Jeremy Simms is a white boy around Stacey's age, blond and sad-eyed, who is always talking in a friendly way to the Logan children, although in a hesitant manner.)
7. Why are white people so concerned about the rules of name-calling in *The Friendship*?
(The rules of name-calling are an important part of the relative status of whites and blacks in the rural Mississippi of the 1930s. Whites affirm their social superiority in part by these rules—whites call grown blacks by their first names always, thus treating the black adults like children and social inferiors; blacks must acknowledge whites' social superiority by calling them "mister" or "missus" while allowing themselves to be called by their first names. Whites allow no breaking of these rules so there is to allow no weakening of the social order they have established.)
8. What scary, unsettling things does 'lois encounter for the first

time on the car trip to Mississippi?

(She sees signs that say: WHITE ONLY, COLORED NOT ALLOWED. She sees the signs above water fountains and in restaurant windows, at roadside food stands and in front of hotels and motels, and on restroom doors. She is encountering segregation for the first time. She also discovers that police will harass and even arrest black people just because of the color of their skin, especially if a black person is driving an expensive new car with northern license plates. She learns that it's not safe to sleep in their car at night; someone must keep watch. She experiences fear on this trip.)

9. Why do the police stop the gold Cadillac and hold Daddy in jail?

(Their excuse is, finally, that Daddy was speeding [although he almost certainly was not]; after he pays a fine, the police release him. The real reason they stop the car is because of prejudice and out of a desire to harass and intimidate any black man who acts "uppity" by driving an expensive new car, showing himself off to be more financially successful than many southern whites.)

Critical Level

10. Were Tom Bee and John Wallace ever really friends, in your opinion? Explain.

(Answers will vary. Probably the teenage John Wallace did feel friendship for Tom Bee when the old man nursed him back to health.)

11. Why did the gold Cadillac make such a big impression on 'lois, the girl telling the story?

(First, owning the car and driving it around the neighborhood made 'lois feel proud, especially because everyone admired the car so much; 'lois herself thought the car was beautiful and elegant. Then, the drive South in the car made a lifetime impression on the girl, as she encountered the reality of segregation and the hostile and threatening police and experienced real fear for the first time.)

12. Was it reasonable or wise for Daddy to buy the gold Cadillac? To make the trip South in it? to switch to driving Cousin Halton's Chevrolet?

(Answers will vary. Buying the car was unreasonable from Mother-Dear's point of view, because the money should have gone toward a new house instead, and the family already had a perfectly good late-model car. It was reasonable from Daddy's point of view, because he admired the car, and had worked hard to earn enough money to be able to afford such a car, and it made him proud to own it. These same feelings made it reasonable in Daddy's mind to make the trip South, but such a trip really was not wise, since it put Daddy and the entire family in danger. Switching to driving Cousin Halton's Chevy was a wise and reasonable move, since the family would no longer attract the attention of hostile whites.)

13. What common elements link these two stories?

(Both tell the story of a young black girl encountering frightening examples of white prejudice and even violence, with the girls struggling to understand the reasons for things like name-calling rules, segregation, and police harassment. Each story is powerful, expresses a strong sense of family unity, draws fine individual character pictures, and pulls the reader in with well-crafted drama.)

Creative Level

14. What happens after *The Friendship* story ends?

(Answers will vary.)

15. Tell *The Friendship* story from another character's point of view—Stacey or Jeremy, for example.

(Answers will vary.)

16. Write a physical description of 'lois, Wilma, and their parents.

(Answers will vary.)

17. Write and role-play a discussion among the grandparents, aunts, and uncles while waiting for 'lois's family to arrive at the grandparents' farm.

(Answers will vary.)

LITERARY TERMS

To enhance students' appreciation and understanding of these two stories, present them with these terms.

autobiographical novel/story: a novel or story that draws largely from the author's own life experiences. Mildred Taylor based *The Gold Cadillac* on trips she took with her family from Ohio to Mississippi when she was a girl, leaving a world of family and security and entering the land of segregation and danger. For *The Friendship*, Taylor drew on one of the many family stories she heard from relatives.

dialect: nonstandard language, often language characteristic of a particular region. The characters in *The Friendship* speak in a rural Southern dialect of the 1930s.

first-person narration: the telling of a novel or short story from the point of view of only one person. In these stories, Cassie and 'lois relate the events, so we know how they think and feel about what happens. Ask the students how the stories would be different in another voice, especially that of an impersonal narrator—less immediate, perhaps? Comprehension Study activity #14 asks students to tell events of *The Friendship* as seen from another character's point of view.

historical fiction: a narrative that presents an imaginative series of events occurring in an actual historical setting. The characters are usually both fictional and historical. The author often does considerable research to incorporate much accurate everyday historical detail into the novel. In Taylor's case, she bases her novels and stories on tales she heard from members of her own family, especially her father, with the aim of presenting young readers with a picture of life for black people in the era before the civil rights movement.

novella: a short novel or extended short story, usually focusing on a single event or a linked series of events. These two stories can be considered novellas, since they have been published as individual books; a short story is generally considered to be too short to be published as a single volume.

ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

Art

1. Create an illustration of the block where 'lois's family lives in Toledo.
2. Draw or create a model of your dream car, or the typical car 50 or 100 years from now.

3. Comment on how the illustrations do or do not enhance the two stories. Do you find one set of illustrations more effective than the other?

Science

1. Create an illustrated field guide to the catfish. Include information on its life cycle and its habitat, and how to catch catfish.
2. Demonstrate to the class how to provide first aid for a wound like the one Mr. Tom Bee suffers. (Also *Health*.)
3. Report on the symptoms and causes of headaches, and the effectiveness of various headache remedies. (Also *Health*.)
4. Report on the nutritional value and cost of a can of sardines. (Also *Health*.)

Social Studies/Geography

1. On a map, trace the car trips with her family that 'lois mentions in *The Gold Cadillac*.
2. Report on the history of lynching in the United States.
3. Report orally or in writing on segregation in the U.S. South and how the civil rights movement worked to end it.
4. Find out about how the justice system worked for black people in the 1930s in and out of the South.
5. Create a class display detailing the geography and climate of Mississippi.

Mathematics

1. Calculate the number of miles 'lois and her family traveled on the trip to Mississippi. How many hours/days would this have taken?
2. Find out how many gallons per mile a 1950 Cadillac consumed, and how much gasoline cost in 1950. How much did 'lois's parents spend on gas for their trip?
3. How much did a 1950 Cadillac Coupe de Ville cost? How much is this in today's money?
4. Suppose you wanted to buy a car. How much could you afford to pay for it? If you took out a loan, what size payment could you afford? How much would you have to pay in interest each month, and over the life of the loan?

Language Arts

1. Read other Logan family stories written by Mildred Taylor. What role do the characters in *The Friendship* play in these other books?
2. Read about Mildred Taylor's life to find out what is autobiographical about *The Gold Cadillac*.

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES

1. Create a grand picnic like the one 'lois describes.
2. Write a number of suggestions for what 'lois's full name is.
3. Choose your dream car. How much does it cost? How could you ever afford it?
4. Report on how a trip like the one 'lois and her family make to Mississippi from Ohio would be different today.
5. With some classmates, create a pamphlet describing games that children could play on a long car trip to help pass the time.
6. Create a class display of color photographs of 1950 cars. You could include details like price, options available, and so on.

7. Plan a car trip to visit relatives, traveling at least part of the way on scenic highways rather than interstates.

ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT

1. Describe what you have learned about black-white relations in the 1930s and in 1950 from these two stories.
2. Explain what the two narrators—Cassie and 'lois—learn about how they must conduct themselves when they're around white people.
3. Compare 'lois's life as she has known it in the North with social conditions she encounters in the South.
4. Write character descriptions of the main figures in *The Friendship*.
5. Describe the impact the gold Cadillac has on 'lois's family.

OTHER BOOKS BY MILDRED D. TAYLOR

Song of the Trees (1975)
Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry (1976)
Let the Circle Be Unbroken (1981)
The Road to Memphis (1990)
Mississippi Bridge (1990)
The Well: David's Story (1995)

RELATED READING

Armstrong, William H. *Souder and Sour Land*
 Herhily, Dirlie. *Ludie's Song*
 Hooks, William H. *Circle of Fire*
 Mohr, Nicolasa. *Felita*
 Nelson, Vaunda. *Mayfield Crossing*
 Smothers, Ethel Footman. *Dawn in the Piney Woods*
 Tate, Eleanora E. *Front Porch Stories at the One-Room School and Thank You, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.!*
 Wilkinson, Brenda. *Ludell*

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 Dussell, Sharon L., "Profile: Mildred D. Taylor." *Language Arts*, May 1981, pp. 599-604.
 Fogelman, Phyllis J., "Mildred D. Taylor." *Horn Book*, August 1977, pp. 410-414.
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 Taylor, Mildred D., "Newbery Award Acceptance." *Horn Book*, August 1977, pp. 401-09.

VOCABULARY TEST

Match each underlined word with its meaning listed below. Write the letter of the meaning in the space next to the sentence number.

- | | | | | |
|------------|-------------------|--------------|----------------|-------------------|
| a. single | e. silently | i. chuckled | m. very dirty | q. with bad humor |
| b. thinly | f. angered | j. offended | n. disapproval | r. train of cars |
| c. careful | g. together | k. uneasy | o. sharply | s. lay in wait |
| d. poked | h. without spirit | l. grandness | p. uncertain | t. feeble |

- _____ 1. "Now, boy, what I'm gonna say?" I cried, indignant that he should single me out."
- _____ 2. Once inside we stood in the entrance a moment, somewhat hesitant now about being there.
- _____ 3. Farm supplies and household and food goods were sparsely displayed on the shelves and counters.
- _____ 4. Dewberry's eyes suddenly widened and he hollered, "Get them filthy hands off-a-there!"
- _____ 5. There was a lone gas pump in front of the store.
- _____ 6. "Reckon we can wait, Mr. Tom Bee don't take too long," Stacey said, then leaned moodily back against the post.
- _____ 7. Stacey nudged me to be quiet.
- _____ 8. Mr. Tom Bee was a slightly built man, and that along with his age made him look somewhat frail.
- _____ 9. Little Man took the candy cane from his pocket and gave it a listless lick.
- _____ 10. Jeremy, who seemed taken aback by the question, nodded mutely.
- _____ 11. "We—we waitin' on ya, Mr. Tom Bee!" Stacey cried shrilly.
- _____ 12. "Papa say white folks get awful riled 'bout them names. Say they can do some terrible things when they get riled."
- _____ 13. The white men came out on the store's porch and sniggered.
- _____ 14. "We got us a Cadillac! We got us a Cadillac!" Wilma and I proclaimed in unison.
- _____ 15. There was an awkward silence.
- _____ 16. My mother still refused to ride in the Cadillac. I just couldn't understand her objection to it.
- _____ 17. "All my life I've had to be heedful of what white folks thought."
- _____ 18. My uncles, my aunts, my cousins got into their cars, and we rolled off in our caravan headed south.
- _____ 19. I was afraid of the dark and of the woods and of whatever lurked there.
- _____ 20. I wouldn't soon forget the splendor of the Cadillac or how I'd felt riding around inside it.

COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Matching (20 points)

Read each character description. In the list below, find the character who matches the description. Write the letter of the character in the space next to the description number. You will use each name only once.

- | | | | | |
|-----------|---------------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|
| a. Stacey | c. Christopher-John | e. Jeremy Simms | g. Callie Jackson | i. 'lois |
| b. Cassie | d. Little Man | f. John Wallace | h. Tom Bee | j. Mother-Dear |

- _____ 1. A nine-year-old girl with three brothers.
- _____ 2. A young girl who's very proud of her family's new car.
- _____ 3. An average-built storekeeper somewhere in his fifties in age.
- _____ 4. An old woman who has a headache.
- _____ 5. A boy who loves shiny new things and takes great pride in being clean.
- _____ 6. A woman who objects strongly to her family's new car.
- _____ 7. A twelve-year-old who's responsible and sometimes moody.
- _____ 8. An elderly, toothless man who does not do much sharecropping anymore.
- _____ 9. A round seven-year old with a mighty sweet tooth, always sympathizing with other people's feelings.
- _____ 10. A blond sad-eyed boy.

Part II: Word Choice (20 points)

Underline the choice that correctly completes each of these sentences.

- 'lois has a sister named (Cassie, Wilma, Dee, Callie).
- On the trip South, 'lois and her family sleep one night in (their car, a hotel, a campground, a motel).
- After Daddy sells the gold Cadillac, the family drives around in an old 1930s (Lincoln, Packard, Ford, Oldsmobile).
- Daddy sells the family's (one, three, five, ten)-year-old Mercury to buy the Cadillac.
- Signs say that black people in the South can not use (gas pumps, state highways, picnic areas, water fountains).
- Dewberry Wallace yells at Little Man for putting his hands on a(n) (shotgun, glass case, ax, licorice stick).
- The youngest of the four brothers and sister is (Little Man, Christopher-John, Stacey, Cassie).
- Mr. Tom Bee goes back to the store to get (catfish, sardines, tobacco, cough drops).
- The Friendship* story takes place during the (spring, summer, fall, winter).
- The Wallace brothers joke about cutting off Little Man's hands because, they say, the hands are (useless, deformed, thieving, filthy).

Part III: Fill-In (30 points)

Write one or two words in each blank to make each statement true.

1. 'lois is upset to find signs in the South that read WHITES ONLY, _____ NOT ALLOWED.
2. 'lois's family drives from Ohio to the state of _____, where her grandparents live.
3. Daddy leaves the gold Cadillac with Cousin Halton in the city of _____, Tennessee.
4. 'lois's family shares their house with a number of _____ and _____ and cousins.
5. The police give Daddy a ticket and a fine for _____.
6. Besides the Cadillac, the family caravan South includes this make of car: _____.
7. Daddy's brother warns him, "Those white folks down South'll _____ you soon's look at you."
8. Mr. Tom Bee loves to go fishing for _____, and he catches a lot of them.
9. _____ and Dewberry are John Wallace's sons.
10. The Wallace brothers jokingly threaten to attack Little Man with a(n) _____.
11. John Wallace tells Tom Bee, "You gotta keep in mind you ain't nothin' but a(n) _____."
12. White people sometimes call an old black woman " _____ " as a sign of respect for her age.
13. John Wallace shoots Tom Bee in this part of the old man's body: _____.
14. The Wallaces and other white people are terribly angry because Tom Bee calls John Wallace " _____."
15. Tom Bee saved John Wallace's life years ago by pulling him out of a(n) _____.

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Choose any three to answer. Write a paragraph for each.

1. Why does Daddy decide to drive the Cadillac through the South? Why do the other family members decide to come along on the trip in their cars?
2. Write a character sketch of Mr. Tom Bee.
3. What is the friendship that gives the first story in the book its title?
4. What do these two stories show about black-white relations?

COMPREHENSION TEST B

Part I: Matching (20 points)

Read each quotation. In the list below, find the character who spoke the words. Write the letter of the character in the space next to the quotation number. Use each name only once.

- | | | | | |
|---------------|-----------------|---------------------|------------|----------------|
| a. Cassie | c. Stacey | e. Dewberry Wallace | g. Tom Bee | i. Daddy |
| b. Little Man | d. Jeremy Simms | f. John Wallace | h. 'lois | j. Mother-Dear |

- _____ 1. "Don't want they ole candy canes! They said I was dirty!"
- _____ 2. "She told me I bought this Cadillac alone, I could just ride in it alone."
- _____ 3. "You owes me, John. Ya knows ya owes me too."
- _____ 4. "Daddy! How come you to let this old nigger disrespect ya this here way?"
- _____ 5. "Now don't y'all go touchin' nothin'. Mind my words, hear?"
- _____ 6. "We got us a Cadillac! We got us a Cadillac!"
- _____ 7. "Big Ma—she say you gonna get yourself in a whole lotta trouble, Mr. Tom Bee. She say all them years on you done made you go foolish -"
- _____ 8. "Wilbert, you keep the car."
- _____ 9. "Stacey! May—maybe one-a these here days, maybe I go fishin' with y'all...."
- _____ 10. "You made me do that, Tom. I coulda killed ya, but I ain't wantin' to kill ya."

Part II: Word Choice (20 points)

Underline the choice that correctly completes each of these sentences.

1. On the car trip South, Daddy spends three hours in (a restaurant, the courthouse, a cotton field, jail).
2. (Wilma, 'lois, Mother-Dear, Aunt Callie) does not like the Cadillac.
3. The gold Cadillac is a (1939, 1948, 1950, 1955) Coupe de Ville.
4. Daddy drives the girls and other family members all the way to (Detroit, Memphis, Toledo, Vicksburg) on their first outing in the Cadillac.
5. On the night the family spends in the car, 'lois sleeps with a (pistol, knife, baseball bat, flashlight) in her hand.
6. At the store, Little Man admires the (penny candy, shiny belt buckles, fishing gear, axes).
7. Dewberry Wallace's brother is named (Thurston, Wilbert, Thomas, John).
8. Cassie has three brothers—Stacey, Little Man, and (John, Wilbert, Kaleb, Christopher-John).
9. Mr. Tom Bee goes to the store the first time for (tobacco, fishing gear, sardines, molasses).
10. (Stacey, Wilbert, Christopher-John, Jeremy) is the white boy in The Friendship story.

Part III: Short Answer (30 points)

Write a one- or two-word answer to each of the following questions.

1. In what U.S. state does *The Friendship* story take place? _____
2. Who is the author of these stories? _____
3. What weapon does John Wallace use to attack and injure Tom Bee? _____
4. What do the children get for Aunt Callie Jackson at the Wallace store?

5. Who is the only girl in *The Friendship* story? _____
6. What does Mr. Tom Bee get at the store and give to the children? _____
7. What gift does Mr. Tom Bee bring to the store for John Wallace? _____
8. What word are black people always supposed to use when addressing a white man?

9. In what U.S. state do 'lois and her family live? _____
10. What make of car does Daddy sell in order to buy the Cadillac? _____
11. Which family members are 'lois and her parents driving South to visit?

12. Who stops Daddy and the gold Cadillac on a road in Mississippi?

13. What kind of meals do 'lois's parents plan to eat on the drive South?

14. Who is 'lois's sister? _____
15. What color is the inside of the Cadillac? _____

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Choose any three to answer. Write a paragraph for each.

1. How do the members of 'lois's family feel about the gold Cadillac?
2. What does Daddy do with the Cadillac in the South? Why? What does he do with it when the family gets back North? Why?
3. Why does Mr. Tom Bee insist on calling Mr. John Wallace by his first name?
4. What do the two young girls who tell these stories learn about prejudice and danger?

ANSWER KEY

ANSWER KEY

VOCABULARY TEST

- | | | | |
|------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. j | 6. q | 11. o | 16. n |
| 2. p | 7. d | 12. f | 17. c |
| 3. b | 8. t | 13. i | 18. r |
| 4. m | 9. h | 14. g | 19. s |
| 5. a | 10. e | 15. k | 20. l |

COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Matching (20 points)

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. b | 6. j |
| 2. i | 7. a |
| 3. f | 8. h |
| 4. g | 9. c |
| 5. d | 10. e |

Part II: Word Choice (20 points)

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------|
| 1. Wilma | 6. glass case |
| 2. their car | 7. Little Man |
| 3. Ford | 8. tobacco |
| 4. one | 9. summer |
| 5. water fountains | 10. filthy |

Part III: Fill-In (30 points)

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. colored | 9. Thurston |
| 2. Mississippi | 10. ax |
| 3. Memphis | 11. nigger |
| 4. aunts, uncles | 12. aunty |
| 5. speeding | 13. leg |
| 6. Ford, Buick, Chevrolet | 14. John
[by his first name] |
| 7. lynch | 15. swamp |
| 8. catfish | |

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Answers will vary.

COMPREHENSION TEST B

Part I: Matching (20 points)

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. b | 6. h |
| 2. i | 7. a |
| 3. g | 8. j |
| 4. e | 9. d |
| 5. c | 10. f |

Part II: Word Choice (20 points)

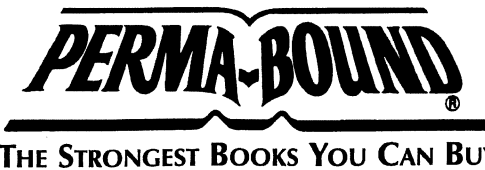
- | | |
|----------------|-----------------------|
| 1. jail | 6. shiny belt buckles |
| 2. Mother-Dear | 7. Thurston |
| 3. 1950 | 8. Christopher-John |
| 4. Detroit | 9. sardines |
| 5. knife | 10. Jeremy |

Part III: Short Answer (30 points)

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------|
| 1. Mississippi | 9. Ohio |
| 2. Mildred Taylor | 10. Mercury |
| 3. shotgun | 11. grandparents |
| 4. head(ache) medicine | 12. police |
| 5. Cassie | 13. picnic |
| 6. candy | 14. Wilma |
| 7. catfish | 15. gold |
| 8. mister | |

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Answers will vary.



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