Their Eyes Were Watching God Study Questions

For AP Lit with Bah

Beyond answering these questions, to understand the story, it helps to know where in the story to find the answers (location and context), and to be able to discuss the questions and answers.

**SPOILER ALERT**—THESE QUESTIONS CONTAIN SPOILERS. THEY MAY BEST BE USED BY REVIEWING A SECTION AT A TIME, AFTER YOU HAVE READ THAT SECTION IN THE NOVEL. ALSO, THESE ARE INCOMPLETE, AND ARE ONLY DESIGNED TO ENCOURAGE CLASS DISCUSSION.

**Day One Reading**

“Women forget all those things they don’t want to remember, and \_\_\_\_\_\_ everything they don’t want to forget.”

What group of people act as a sort of chorus in this story?

True or False. The men of the various communities that Janie lives in find her ugly. How do various men see her?

To whom does Janie tell her story?

Of what do the people on the porch warn Pheoby to beware as she walks to Janie’s house?

What was Janie’s childhood nick-name?

To what type of tree does Janie repeatedly refer?

What does Granny see Janie doing that makes Granny decide it is time for Janie to get married?

Granny hits Janie and a tear comes to Janie’s eye. Where does this tear come from?

Janie runs away in response to her first husband, Logan’s, plan to buy something. What is it he plans to buy?

**Day Two Reading**

What about Eatonville attracts Joe Starks?

What does Joe order for Eatonville from the Sears catalog?

What elected position does Joe take in Eatonville?

Where does Janie work in Eaton?

How does Joe use the mule he buys from Matt?

Why does Joe make Janie keep her hair up in a rag?

What does Janie say to Joe after he buys the mule–in your own words?

How is the mule’s appearance characterized after its death?

What do the town’s people do with the mule after its death?

With what, are the trees “peopled” (at the funeral)?

What do the vultures say killed the mule?

“Somebody got to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for women and chillun and chickens and cows.”

“She stood there until something fell off the shelf inside her. Then she went inside to see what it was. It was \_\_\_\_\_\_.”

“It’s so easy to make yo’self out God Almighty when you ain’t got nothin’ to strain against but \_\_\_\_\_\_ and chickens.”

**Day Three Reading**

When Joe begins to get fat, what does he say about Janie’s body?

When Joe becomes ill, what does he assume Janie has done?

Does Death’s house have walls?

Who says, “Shut up! Ah wish thunder and lightnin’ would kill yuh!”

What does Janie do to change her appearance when Joe dies?

What had Nanny done with “the biggest thing God ever made, the horizon”?

“Tain’t dat Ah worries ofver Joe’s death, Pheoby. Ah jus’ loves dis \_\_\_\_\_\_.”

Instead of going to the ball game, Janie and Teacake play what game together?

What musical instrument does Teacake play?

Who is “a glance from God”?

What “fiend from hell” is “specially sent to lovers”?

True or False. Teacake never teaches Janie to drive.

True or False. The townspeople feel that Janie and Teacake are a great couple.

**Day Four Reading and Day Five Reading**

What of Janie’s does Teacake take with him when he goes away for several days?

Does he return it?

What does Teacake pay the ugly women to do?

Janie and Teacake fight over Nunkie. Why?

True or False. Janie and Teacake never really make up after fighting over Nunkie.

True or False. Mrs. Turner admires black people.

True or False. Mrs. Turner finds Janie ugly and unfit for Teacake since he “looks like the love thoughts of women.”

True or False. The rest of the workers on the muck lose respect for Teacake after he beats Janie.

True or False. Teacake beats Janie to show her who is boss.

What happens to Turner’s roadhouse when Teacake attempts to throw out Coodemay and Sop?

Why do the Seminoles leave the area around Lake Okechobee?

“You couldn’t have a hurricane when you’re making \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .”

“If I never see you no mo’ on earth, Ah’ll meet you in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .”

What do the white people in the big houses do before the hurricane?

During the hurricane, people sat in their shanties, and “they seemed to be staring at the dark, but \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .”

What do the animals do during the hurricane?

What happens to Teacake when he rescues Janie who is floating away on a cow?

Who is “Him-with-the-square-toes”?

What is Teacake forced to do after the hurricane?

What does Teacake sleep with under his pillow?

True or False. Janie kills Teacake.

Describe Janie’s jury in a few words.

True or False. It was not death Janie feared from the trial, it was misunderstanding.

True or False. The black men at first feel an injustice is done in the aquittal (freeing) of Janie.

True or False. Pheoby feels oppressed and shrunken from listening to Janie’s story.

What does Janie do with the horizon?