

LET THE CIRCLE BE UNBROKEN

LIVING LITERATURE SERIES

MILDRED TAYLOR

A PERMA-BOUND PRODUCTION

TEACHER'S GUIDE

GUIDE WRITTEN BY PATRICIA BUTLER

SYNOPSIS

Making their final stop of the evening, Papa Logan and his children, Stacey, Cassie, Christopher-John, and Little Man, head towards the Ellises. Only moments earlier, Cassie has seen Wordell Lees, the so-called "retarded" grandson of Mrs. Lee Annie Lees, running into the forest. At the Ellises, Papa assists with their colicky mule while the children visit with Son Boy and Don Lee Ellis and Willie and Maynard Wiggins. Dubé Cross, a stuttering sixteen-year-old, comes by on his way to the Logans in search of work in exchange for milk.

Papa reappears, accompanied by Mrs. Lee Annie, who informs them that her grandson Russell Thomas is home from the army. Russell returns later, and Mr. Ellis and Mr. Tom Bee, Mrs. Lee Annie's cousin, discuss the events of the past summer, particularly the arrest of T.J. Avery, Stacey's schoolmate and friend, for the murder of Jim Lee Barnett, a white merchant.

Leaving the adults to their conversation and Stacey to his thoughts of T.J., Cassie, Christopher-John, and Little Man play a game of marbles with Don Lee and Son Boy, who flashes his prized emerald-blue marble, a gift from Russell. The Logans win, but Papa orders them to return their winnings and refrain from playing marbles, which he considers a form of gambling, or risk punishment. Cassie, however, is obsessed with Son Boy's emerald-blue, so the following Sunday, she plots and wins it. Again, she is caught and forced to yield her prize. As they return to church, they see two-year-old Doris Anne gleefully swinging from the church bell rope while her mother watches in terror. Wordell Lees is alone with Doris Anne, so it is assumed that he is responsible for her being in the belfry. With Wordell's assistance, Papa rescues the child and returns her to her mother.

News of T.J.'s trial spreads throughout the town. Mr. Wade Jamison, T.J.'s white attorney and a friend of the Logans, requests that they avoid the trial. Papa assents, but the children skip school and watch the court proceedings. Though Jamison presents a convincing defense, T.J. is found guilty and receives the death penalty.

As T.J. awaits his fate, life goes on. Mama tutors, Papa and Mr. Morrison work the land, Big Ma completes her chores, and the children focus on school. Stacey draws closer to school chum Moe Turner, who wants to escape from the Montiers and sharecropping, a system which forces tenants to incessant servitude.

One evening, Mr. Farnsworth, the county extension agent, tries to convince Papa to re-enroll in the government's crop reduction program, but Papa's experience with the gov-

ernment has proven to be unprofitable, so he declines. Harlan Granger, a prosperous and powerful landowner, offers to pay the Logans' taxes. Though he needs the money, Papa refuses the offer, knowing that Harlan Granger wants his land and would do anything to get it.

The next morning on their way to school, the children debate whether Papa will return to the railroad. Though Christopher-John and Little Man express their wish that Papa will stay home, Cassie and Stacey remain silently doubtful.

The school day is an unforgettable one for Cassie. It begins with her being chastised by her teacher Mrs. Crandall for making a snide remark. Then she witnesses the forbidden — interracial flirting between Jacey Peters and Stuart Walker, the son of a plantation owner. Finally, she writes a letter for Mrs. Lee Annie and promises to help her read the state constitution.

During her sessions with Mrs. Lee Annie, Cassie gains insight into Wordell's personality — his laconic but protective nature and his love for the harmonica. Wordell gains Cassie's respect, but it is respect tinged with fear.

One morning, Stacey's white friend Jeremy Simms appears at the crossroads. His family has been living in Jackson since the trial. People doubt his brothers' innocence. (The truth is that R.W. and Melvin Simms, not T.J., are responsible for Jim Lee Barnett's murder.) Before they depart, Jeremy gives Stacey and Cassie a picture of himself.

When Uncle Hammer, Papa's brother from Chicago, arrives, he and Papa discuss the family's finances and the need for Papa to return to the railroad. On their way to the Wigginses, Papa and Hammer encounter Jacey Peters with Stuart Walker and Joe Billy Montier. Stuart becomes insulting when Papa orders Jacey home. Enraged, Hammer bolts towards Stuart, but Papa restrains him. The scene is so confusing to Cassie that she asks Stacey for an explanation. He responds angrily that white boys around black girls means trouble.

At church, Hammer is greeted enthusiastically by all but Jake Willis, a stranger from Jackson, who eyes Hammer enviously because he is the only black man in town who owns a car. After church, Mama discovers that her nephew, Bud Rankin, has come to town. Bud has returned South to reconcile with his wife, who is white. Though Hammer insults Bud, calling him a fool for marrying a white woman, Bud understands. He asks Mama to allow Suzella, his biracial daughter, to spend some time with them while he attempts to reunite with his wife.

On their way to school, Stacey, Cassie, Christopher-John, and Little Man overhear a beating and find Mr.

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Farnsworth unconscious in the road. With Jeremy Simms' help, Stacey drives Farnsworth's car to Tate Sutton's place, where help is found. Later, Hammer finds Cassie's picture of Jeremy and angrily throws it into the fireplace. Responding to Hammer's actions, Papa explains the history of black and white relationships in America.

Days later, Sheriff Dobbs visits and introduces Mr. Peck, Farnsworth's replacement. Dobbs indicates that Farnsworth's beating is union-related, and Peck is under his protection. He also informs Papa that he will arrest Jake Willis for stabbing another black man during a card game. After Dobbs and Peck leave, Papa decides to host the next union meeting. Days after the meeting, Papa, faced with his family's objections but knowing his financial needs, leaves with Hammer and returns to the railroad.

In mid-April, Mrs. Lee Annie announces that she is going to register to vote. Friends and family try to dissuade her, but she petitions Mama's help to study the constitution in preparation for the literacy test.

A month later, Stacey seeks employment at the proposed hospital site, but he is turned down because of his age. He is, however, offered work on Mr. Harrison's plantation, but Mama forbids it.

Suzella arrives and is immediately admired by everyone except Cassie, who views her as an intruder and treats her like one. When Cassie expresses her dislike for Suzella to Wordell, he scolds her and leaves her numb and alone. The experience with Wordell does not change Cassie's attitude or behavior towards Suzella, but Cassie is forced to confront her insecurities.

Having heard that the Turners need a cow, Big Ma loans them one. While at the Turners', Big Ma and the children observe Peck ordering the Turners to plow up their fields. Feeling disheartened, Moe cries for the land, his family, and himself as he watches his father plow up their best cotton crop ever.

Stacey and his friends discuss Peck's orders and the opportunity for employment in the cane fields of Louisiana. Dubé Cross tells them that Granger, Montier, and the other landlords, not the government, are giving Peck his orders and that an integrated union meeting is to be held in a few days. As the boys talk, Suzella encounters Stuart Walker and "passes" for white. Cassie and her brothers are disappointed in her, but Suzella explains her need to "pass." Stacey discovers that Joe Billy Montier has found out who Suzella is and that Jacey Peters, the girl he likes, is carrying Stuart's child. That evening, Dubé and Russell, who have become active in the union, inform the Logans that the union house has been burned down. Days later, John Moses' body is found in a creek bed. Papa writes that he is not coming home, and Stacey leaves to find work.

Papa returns to search for Stacey and his friend Moe, but to no avail. Stacey's disappearance causes so much tension between Cassie's parents that she notices them drifting apart.

Jamison aids in the search by supplying legal stationery for letters of inquiry to sheriffs around the Louisiana area. While Papa investigates a lead, Cassie comes down with the fever that takes the lives of many in the community.

Wordell visits and plays his harmonica for Cassie every day during her illness, and when she recuperates, she thanks him and shares her recurring dream that Stacey is dead.

Hammer arrives for Christmas, but little preparation has been made for the holidays. When family and friends gather to celebrate, Mrs. Lee Annie restates her plan to register to vote. Jake Willis brings Suzella a Christmas present, but Papa refuses it for her. Cassie asks to accompany Mrs. Lee Annie when she registers to vote.

Three days after Christmas, Bud returns to take Suzella home. He and his wife are getting a divorce. During his stay, Bud is taunted by Joe Billy Montier, Stuart Walker, and Pierceson Wells. They force him to remove his clothes in front of his daughter, the Logan children, and Dubé Cross, who is beaten by Pierceson. Mr. Morrison comes along just in time and stops the action. Deeply embarrassed, the next day Bud leaves for New York with Suzella.

The Logans receive information about Stacey and Moe's whereabouts on the day that Mrs. Lee Annie registers to vote. While she is taking the test, a group of displaced black and white farmers demonstrates outside the courthouse. Harlan Granger is called to control the situation, and he reduces the plight of the people to "race mixing" and uses Mrs. Lee Annie's desire to vote as a stab against the union. The crowd turns hostile. Mrs. Lee Annie's life is in danger. Russell is hurt, and Jake Willis loses an eye. Shots ring out; the crowd disperses. Harlan Granger evicts Mrs. Lee Annie and her family from his property.

Mama, Papa, Hammer, and Cassie travel to Shokesville to find Stacey. Detained by the sheriff, Stacey and Moe are released to the Logans. Stacey relates his experiences of the past few months before leaving for home.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Influenced by black history and the tales of her family, Mildred D. Taylor has produced narratives which underscore the pride of blacks in their struggle for equality in America. Though born in Jackson, Mississippi in 1943, Taylor grew up in Toledo, Ohio. Usually the only black student in her college preparatory classes, Taylor experienced embarrassment and humiliation whenever black people and situations were presented in class. The portrayals were often stereotypical, not at all like the oral history she was used to hearing as a child. These experiences fostered a desire in her to present a positive, realistic depiction of black family life in America, especially the period which paved the way for the civil rights movement.

Taylor's writing career trails a number of positions she has held. After graduating from the University of Toledo, she joined the Peace Corps and spent two years in Ethiopia teaching English and history. Returning to the U.S., she recruited for the Peace Corps and even taught one of its training courses. After receiving her master's degree from the University of Colorado's School of Journalism, she accepted a position as study skills coordinator in the Black Education Program. Her experiences allowed her to study, travel, and live in Africa, but Taylor longed to recreate the stories that had become a major part of her life.

Her first triumph was *Song of the Trees* (1975), which

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introduced readers to Cassie Logan and her family. Taylor entered the story in the Council on Interracial Books for Children and won first prize in the African-American category. Her manuscript was published and was named a *New York Times* Outstanding Book of the Year in 1975 and a 1976 Children's Book Showcase book.

Taylor continued the Logan story with *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* (1976) which won the 1977 Newbery Medal and was a nominee for the 1977 National Book Award. The book was also adapted as a three-part television miniseries by the American Broadcasting Company in 1987.

Her other works which have earned her honors and recognition are *Let the Circle Be Unbroken* (1981), *The Friendship* (1987), *The Gold Cadillac* (1987), *The Road to Memphis* (1990), and *Mississippi Bridge* (1990).

Taylor resides in Colorado.

CRITIC'S CORNER

Taylor's phenomenal success is attributed to her ability to create life-like fiction which crosses gender, age, and racial lines. Her stories center around the black experiences of the 1930s through 1950s and are mostly set in Mississippi. The theme of the family, especially the black family, permeates her works.

Critics like June Jordan from the *New York Times Book Review* praised *Let the Circle Be Unbroken* for its "dramatic tension and virtuoso characterization." Others like Christine McDonnell note that Cassie and Stacey experience certain situations because they are black, but "their growing pains and self-discovery are universal. The Logans' story will strengthen and satisfy all who read it."

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

1. To define family, home, and neighbors
2. To investigate the economic, political, and social climate in America during the 1930s and 1940s
3. To analyze character development in the novel
4. To evaluate the themes presented in the novel
5. To recognize and interpret symbols in the novel
6. To discuss the pros and cons of interracial relationships
7. To research forms of mental illness
8. To explore Taylor's literary style

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To characterize the Logans as a family unit
2. To discuss the concept of neighbors and neighborhood
3. To explore the effects of Jim Crow on blacks and whites
4. To explain what voting means to Mrs. Lee Annie Lees and what she loses and gains by seeking to acquire that right
5. To discuss the voting process
6. To research the significance of the black church
7. To analyze Stacey's growth in the novel
8. To discuss the effects of adolescence on the parent-child relationship
9. To explain selected themes in the novel
10. To assess whether Wordell Lees is mentally retarded
11. To characterize Uncle Hammer as a symbol of success

12. To evaluate Papa and Uncle Hammer's attitude towards interracial relationships
13. To examine the figurative language in the novel
14. To explore Taylor's use of dialogue

MEANING STUDY

Below are words, phrases, sentences or thought units that have particular meaning in the novel. Explain each. Page numbers are provided so that you can note the context from which each item is taken.

1. Bilbo (p. 8)
(*Theodore G. Bilbo was a Mississippi senator who desired to keep blacks from voting.*)
2. Vardaman (p. 8)
(*James K. Vardaman was a Mississippi senator who was against blacks in the military.*)
3. Beelzebub (p. 37)
(*One of the names in reference to Satan or the Devil; the name means "Lord of the Flies."*)
4. "Stacey looked at me and turned away. There had been an old man's sorrow in his eyes, a deepening frown across his forehead which now seemed always to be there." (p. 43)
(*Besides going through the changes which accompany adolescence, Stacey is still feeling guilty because he could not stop T.J. from getting into trouble.*)
5. "That water in there and them toilets, they belong to the white folks, and white folks don't want no colored folks using neither one." (p. 59)
(*Cassie, Christopher-John, and Little Man experience firsthand the effects of Jim Crow when they are in Strawberry at the courthouse.*)
6. CCC (p. 92) WPA (p. 92) AAA (p. 102)
(*The CCC - Civilian Conservation Corps - was a job corps program (1933) which offered young men the opportunity to work in these areas: planting trees, clearing beaches, building bridges, dams, reservoirs, fish ponds, and fire towers.*
WPA - Works Progress Administration - was a public works program which provided jobs for millions in the 1930s. Highways, streets, parks, public buildings were built under this program.
AAA - Agricultural Adjustment Administration - 1933 plan whereby farmers were paid a subsidy to reduce their acreage or plow under crops already in the fields.)
7. *Mississippi Constitution—1890* (p. 113)
(*The book Mrs. Lee Annie receives from her former employer's daughter. It elicits her interest in voting.*)
8. "Take over that too." (p. 227)
(*Cassie has had it with Suzella, who has taken over Cassie's family and friends. Cassie is ready to send her back to New York.*)
9. "Crying would be like admitting Stacey was really gone, and he couldn't be gone..." (p. 283)
(*Cassie refuses to cry because crying would confirm Stacey's absence, and his absence is too painful.*)
10. "I couldn't get over how adultlike he had become, and that

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bothered me. It had bothered me as well that there was a large chunk in his life now that I could not share." (p. 387) *(Cassie is in awe of the physical changes that she sees in Stacey. But she is also aware that his past experiences are moving him further away from the boy she knew to the man he will be.)*

COMPREHENSION STUDY

Answer the following questions in your own words. There is not always one right answer. Your judgment is important and you should be ready to defend your answers with quotations from the novel.

Questions 1-9 Literal Level

1. Recount the events of the past summer.
(1. The Logans plan and implement a boycott against a local merchant; the boycott is a success until pressure is placed on those participating with the Logans.
2. T.J. Avery befriends the Simms brothers who force him to break into Jim Lee Barnett's store. Masked in dark stockings, the Simmses rob and kill Barnett and then point the finger at T.J.
3. Papa sets fire to his cotton crop in order to save T.J. from being lynched by a mob of whites who believe he is guilty of murder.)
2. What is ironic about the Bible verse that Cassie recites in Sunday School?
("Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house or anything that is thy neighbor's" is the verse Cassie recites. Afterwards, she proceeds to plot and win Son Boy's emerald-blue marble.)
3. Why are the black citizens skeptical about T.J. getting a fair trial?
(Mama states it succinctly. "The people who'll hear T.J. and make the decision will be white. There'll be somebody else who'll be saying that what T.J. says is not the truth. He'll be white too. There'll be a judge there and he'll be white. All white.")
4. Why does Harlan Granger offer to pay the Logans' taxes?
(To get the Logans indebted to him would be one way to acquire their property.)
5. Explain why Stacey and Moe are so eager to leave home.
(Though both are experiencing growing pains, Stacey wants to earn money to help his family and Moe wants to escape the hardships of sharecropping.)
6. Explain Cassie's feelings toward Suzella.
(Cassie sees Suzella as a thief, stealing attention and affection from her.)
7. How do Stuart and his friends humiliate Bud?
(They force him to remove his clothes in front of Suzella and the Logan children.)
8. Discuss Cassie's dreams.
(Cassie has recurring dreams about Stacey being dead. Subconsciously she is afraid for him.)
9. Why are Stacey and Moe in jail?
(Stacey, Moe, Jimmie B., Ben, and Charlie escape from the cane plantation. Charlie steals money from the boss, and he and Ben travel west; Stacey, Moe,

and Jimmie B. travel north. Jimmie B. is shot on the way, and Moe and Stacey are taken to jail.)

Questions 10-13 Interpretive Level

10. What does Hammer symbolize to the townspeople?
(Hammer represents the "small town boy" who made it big.)
11. Taylor uses the "circle" throughout the novel. Indicate its significance.
(The circle is a symbol of unity. Family, friends, and neighbors unite in order to love, share, work, and play.)
12. What does Hammer hope to achieve by burning Jeremy's picture?
(Hammer has made a strong statement about interracial relationships. He wants Cassie to know that he will not accept or tolerate her friendship with Jeremy.)
13. Explain Wordell's importance during Stacey's absence.
(Wordell becomes the brother she needs at this time.)

Questions 14-18 Critical Level

14. Are Hammer's feelings about Bud Rankin justified?
15. Evaluate the friendship between Jeremy Simms and the Logan children.
16. When Papa decides to return to the railroad, Mama is disappointed and angry. Share your feelings concerning who you think is right.
17. If you were Suzella, would you "pass"? Explain.
18. What lessons do you feel that Stacey and Moe learn from their experiences away from home?

Questions 19-20 Creative Level

19. Predict what will happen to Jacey Peters and her biracial child.
20. Act out a major scene from the novel.

ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

History/Geography

Research the following topics:

- a. Blacks in the Military (1930s and 40s)
- b. Voter Registration
- c. Jim Crow System
- d. The Great Depression
- e. Federal Writers' Project
- f. Scottsboro Trials
- g. Anti-Black Effects of the New Deal

Draw a map detailing Papa's travels as he repairs and lays railroad tracks — Louisiana, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Missouri, and Texas. Determine the number of miles between each capital city and the approximate length of time it would take to reach each destination by car and by plane.

Art

1. Create a collage on one of these themes: home, family, or friendship. Share with the class.
2. Illustrate major scenes from the novel.
3. Sketch one of the following:
 - a. The Logan home
 - b. Harlan Granger's plantation
 - c. Courthouse in Strawberry

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- d. Greater Faith School
- e. Lee-Ellis home
4. Make a model of your neighborhood.

Music

1. Compose a song on the life of T.J. Avery
2. Report on the origin of spirituals and sorrow songs.
3. Find a copy of the song "Let the Circle Be Unbroken." Analyze it for its meaning and relevance in the novel.
4. Report on the music of the 1930s.

Health/Psychology

1. Research and report on types of mental illnesses.
2. Investigate the effects of divorce on children.
3. Explore the types of vision problems:
 - a. farsightedness
 - b. double vision
 - c. colorblindness
 - d. night blindness
 - e. nearsightedness (myopia)
4. Examine the emotional, physical, social, and psychological changes that occur during adolescence.

Drama

Role play one of the following:

- a. T.J.'s trial
- b. Suzella's arrival at the Logans'
- c. Uncle Hammer finding and destroying Jeremy's picture
- d. Cassie approaching Wordell for the first time
- e. Mrs. Lee Annie registering to vote
- f. Stacey's return home

Speech

Write and present a persuasive speech on one of the following:

- a. choices
- b. change
- c. passing
- d. interracial relationships
- e. self-respect

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES

1. Write a news article using one of these headlines:
 - a. Union Fire Heats Things Up
 - b. Jury Reaches Verdict in Avery Trial
 - c. Cassie Discovers Jim Crow
 - d. Stacey Logan Leaves Home
 - e. Northerner Terrorized by White Youths
 - f. Courthouse is Scene of Demonstration
 - g. Fever Claims Lives
 - h. Small Town Boy Makes It Big
2. Prepare an oral report on the music, art, literature, entertainment, or fashions of the 1930s.
3. Discuss the similes used in the novel. Explain the images in each example:
 - a. "I watched her drink, the water arching toward her like a colorless rainbow." (p. 56)
 - b. "...the music slipped from him like water from a well." (p. 159)
 - c. "The words, the note, were like a shotgun blast." (p. 278)
 - d. "...the fields looking like a patchwork quilt of

growing things..." (p. 268)

4. Prepare a survey on racial attitudes. Present results to the class. Suggest ways to improve race relations.
5. Research and report on how the definition of family has changed over the last decade.
6. Investigate the effectiveness of unions in America.
7. Read aloud an interesting excerpt from the novel.
8. Visit the Board of Elections for insight into the voting process.
9. Investigate the role of the black church in the black community.
10. Write to a pen pal from a rural community.
11. List and discuss the characteristics of a good father. Evaluate Papa using the attributes listed.
12. Write an essay on the importance of one of the following:
 - a. The Importance Of A Father
 - b. Every Choice Has A Consequence
 - c. Change Hurts
 - d. Losing A Friend
 - e. Being The Oldest/Only Child
 - f. What Makes A Home?
13. Interview an older American who lived during the Jim Crow era. Discuss what you have learned about this period in history.
14. Report on one of the following:
 - a. cotton as "king"
 - b. sharecropping system
 - c. cane plantations

ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT

1. Explain how the novel would change if the following occurred:
 - a. Stacey takes the stand on T.J.'s behalf
 - b. T.J. escapes from jail
 - c. Harlan Granger pays the Logans' taxes
 - d. Hammer attacks Stuart Walker
 - e. Stacey is caught driving Farnsworth's car
2. Evaluate the motives of the following characters:
 - a. Stacey's motive for leaving home
 - b. Hammer's motive for burning Jeremy's picture
 - c. Bud's motive for leaving Suzella with the Logans
 - d. Peck's motive for ordering Turner to plow up his fields
3. Analyze the following quotations from the novel. Indicate the meaning of each. Then apply each quotation to real-life situations.
 - a. "Anytime you take possession of somebody else's things through a game, there's usually gonna be hard feelings." (p. 15)
 - b. "...each of us got something to do in this life, and if we do a good job at that, then we can be right proud." (p. 120)
 - c. "...you gotta always respect yourself and your family..." (p. 176)

RELATED READING

Armstrong, William. *Souder*
Brown, Claude. *Manchild in the Promised Land*
Lee, Harper. *To Kill a Mockingbird*
Moody, Anne. *Coming of Age in Mississippi*

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Murphy, Barbara. *Home Free*
 Parks, Gordon. *The Learning Tree*
 Walter, Mildred Pitts. *The Girl on the Outside*
 Wright, Richard. *Black Boy*

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Contemporary Literary Criticism. Vol. 21. Detroit: Gale, 1982.
 Jordan, June. "Mississippi in the Thirties." *New York Times Book Review*. 15 Nov. 1981, pp. 55, 58.
 Martin, Ruby. "Books for Young People." *Journal of Reading*. Feb. 1977, pp. 432-435.
 McDonnell, Christine. "Powerful Lesson of Family Love." *Christian Science Monitor*. 14 Oct. 1981, pp. B1, B11.
 Rees, David. "The Color of Skin: Mildred Taylor." *The Marble in the Water: Essays on Contemporary Writers of Fiction for Children and Young Adults*, pp. 108-109.
Something About the Author. Vol. 70. Detroit: Gale, 1993.

ANSWER KEY

READING QUIZZES

Chapter One	1. T	2. F	3. F	4. T	5. F
Chapter Two	1. F	2. T	3. F	4. F	5. F
Chapter Three	1. F	2. T	3. F	4. T	5. F
Chapter Four	1. T	2. F	3. T	4. T	5. F
Chapter Five	1. F	2. T	3. F	4. F	5. T
Chapter Six	1. F	2. T	3. F	4. F	5. T
Chapter Seven	1. T	2. T	3. T	4. F	5. F
Chapter Eight	1. T	2. F	3. T	4. F	5. T
Chapter Nine	1. T	2. T	3. T	4. F	5. F
Chapter Ten	1. F	2. F	3. T	4. T	5. F
Chapter Eleven	1. F	2. F	3. F	4. T	5. T
Chapter Twelve	1. F	2. T	3. T	4. T	5. F
Chapter Thirteen	1. T	2. F	3. T	4. F	5. T
Chapter Fourteen	1. F	2. F	3. F	4. T	5. T

WORDS IN CONTEXT

1. threatening	9. skillfully
2. dangerous	10. harsh
3. jeering remark	11. unbelievable
4. wild noise	12. reddened
5. fixed	13. abruptly
6. charming, winning	14. watch
7. scornful	15. pretending
8. grossed	

VOCABULARY MATCH

1. value judgment	11. violent rage
2. bell tower	12. thin
3. mercy	13. ability to be deceived
4. admit as true	14. tradition
5. close; end	15. strong
6. comfort	16. lasting a moment
7. tending to spread	17. basics
8. bold	18. close examination
9. scatter	19. scold
10. border; edge	20. worry

VOCABULARY TEST

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

COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Quotation Identification (30 points)

1. I	4. D	7. H	10. B	13. F
2. B	5. K	8. B	11. C	14. K
3. E	6. B	9. E	12. B	15. G

Part II: Settings (20 points)

- where Stacey and Moe took work in the cane fields
- where Stacey and Moe have been detained in jail
- where Hammer lives
- where T.J.'s trial is held; demonstration takes place; where Mrs. Lee Annie hopes to register to vote
- where Bud and Suzella live

Part III: Completion (20 points)

- the white community doubts his brothers' innocence in the murder of Barnett.
- she plans to take the literacy test which will allow her to register to vote.
- he is a successful black man.
- he wants to earn money to help his family.
- she feels that the job is demeaning.
- he wants to reconcile with his wife and arrange for Suzella to stay with the Logans.
- he knows that Granger would use this as an opportunity to acquire his land.
- he doesn't want Cassie and her brothers to associate with whites.
- she wants to win his prized marble.
- he is caught running away from the cane plantation.

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Answers will vary.

COMPREHENSION TEST B

Part I: Character Identification (20 points)

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

Part II: Short Answer (30 points)

- what Stacey gives Cassie before he leaves home
- what Jake Willis delivers to Suzella for Christmas, but Papa declines it for her
- what Jeremy gives Cassie and Stacey; Hammer burns it in the fireplace when he finds it
- what Cassie, Christopher-John and Little Man hide under when they sneak off to Strawberry to see the trial
- what Hammer drives
- what Cassie plays for in the game against Son Boy
- what Wordell plays for Cassie when she becomes ill
- what the Simms brothers wear in order to disguise themselves when they rob and murder Barnett
- what is used to destroy the union house and Jeremy's picture
- what Doris Anne swings on while her mother watches in terror

Part III: Relationships (20 points)

- Mama blames Papa for Stacey's disappearance. Papa even blames himself.
- Uncle Hammer insults Bud because he is married to a white woman. Mama gets upset with Hammer.
- Cassie helps Mrs. Lee Annie read and review the constitution.
- Papa saves Doris Anne with Wordell's help.
- Cassie mistakenly thinks that Wordell is going to attack her with an axe.

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Answers will vary.

LET THE CIRCLE BE UNBROKEN

READING QUIZZES True or False

CHAPTER ONE

- _____ 1. The novel takes place in Mississippi in 1934.
- _____ 2. When the Logans arrive at the Ellises, Papa helps them tend to a colicky bull.
- _____ 3. Mrs. Lee Annie's grandson has returned from the navy.
- _____ 4. Cassie plays marbles and wins, but Papa orders her to return them and refrain from playing.
- _____ 5. Papa saves Doris Anne from Wordell.

CHAPTER TWO

- _____ 1. When Mama hears T.J. is going to trial, she is confident that he will be found innocent.
- _____ 2. Mr. Jamison wants the Logans to stay away from the trial.
- _____ 3. Cassie, Christopher-John, and Little Man hitch a ride to Strawberry with Mrs. Jamison.
- _____ 4. While Cassie is in Strawberry, she is caught drinking from the "white only" water fountain.
- _____ 5. Papa and Big Ma decide to go to Strawberry to support the Averys.

CHAPTER THREE

- _____ 1. Cassie, her brothers, and friends are allowed to sit in the "black only" section of the courtroom.
- _____ 2. Mr. Jamison questions Mrs. Barnett, who admits that she is unsure of the racial identity of T.J.'s companions.
- _____ 3. When T.J. takes the stand, he is unable to answer any of Jamison's questions.
- _____ 4. T.J. is found guilty of Barnett's murder.
- _____ 5. T.J.'s punishment is life in prison.

CHAPTER FOUR

- _____ 1. Mr. Farnsworth, the county extension agent, visits Papa in order to convince him to participate in the crop reduction program.
- _____ 2. Because of his finances, Papa accepts Harlan Granger's offer to pay his taxes.
- _____ 3. Stacey and his friends see Jacey Peters and Alice Charles flirting with Billy Montier and Stuart Walker.
- _____ 4. Mrs. Lee Annie studies the constitution in order to take the literacy test.
- _____ 5. During one of her sessions with Mrs. Lee Annie, Cassie converses with Wordell Lees, but he gets excited and chases her with an ax.

CHAPTER FIVE

- _____ 1. Jeremy Simms and his family move to Jackson because they lose their land.
- _____ 2. Jeremy gives Cassie a black and white picture of himself.
- _____ 3. Two union men, both black, solicit Papa's help in starting a black union.
- _____ 4. When Papa and Hammer encounter Jacey Peters with Stuart Walker, they pretend not to notice.
- _____ 5. Stacey warns Cassie to stay away from white boys.

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CHAPTER SIX

- _____ 1. Bud Rankin, Mama's nephew, stops to see the family on his way to a funeral.
- _____ 2. Bud is reluctant to tell Mama that his wife is white.
- _____ 3. When Hammer discovers that Bud's wife is white, he loses his temper and punches Bud in the eye.
- _____ 4. Bud asks Mama to allow his daughter to visit for a year.
- _____ 5. Hammer finds Jeremy's picture and throws it into the fireplace.

CHAPTER SEVEN

- _____ 1. Papa agrees that Cassie should not associate with Jeremy.
- _____ 2. Papa returns to the railroad since he is unable to find work in the area.
- _____ 3. Mrs. Lee Annie announces her desire to register to vote.
- _____ 4. Desiring to relieve his family's financial strain, Stacey tries to get employment at a hospital.
- _____ 5. Mama refuses to allow Stacey to work for the Harrisons because they want to purchase the Logan property.

CHAPTER EIGHT

- _____ 1. Stacey is interested in Jacey Peters, but he is repulsed by her attraction to Stuart Walker.
- _____ 2. Suzella and her mother arrive a few days after Papa leaves.
- _____ 3. Cassie and Suzella clash because Cassie is jealous of her.
- _____ 4. When Big Ma hears that the Turners need a cow, she buys them one.
- _____ 5. While at the Turners' home, Big Ma, Cassie, and the boys witness Mr. Peck ordering Mr. Turner to plow up his crops.

CHAPTER NINE

- _____ 1. Dubé Cross discovers that Granger, Montier, and other landlords are ordering the crops to be plowed up.
- _____ 2. Suzella encounters Stuart Walker and pretends to be white.
- _____ 3. News about Jacey's pregnancy spreads throughout the black community.
- _____ 4. The house where union meetings are held is burned down, and John Moses' body is found inside.
- _____ 5. Before Stacey leaves home, he gives Cassie his harmonica.

CHAPTER TEN

- _____ 1. Little Willie tells Mama that Stacey and Moe once talked about working for the railroad.
- _____ 2. Mr. Morrison brings Papa news about Stacey's disappearance.
- _____ 3. Papa and Hammer search for Stacey but without success.
- _____ 4. Papa blames himself for Stacey's disappearance.
- _____ 5. At the end of the week, Papa returns to work, leaving Hammer to care for his family.

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CHAPTER ELEVEN

- _____ 1. Cassie fights Mary Lou Wellever because Mary Lou says that Stacey is in jail.
- _____ 2. Mr. Jamison aids the Logans by driving to Louisiana to search for Stacey.
- _____ 3. Stuart Walker attacks Dubé Cross because of his stuttering.
- _____ 4. Cassie gets sick with the fever and Wordell visits her everyday.
- _____ 5. Don Lee Ellis dies of the fever.

CHAPTER TWELVE

- _____ 1. When Hammer returns, he finds the house decorated and the family in a festive mood.
- _____ 2. Mrs. Lee Annie states that she will register to vote when she turns sixty-five.
- _____ 3. Bud returns to take Suzella home since he and his wife are getting a divorce.
- _____ 4. Stuart forces Bud to remove his clothes.
- _____ 5. The sheriff arrives, rescuing Bud from further humiliation.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

- _____ 1. Mr. Jamison has information on Stacey and Moe's whereabouts.
- _____ 2. When Mrs. Lee Annie goes to register to vote, the registrar refuses to let her take the test.
- _____ 3. A demonstration takes place outside the courthouse.
- _____ 4. The demonstration turns violent, and Russell Thomas loses an eye.
- _____ 5. Harlan Granger tells Mrs. Lee Annie to vacate his property.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

- _____ 1. Cassie, Big Ma, and Papa go to Shokesville to look for Stacey.
- _____ 2. The Shokesville sheriff releases Stacey and Moe after Papa pays their bail.
- _____ 3. Stacey and Moe are in jail for stealing.
- _____ 4. Before going home, Stacey visits Mrs. Mattie Jones.
- _____ 5. Stacey's homecoming is a pleasant surprise to his remaining family members.

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WORDS IN CONTEXT

Read the following sentences and use the context clues to figure out the meaning of the underlined words.

1. "Son Boy wondered, absently shaking the marbles in his hand, the impending game for the moment forgotten." (p. 13)
Meaning:
2. "Moe nodded, acknowledging the precarious timetable." (p. 45)
Meaning:
3. "Mr. Farnsworth ignored the taunt and went up the steps into the courthouse." (p. 52)
Meaning:
4. The pandeonium fizzled to an end and I scooted into the third-row bench I shared with two other students. (p. 106)
Meaning:
5. "The head of the axe lay embedded in one of the logs." (p. 122)
Meaning:
6. "Cousin Bud was a handsome man with a winsome smile and a pleasant way about him." (p. 158)
Meaning:
7. "Uncle Hammer kept his eyes on him a moment longer, his look contemptuous, then crossed to the side door and went out." (p. 163)
Meaning:
8. "I kept my eyes riveted on the horseshoe I had successfully thrown and didn't answer." (p. 190)
Meaning:
9. "Big Ma's fingers moved deftly over the patch that had once been a part of Little Man's trousers to make sure it hadn't puckered." (p. 193)
Meaning:
10. "He laughed then, a raucous, distasteful laugh, and Stacey pushed us on." (p. 201)
Meaning:
11. "The whole thing seemed incredible to me." (p. 214)
Meaning:
12. "Suzella crimsoned." (p. 245)
Meaning:
13. "Mama walked brusquely from the room, passing me without ordering me back to the clothesline." (p. 257)
Meaning:
14. "...Wordell had already taken up his morning vigil." (p. 317)
Meaning:
15. "Papa was silent, feigning ignorance." (p. 337)
Meaning:

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VOCABULARY MATCH

Choose the correct definition for each word in the Word List. Write the answer on the blank.

Word List		Definition
1. appraisal	_____	ability to be deceived
2. belfry	_____	admit as true
3. clemency	_____	bell tower
4. concede	_____	bold
5. conclude	_____	border; edge
6. console	_____	close; end
7. contagious	_____	close examination
8. defiant	_____	comfort
9. dispel	_____	basics
10. fringe	_____	lasting a moment
11. fury	_____	mercy
12. gaunt	_____	scatter
13. gullibility	_____	scold
14. heritage	_____	strong
15. intense	_____	tending to spread
16. momentary	_____	thin
17. rudiments	_____	tradition
18. scrutiny	_____	violent rage
19. upbraid	_____	worry
20. vex	_____	value judgment

LET THE CIRCLE BE UNBROKEN

VOCABULARY TEST

Write the correct definition in the blank below.

- | | | | |
|-------|------------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| _____ | 1. pandemonium
(a) bell tower | (b) wild rose | (c) maze |
| _____ | 2. gaunt
(a) tall | (b) bold | (c) thin |
| _____ | 3. rudiments
(a) basics | (b) endings | (c) beginnings |
| _____ | 4. winsome
(a) charming | (b) windy | (c) cool |
| _____ | 5. upbraid
(a) scatter | (b) uplift | (c) scold |
| _____ | 6. clemency
(a) danger | (b) mercy | (c) strength |
| _____ | 7. raucous
(a) harsh | (b) rash | (c) ride |
| _____ | 8. vex
(a) comfort | (b) scold | (c) worry |
| _____ | 9. impending
(a) threatening | (b) raging | (c) fearful |
| _____ | 10. vigil
(a) target | (b) examination | (c) watch |
| _____ | 11. defiant
(a) eager | (b) serious | (c) bold |
| _____ | 12. concede
(a) believe | (b) admit | (c) hide |
| _____ | 13. gullible
(a) highly skilled | (b) strongly built | (c) easily cheated |
| _____ | 14. precarious
(a) dangerous | (b) evil | (c) bold |
| _____ | 15. deft
(a) momentary | (b) threatening | (c) skillful |
| _____ | 16. contagious
(a) sharp | (b) spreading | (c) healing |
| _____ | 17. momentary
(a) mutual | (b) minute | (c) for the moment |
| _____ | 18. scrutiny
(a) disappointment | (b) first principle | (c) close examination |
| _____ | 19. taunt
(a) jeering remark | (b) excuse | (c) hint |
| _____ | 20. contemptuous
(a) scornful | (b) hopeful | (c) harsh |

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COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Quotation Identification (30 points)

Which characters made the following statements? Write the letter of your answer in the space provided.

- | | | | |
|----------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| A. Cassie | D. Uncle Hammer | G. Mama | J. Jeremy Simms |
| B. Stacey | E. Harlan Granger | H. Suzella | K. Mrs. Lee Annie |
| C. Mr. Jamison | F. Papa | I. Russell Thomas | L. Wordell Lees |

- _____ 1. "I represents the United States government."
- _____ 2. "Mama, I gotta go! T.J. gonna need me."
- _____ 3. "I want y'all and everything y'all's off my land."
- _____ 4. "Y'all ever need me, y'all know there ain't nothing in this world I wouldn't do for y'all...y'all like my own children..."
- _____ 5. "...I just wants to vote."
- _____ 6. "I ain't no baby no more, Mama, and you gotta stop treating me like one."
- _____ 7. "Cassie, why don't you like me?"
- _____ 8. "I'm fine, Cassie. Now you jus' be careful with that knife, you hear?"
- _____ 9. "My offer to buy y'all's place still stands, same as last year."
- _____ 10. "You jus' shouldn't've been drinking in there, Cassie."
- _____ 11. "...if you or Mr. Morrison or any of your family go into town, it could make things worse for the boy."
- _____ 12. "Y'all just stay away from me from now on, ya hear?"
- _____ 13. "I don't know if I'll be going to the railroad."
- _____ 14. "And you be sure and ask your mama 'bout comin' to read with me, ya hear?"
- _____ 15. "Used to get him into a whole lot of trouble too, that voice of his."

Part II: Settings (20 points)

Discuss the significance of the following settings. Be specific.

1. Louisiana

2. Shokesville

3. Chicago

4. Strawberry

5. New York

LET THE CIRCLE BE UNBROKEN

Part III: Completion (20 points)

Complete each statement below by explaining the reason.

1. Jeremy's family moves to Jackson because

2. Mrs. Lee Annie studies the state constitution because

3. Jake Willis is hostile towards Hammer because

4. Stacey leaves home because

5. Mama refuses to let Stacey work for Harrison because

6. Bud comes to Mississippi because

7. Papa refuses Harlan Granger's help because

8. Uncle Hammer burns Jeremy's picture because

9. Cassie plays marbles with Son Boy because

10. Stacey ends up in jail because

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Choose one of the following essay topics.

1. Write a character sketch on one of the following characters.
 - A. Stacey Logan
 - B. Suzella Rankin
 - C. Wordell Lees
 - D. Harlan Granger
 - E. Mrs. Lee Annie Lees

2. Explain how one of these themes is developed in the novel.
 - A. change
 - B. racism
 - C. family
 - D. circle
 - E. determination

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COMPREHENSION TEST B

Part I: Character Identification (20 points)

Match the characters listed below with the correct action. Place the letter of your answer in the space provided.

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| _____ 1. Is found guilty of murder | A. Cassie |
| _____ 2. Stops Cassie from drinking water | B. Big Ma |
| _____ 3. Saves Bud from white youths | C. Stacey |
| _____ 4. Returns to work for the railroad | D. T.J. |
| _____ 5. Burns Jeremy's picture | E. Mr. Morrison |
| _____ 6. Goes to work in cane fields | F. Uncle Hammer |
| _____ 7. Becomes bedridden with the fever | G. Mama |
| _____ 8. Loans the Turners a cow | H. Papa |
| _____ 9. Refuses to let Stacey work | I. Jeremy |
| _____ 10. Refuses Harlan Granger's money | J. Suzella |

Part II: Short Answer (30 points)

Explain the significance of the following items.

1. penknife
2. box of candy
3. picture
4. tarpaulin
5. Ford
6. emerald-blue marble
7. harmonica
8. black stockings
9. fire
10. church bell rope

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Part III: Relationships (20 points)

Identify the relationships between the following:

1. Mama — Stacey's disappearance — Papa
2. Uncle Hammer — Bud — Mama
3. Cassie — constitution — Mrs. Lee Annie
4. Papa — Doris Anne — Wordell
5. Cassie — axe — Wordell

Part IV: Essay (30 points)

Choose one of the following essay topics.

1. Explain how one of the following issues is developed in the novel:
 - A. death
 - B. change
 - C. friendship
 - D. interracial relationships
2. Write a character sketch on one of the following:
 - A. Mrs. Lee Annie
 - B. Uncle Hammer
 - C. Jeremy Simms
 - D. Stacey Logan



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