The Glass Castle by Jeannette Walls **STUDY GUIDE for FINAL EXAM**

Study Guides for Reading Assignments

Reading Assignment 1, pages 9-18

* Where (location) does the story of Jeannette’s childhood begin?
* What is Jeannette’s earliest memory? Describe this scene.
* What are your thoughts on what happens to Jeannette in this early memory?
* How does the family dog, Juju, play a part in Jeannette’s earliest memory?
* When Jeannette is taken in the hospital, the doctor says her condition is very serious.
* A nurse, trying to comfort Jeannette, leans over her bed and tells her that she is going to be okay.
* What is Jeannette’s response to her comment, and what does this say about Jeannette’s personality?
* Who is Brian?
* What is Brian doing as Jeannette is laying on the metal table covered in ice?
* What system did Jeannette use to fill the cooking pan with water, since it was too heavy for her to lift?
* What does Jeannette like about the hospital?
* What first-time experiences does Jeannette have while in the hospital?
* What was the one thing you never had to worry about while being in the hospital?
* How does the atmosphere in the hospital change when Jeannette’s family comes to visit?
* Who is Rex Walls?
* According to Rex, why does everyone in the hospital treat Jeannette so well?
* According to Jeannette’s mother, Rosemary, what is wrong with chewing gum? Why is this situation ironic?
* Do you find any irony in Rosemary saying, “After all, I am your mother, and I should have a say in how you’re raised,”?
* Who is Lori?
* When Jeannette asks Lori, “Do you guys miss me?” how does Lori respond?
* What is Rex’s opinion of Jeannette being in the hospital?
* What are the details of the story Rex tells Jeannette (Lori being stung by a scorpion)?
* According to Jeannette, where should Rosemary have taken Jeannette instead of the hospital?
* What happens to Brian while Jeannette is still in the hospital?
* Why do the Walls parents decide not to take Brian to the hospital?
* What is the significance of the helicopter ride?
* Why does Rex get into an argument with Jeannette’s doctor?
* What does it mean to “check out, Rex Walls-style”?
* When Jeannette comes home from the hospital, with what does she become fascinated ?
* What happens to Tinkerbell?
* When Rex comes home in the middle of the night, what does he ask his family to do?
* How long do the kids have to gather their things before the family moves?
* What is the Blue Goose?
* Where does the Walls family hide their “jar of cash”?
* Who is Quixote?
* According to Rosemary, what don’t cats like to do?
* What happens to Quixote?
* Where does the Walls family sleep that night? Why was this, according to Rex, better than using pillows and sleeping in a bed?
* How does Jeannette feel about sleeping under the stars?
* How does Lori respond to Jeannette’s comment, “We could live like this forever,”?
* **Reading Assignment 2, pages 19-38**
* Who are the people who are after the walls family?
* How does dad refer to them?
* Why does dad insist on saying that the FBI/henchmen/Gestapo are after them? (Mom tells them the true story.)
* What kind of work ethic does Rex walls have?
* What does it mean to be “rootless”? Jeannette describes her family this way.
* How were the Walls children educated?
* What does mom teach her kids to do in the desert?
* What item is for “namby-pambies”? What does that term mean?
* What does Jeannette mean when she says, “We were sort of like cactus”? How is her family really like the cacti in the desert when it comes to eating?
* What is dad’s first plan to get rich?
* Dad is an expert in what fields?
* What is dad’s invention and for what purpose is it used?
* What does this line imply about Rex Walls’ work ethic: “At least that was what it would be able to do once dad finished building it”?
* What is Jeannette’s opinion of her father at this point in the book?
* What type of “situation” does mom say that her husband has? There are two phases of this situation. Name each and describe their outcomes.
* Jeannette’s dad is a great storyteller. What kinds of stories does Rex Walls tell his children?
* What must Jeannette’s father do in order to start work on the glass castle? What must he buy Jeannette’s mother and why?
* Rex Walls refuses to talk about which two subjects?
* In the story of how Jeannette’s parents met, what does Rose Mary do that makes Rex believe that she has “spirit”?
* Jeannette’s mom always said that people worry too much about what? Do you agree with Rose Mary?
* Why did Rex and his family decide to move to Las Vegas? Do you think that there is a flaw in his logic?
* In how many different places has Jeannette’s family lived by this point?
* What happened to Jeannette as their car took a sharp turn over some railroad tracks? Why didn’t Jeannette’s family immediately come back for her?
* What happens to the kids at the hotel in the Tenderloin District?
* What does Jeannette think about her history with fire?
* What do you think a Joshua tree looks like?
* How Could the Joshua tree be a symbol for Jeannette’s life?
* Why does Jeannette’s Dad call her “mountain goat”?
* What does Jeannette mean by the following quote from the novel: “The only animals that could survive around Midland were lipless, scaly creatures such as gila monsters and scorpions, and people like us”?
* What happened to Juju?
* What happened to the cats that the walls family took in to replace Quixote?
* **Reading Assignment 3, pages 39-57**
* Why didn’t the Walls children ever believe in Santa Claus?
* Why did the Walls parents tell their children that other kids were being deceived by their own parents?
* Why do the Walls parents encourage their kids not to look down on the other children?
* When did the Walls family celebrate Christmas and why?
* When Jeannette was five, what did she receive as a Christmas present from her dad?
* What is special about Rosemary’s pregnancies?
* What happens when Rex refuses to believe in Rosemary’s “special” pregnancies?
* What was the benefit of the kids living in the LBJ apartments?
* Living in a big city like Blythe meant what two things for Jeannette?
* What happens between Jeannette, Brian, and the four Mexican girls?
* What do Brian and Jeannette gorge themselves on after the fight?
* Why is Rosemary in the hospital, and how does she go about checking out?
* Who got to hold the baby on the way home from the hospital?
* What did Jeannette promise the new baby on the way home?
* How long did the baby go without a name?
* What were Rex and Rosemary considering naming the baby?
* What happened when the squad car tried pulling over the green caboose?
* What is the irony of the following statement: “Mom told us it would be about fourteen hours if we took the highway, but we should tack on another couple of hours because we might make some scenic detours”?
* Who ends up in the back of the U-Haul? How do you feel about this mode of transportation?
* What do you think of the following statement: “Brian and Lori held tight to the Prospector, which Dad had tied securely with ropes”?
* What happens when a car comes up behind the U-Haul? Why is Rex so angry?
* What kind of a town was Battle Mountain?
* When the Walls family moves to Battle Mountain, where do they live?
* What kind of furniture does the Walls family use in their house in Battle Mountain?
* When the parents consider buying their children real beds, why do the kids protest?
* Despite the piano being the in yard, Rosemary still sees a positive to having it in that location. What is that positive?
* What sort of things did Rex Walls teach his children?
* What was the Owl Club?
* When Rosemary and the kids went to the commissary, what did they buy?
* According to Rosemary, what type of people bought things like Spaghetti-Os and TV dinners?
* How does Rosemary justify painting over making supper?
* Why did Rex and the kids write letters to the “dictionary people”?
* **Reading Assignment 4, pages 58-75**
* At the beginning of this section, where is the Walls family living? (House and City/State, please)
* Where did Rex and Rosemary enroll their children in school?
* What did Jeannette try not to do to make the other kids like her?
* What did Rex make Jeannette do because he argued that she needed to be challenged?
* The neighborhood where the Walls children live is known as what?
* What two things were most important to the kids who lived in this neighborhood?
* Rosemary believed that children should not be burdened by what? Do you agree?
* According to Rosemary, we are becoming a nation of what? Why does she come to this conclusion?
* What kind of collection does Jeannette start while living in Battle Mountain?
* What kind of rock was Jeannette’s favorite?
* Who was the only person who ever bought a rock from Jeannette during her “rock sales”? What does he suggest Jeannette do?
* What was “The Woods” according to Jeannette and Brian?
* What happened to Brian and Jeannette’s “laboratory”? Did you see anything wrong with the situation that occurred?
* Who saved Brian and Jeannette from the potentially deadly consequences at the laboratory?
* According to Rex, what is the zone of yellow flames dissolving into shimmery heat called? How might this phrase relate to themes in the book?
* What did Brian and Jeannette do to earn money?
* What was the Green Lantern?
* What was the ugliest pet the Walls family ever owned?
* What was the most unusual, but “pretty-tame”pet taken in by the Walls family?
* What were Jeannette’s feelings about Buster?
* According to Rosemary, their family was doing the animals a favor by not doing what?
* What are your thoughts on the following statement: “Mom liked to encourage self-sufficiency in all living creatures.”
* How is there a “circle of life” happening within the Walls’ home?
* Do you find any irony in the following statement by Rosemary: “If it kills flies, it can’t be good for us”?
* What was the Hot Pot?
* What happened when Jeannette “learned to swim”?
* What lesson did Rex say Jeannette was supposed to learn from her experience at the Hot Pot?
* What was the longest Rex ever held a job?
* According Rex, how did he actually lose his job?
* What does Jeannette plan to do to “help out” after Rex loses his job?
* When Lori tells Jeannette that she doesn’t think her plan will be enough, what do Jeannette and Lori decide they will have to do to “help out”?
* What did Jeannette do to try to curb her hunger?
* What caused Brian’s “upchucking” behind the house?
* What happened to the can of corn? Who do you think is the culprit?
* What did Jeannette find Lori eating in the kitchen?
* What did Jeannette do to break one of the family’s unspoken rules?
* What did the Walls family have to do in desperate times when they needed money?
* What did Grandma Smith suggest they should do if they couldn’t take care of themselves?
* What kind of degree does Rosemary have? Did this surprise you?
* Rex suggests that Rosemary should “stop her bellyaching” or go do what?
* What happens as Rex and Rosemary’s fight escalates?
* Why did Miss. Page get fired?
* What was Rosemary’s teaching philosophy?
* Why did Rosemary become a teacher in the first place?
* What did Lori, Brian, and Jeannette do to keep Rosemary from getting fired?
* Who understood Rosemary better than anyone?
* Why did Lori get paddled at school?
* **Reading Assignment 5, pages 76-93**
* Why was Jeannette’s school picture that year not worth stealing/buying?
* What “art” did Jeannette say Rex and Rosemary never mastered?
* What happened to the money that Rosemary brought home from her teaching job?
* Why did Rosemary give Jeannette a sock for safekeeping?
* What did the Walls family do to celebrate payday?
* When Rex finds out that Jeannette and Brian have no lunches for school, why is he outraged?
* What was in the lunch that Rex brought to school for Jeannette and Brian?
* What questions does Rex ask Jeannette and Brian as he walks away from dropping off their school lunch? How do the kids respond?
* According to Lori, what does Rex spend all of their money on? Does Jeannette agree? What about Brian?
* How do the Walls children seem to feel about their dad?
* Who was Ginger? Why did Brian think she was dumb?
* What happened to the Sad Sack comic book that Brian got for his birthday?
* Does Brian tell Jeannette what really goes on at the Green Lantern? Why do you think he does/ doesn’t?
* How long did the Walls family live in Battle Mountain?
* Who was Billy Deel?
* What did Billy Deel do to Bertha White foot’s animals?
* What was the “funny” thing that Billy Deel wanted to show Jeannette?
* What was the inside of his house like? How did it compare to Jeannette’s?
* According to Jeannette, why is Rex nothing like Billy Deel’s father?
* Why is Rosemary disappointed in Jeannette when she tells her family about Billy Deel’s father?
* According to Rosemary, why have the Walls children turned out better than Billy Deel?
* Why does Jeannette decide to keep the ring from Billy Deel?
* How did the Walls children solve the problem of Billy Deel?
* What happens as a result of the shootout with Billy Deal?
* Where does the Walls family move after the shootout?
* When Rex tells the kids they can only take one thing to Phoenix, what does Jeannette decide to take? Does that end up working out? Why/Why not?
* Why did Jeannette favor Grandma Smith?
* Why didn’t Rosemary ever set rules for her own children?
* What surprising news does Jeannette get on the way to Phoenix? What do you think of the way this situation is handled?
* What did Rosemary inherit when her mother passed away?
* Why had Rex been so reluctant to leave Battle Mountain months before?
* To what does Rosemary say she is “addicted”?
* **Reading Assignment 6, pages 94-109**
* What does Jeannette think about the family’s new house in Phoenix?
* How many rooms does the house have? Describe the house.
* The house contained many things that Rosemary inherited from her Grandma Smith. What kinds of things were left in the house?
* Do you agree with Jeannette when she says, “We were definitely moving up in the world”?
* According to Rosemary, what sort of people were nuns? How did this influence the family’s decision to send their children to public school?
* What kind of school was Emerson?
* What grade is Jeannette in during this section?
* What kind of “group” is Jeannette promoted to after telling Miss Shaw that she had read all of the Laura Ingalls Wilder books?
* How do Jeannette, Brian, and Lori feel about this promotion?
* When Jeannette and Lori tell their mother and father about being “gifted”, how does Rex respond?
* How does Brian react to Rex’s comment?
* What discovery does the school nurse make about Lori?
* How does Lori react to her new glasses? What kind of questions does she ask about Jeannette’s vision?
* Why did Lori never like to go exploring as much as Jeannette and Brian?
* When Rosemary tried on the glasses, did she see better? How did she respond when Jeannette asked, “Did you see better?” What does Rosemary think about her own vision/perspective?
* What career decision did Lori make shortly after getting glasses? Why do you think her new glasses influenced her decision?
* After moving into the new house in Phoenix, what did Rosemary “throw herself into”?
* To what store did the Walls family make frequent trips with Rosemary’s inheritance money?
* What is Rosemary’s “Philosophy of Life”? How do you think this philosophy influences the ways she thinks about the world and raises her children?
* In what profession is Rex employed during this section?
* What new toy do the Walls children receive after Rex’s first payday?
* What surprises Jeannette about her new toy?
* What does Rex admit to Jeannette about her rock collection and his regret about making her leave it behind?
* Where do the Walls children ride their new bicycles? Who is in charge of planning their journeys?
* Upon getting their first telephone, how do the Walls children answer it?
* What other appliances does the Walls family get?
* Why wasn’t life in Phoenix a total luxury according to Jeannette?
* According to Brian, what are Jeannette’s shoes called? Why?
* What other insect problem did the Walls family encounter in their new home?
* How did Rex go about fixing this insect problem and the damage it caused?
* What incident took place with the clan of gypsies?
* According to Jeannette, their new neighborhood had its share of what?
* Why were drunks occasionally wandering into the Walls’ home?
* What did Rosemary and Rex do to fix this problem? What did the children suggest they do to fix the problem of drunks wandering into the home?
* What sort of “hunting” did the Walls children do in their new neighborhood?
* What did Rex and Rosemary like to make a “big point” about? What were the Walls children supposed to do instead?
* What did the Walls family do in the fountain in front of the Civic Center?
* What thing never bothered Rosemary?
* How did Rosemary treat the Ten Commandments?
* What superficial thing did Rosemary refuse to do when going to church? Why did she act this way?
* Why was church particularly excruciating when Rex went along?
* What does it mean when Rosemary says, “Don’t worry, God understands. He knows that your father is a cross we must bear”?
* What thing was “getting at” Rex after living in Phoenix for a while? What did Rex miss?
* Why was Rex so upset about the shooting of the mountain lion?
* What trip does the Walls family take so that Rex can teach his children about animal psychology?
* What is Rex doing on the drive to this location?
* What kind of a contest does Rex have with alligator in the zoo?
* What does Rex ask for at the concession stand? What does he intend to do with the food?
* What situation unfolds with the cheetah at the zoo?
* What does Jeannette think about the people at the zoo who she hears whisper about the “crazy drunk man and his dirty little urchin children”?
* **Reading Assignment 7, pages 110-125**
* What happens to Rex at the beginning of this section?
* How is the Walls family getting by financially by this point in the book?
* Why didn’t Jeannette go hungry?
* What did Jeannette and Brian find in the big, green dumpster behind the warehouse? Why did this dumpster become important to them?
* Describe the youngest Walls child, Maureen.
* According to Rosemary, why did Maureen deserve special treatment?
* What did Rosemary do to prepare Maureen for preschool?
* What was Rex’s ingenious way of coming up with extra cash?
* According to Rex, why was he having such a tough time getting steady work? What would Rex need to do before he could get a decent job? What type of research did this require?
* What does Rex’s “research” involve and why does Rosemary roll her eyes each time her mentions it?
* Why did Rosemary refuse to clean up the mess Rex made while in a drunken rage?
* What did Rosemary teach the kids to do when Rex passed out?
* What was Jeannette’s reaction to taking a “swig of booze”?
* When Rosemary has a good feeling about Christmas, what does she decide the family will do this year?
* What does Jeannette buy her siblings for Christmas?
* How much did the Walls family pay for their Christmas tree?
* What happens when the Walls family attends midnight mass?
* What does Rex do that ruins the family’s Christmas?
* What does Jeannette ask for on the tenth birthday?
* How does Rex react to her request?
* What happens to the Walls family when they embark on their trip to the Grand Canyon?
* What does Jeannette get blamed for when the car breaks down?
* When the Oldsmobile breaks down, how does the Walls family plan to get back to their home in Phoenix
* Who gives the Walls family a ride back to their home? How does this affect the family? What happens to Rex as a result of this?
* What happens when Rex finally returns home? How do Rex and Rosemary resolve their conflict?
* What does Rosemary do in preparation for moving east?
* Where does she get the money for this expense?
* Who does the Walls family plan to stay with when the move to West Virginia?
* **Reading Assignment 8, pages 129-144**
* According to Rex, why didn’t the Walls family cars deserve names?
* Similarly, why didn’t Rosemary’s family name the cattle while she was living on the ranch?
* Why was the Oldsmobile considered a clunker?
* What happened to the Walls family in Muskogee?
* What advice does Rosemary give Jeannette when she is embarrassed to be seen by the Okies?
* How long did it take the Walls family to cross the country?
* Who is Erma? Describe this character.
* Why does Erma insist upon being called Erma instead of grandma?
* How does Rex react to being back “home” in Welch?
* How does Jeannette like the green beans that are prepared by Erma?
* Why can’t the Walls children sleep in the upstairs bedrooms of Erma’s house?
* What does Erma ask of the children while they are in her house?
* How does Lori describe her newly acquainted family members?
* According to Rex, what turned him into an atheist?
* Why might Rex be especially uninterested by religion?
* Why is Welch not an agricultural city?
* What is (was) the biggest source of industry in Welch?
* When Jeannette suggests fishing and swimming in the Tug, why does Rex suggest that it’s not a good idea to do either activity?
* Welch, WV boasts what attraction?
* Why did President John F. Kennedy make a visit to Welch in the fifties? What does this tell you about the socio-economic issues in the area?
* Why didn’t the townspeople care much for outsiders?
* According to Rosemary, what could “really take off” in Welch?
* Why does Rosemary explain to the principal at Welch Elementary that her children have no records? Why is this?
* What sort of barrier exists between the Walls children and the administrators at Welch Elementary?
* What occurs as a result of this barrier? How are the Walls children placed at Welch Elementary?
* Describe the playground at Welch Elementary. How does it compare to other schools Jeannette has attended in the past?
* What flaw does Jeannette’s thrift store coat possess?
* When Jeannette goes to Welch Elementary for the first time, what surprises her?
* How does Jeannette’s first school day progress? What classes is she taking, and what happens in these classes?
* How does Miss Caparossi react to her new student, Jeannette? What does this tell you about how “outsiders” are treated in Welch? Do you think she is right to react this way?
* What does Jeannette eat for lunch on that first day of school?
* What does Jeannette do to try and avoid going out on the playground?
* When Jeannette finally makes it out to the playground, what happens to her?
* Who is the “leader of the pack” during the incident on the playground?
* What tactic, prescribed by Rosemary, does Jeannette employ to try to stop the bullying? Does it work?
* What incident finally changes the way Dinitia treats Jeannette? Why does she change her mind about bullying Jeannette?
* What does Dinitia ask Jeannette to help her with?
* Based on Jeannette’s experience going to Dinitia’s house, how do you think Erma and Stanley feel about African-Americans?
* When Erma asks Jeannette how she liked “Niggerville” how does Jeannette respond?
* How does Erma punish Jeannette for talking back to her?
* When Jeannette tells Rosemary about how she stood up for African-Americans, what does Rosemary tell Jeannette they must do?
* Why does Rosemary’s advice come as a shock to Jeannette?
* According to Rosemary, everyone has a redeeming quality. Who does Jeannette ask Rosemary about to test this theory? How does Rosemary respond?
* How do you feel about Rosemary at this point in the story?
* Do you feel that Rosemary has a “redeeming quality”? If so, what is it?
* **Reading Assignment 9, pages 145-158**
* At the beginning of this section, where are Rex and Rosemary planning to go and for what purpose?
* Why can't Rex get a job in the mines as Lori suggests?
* What things does Jeannette say she misses about Phoenix?
* As Rex and Rosemary leave, what is the big question the Walls children are pondering?
* According to Erma, how was she treated as a child?
* When Jeannette discovers Brian being molested by Erma, who does she call to stop the situation?
* How does Lori stop Erma from hurting Brian any further?
* Who eventually breaks up the fight?
* Where did the Walls children live after the incident with Brian and the fight between Erma and Lori?
* How did living in this location complicate the kids' lives?
* When Rex and Rosemary return from their trip, the kids try to explain the situation with Erma. How does Rex react?
* What does Jeannette suggest about her father's past? Does this explain Rex's behavior?
* What happened to the house on North Third Street?
* Why didn't Rex and Rosemary bring anything back with them to Welch from the house in Phoenix?
* What makes the house that Rex and Rosemary agreed to buy "rustic"?
* How were most houses in Welch heated?
* What distinguishes the "prosperous" families from the "poor" families in the Little Hobart Street neighborhood?
* Why did Jeannette describe the porches of houses on Little Hobart Street as "furnished"?
* According to Rex, why is it good that the Walls children were raised to be tough? What does his expression mean in terms of their new home?
* How many rooms were in the house on Little Hobart Street?
* What other features did the house have (or, in most cases, lack)?
* How does Rosemary highlight the positive side to owning their new home? (Why should the kids count their blessings?)
* Why had Rex and Rosemary finally decided to acquire the land (and house) on Little Hobart Street?
* Why did Rex need to do some serious reconfiguring of the plans for the Glass Castle?
* Rex build his kids to solve the problem of four kids all sleeping in one bed?
* Why was the kitchen in the house on Little Hobart Street in a category all its own?
* What did the Walls children have to do to avoid being shocked in the kitchen
* What did the Walls children do that was sort of like a weather report?
* How did Rosemary try to make living at 93 Little Hobart Street seem like an adventure?
* Why did Rosemary, Lori, and Jeannette decide that sewing was not the best use of their creative energy?
* How did Rosemary try to make the house cheerful?
* When Jeannette asks Rex, "Are we ever going home?" how does he respond?
* After Brian and Jeannette decide to make the best of their situation in Welch, what do they spend every free minute they have doing what?
* What happens to the hole that Brian and Jeannette dig for the foundation for the Glass Castle?
* How is this act symbolic of the kids' lives with their parents?
* Who took up residence with the Walls family after the trash outside started to really pile up?
* How old is Maureen in this section?
* Who is Tinkle?
* Why was Rosemary slightly upset about the situation with the rat?
* What happened to Rufus after Brian hung him outside?
* When the garbage pit is completely full, how does Rosemary instruct Jeannette to deal with the situation?
* When Jeannette tells Rosemary that their neighbors will begin to think less of them because of the heap of garbage outside their house, what does Rosemary say?
* When Jeannette suggests doing a little to "spruce up" their yard by cutting tired in half to create decorations, how does Rosemary respond?
* What does Jeannette decide to do to make their house look a little more like other people's houses?
* Who chips in to get the work done on making the house on Little Hobart Street look better?
* How do Rex, Rosemary, Brian, and Lori respond to Jeannette's project?
* Why is Jeannette's project halted?
* How is Jeannette different from all of the other characters in the book by this point? What makes her different?
* What does the "weird-looking half-finished patch job" announce to the world according to Jeannette?
* How is this expression reflective of the family's life?
* **Reading Assignment 11, pages 175-192**
* What about the winter season appeals to Jeannette?
* What means does the Walls family use to heat their house?
* Why does mom say that the Walls children should be thankful (regarding heat/winter weather)?
* How is the roof of the Walls home different from most other homes? What is the cause of this?
* How does mom put a “positive spin” on this chilly situation?
* Who was Iggy and what happened to him?
* Mom says, “All seasons have something to offer.” What does she say that cold has to offer? How is this ironic?
* What does mom decide the Walls children do in January?
* What do the children use to burn the wet wood? What is dad’s opinion of this method? What happens to Lori?
* After Lori’s incident, mom reminds her of the saying “What doesn’t kill you will make you stronger.” What is Lori’s response? Do you believe that this saying is true in your own life? Do you think this saying is true for the Walls children?
* What is the small plastic box that Jeannette discovers for the first time at the McDowell’s house? What is Jeannette’s reaction to it?
* Who dies during the Walls family’s second winter in Welch? Mom and dad have differing opinions about what caused the death. What are their opinions? How does dad react, and why do you think he is so distraught?
* How does Dad react to Lori’s comment “Ding-Dong, the witch is dead”? What is ironic about his comment to the kids?
* What happens when Jeannette is sent to pick up her dad from the bar? The man who gives Jeannette and her father a ride home from the bar makes a comment that offends Jeannette. What does he really mean by the comment? How does Jeannette react?
* What happened to grandpa and uncle Stanley’s house? Where did they move following this incident?
* What is your reaction to Rosemary’s refusal to console Jeannette after Uncle Stanley’s INNAPPROPRIATE, INEXCUSABLE behavior?
* What condition is the Walls house in by the time spring rolls around? What must Brian do to keep dry while in bed? What happens to the porch? Since it has become dangerous to go to the outhouse at night, what must the Walls family do?
* What do Brian and Jeannette find among pieces of rotting lumber? What does Mom decide to do with the item and why?
* What does Jeannette suggest her mother do to improve their situation? Do you think that this move would benefit the Walls family?
* Why is Rosemary opposed to welfare, even though it would greatly help their family?
* Rosemary claims that she couldn’t leave her husband because of what reason?
* With whom does Jeannette go to the public swimming pool?
* **Reading Assignment 12, pages 193-213**
* Why is the child-welfare services agent sent to 93 Little Hobart Street? Do you feel that the agent is right to inquire into the home environment at 93 Little Hobart Street?
* Why does Jeannette hate the child-welfare man more than anyone, except for Erma?
* On pages 194-195, Jeannette gives her mother the card from the child-welfare agent and tells her mom that “since neither she [mom] nor her Dad could be bothered to work, and since she refused to leave Dad, the government was going to do the job of splitting up her family for her.” What is Rose Mary’s reaction to Jeannette’s tirade? What does she say to Jeannette, and do you agree that it is true?
* How does Rose Mary resolve the problem of the government trying to split up the Walls family?
* Who is Lucy Jo Rose?
* What does Rose Mary say is the surest way to feel rich? What are your thoughts about these non-essential items?
* What unconventional dinner item do the Walls children eat when they have only one dollar left to eat dinner?
* Jeannette argues with her mother that what must be easier than her mother implies?
* What does Jeannette plan to do with the surplus of money from her mother’s check? Do these plans come to fruition? Why or why not?
* When Jeannette meets Dinitia Hewitt again at Welch High School, the “spark” has gone out of her. How has Dinitia changed and what does she say has caused this? What do you suspect?
* Why was Dinitia Hewitt arrested?
* What does Jeannette say is her most prominent feature?
* When Jeannette realizes the cost of braces, what does she resolve to do and how does she do it? What problems does she run into? Who commends her on her “feat of engineering genius”?
* Which school group does Jeannette join to feel as though she belongs? Why does she decide against going out for the track team?
* Who is Miss Jeanette Bivens and why is she a significant figure in the story? How is Jeannette’s namesake strikingly appropriate?
* Why does the job of being a reporter appeal to Jeannette? How does this job contrast with her mother’s job as a writer?
* When does Jeannette begin to feel that “the world was making a little more sense”?
* Why does Jeannette feel as though she’s failing Maureen and what do she, Brian, and Lori do to compensate?
* Who do you believe has it harder: Rose Mary or her children? Who does Lori argue has it the hardest and why? Who does Jeannette argue for and why?
* When does Jeannette get the opportunity to become head of the household? What does Jeannette do to prepare for her duty?
* Why does Jeannette feel that her father has taken advantage of her?
* When Rex asks Jeannette for twenty dollars, Jeannette responds by saying, “I’ve got bills piling up. I’ve got kids to feed.” Rex replies, “Don’t you worry about food and bills. That’s for me to worry about. Okay?” What do you think of this exchange?
* When Rex hustles Robbie by playing pool to pay back Jeannette, do you feel that Jeannette also gets hustled by her father? How does this situation compare to the incident at the sulfur springs when Rex threw Jeannette into the center of the water, forcing her to sink or swim?
* Do you believe that Jeannette has to sacrifice her dignity by accepting the money from her dad’s hustling job?
* How strong is Jeannette’s faith in her father at this point in the novel? How strong is her father’s faith in her?
* **Reading Assignment 13, pages 214-230**
* What happens to the check that arrives in the mail? What is the check from?
* How does Jeannette determine that being a “strong woman” is harder than she originally thought?
* What is Jeannette’s first real job? How much money does she make per week?
* What accessory/jewelry has Jeannette always wanted? How does she obtain this item? How does this item reflect her personality?
* Why is the watch more appealing to Jeannette than the diamond rings?
* What does Jeannette end up doing with the watch?
* What realization did Lori come to while she was at summer camp?
* When Rose Mary was living in the dorms on the college campus, she read tons of self-help books that made her come to what realization? Do you agree, or do you think this realization is ironic?
* What happens to Jeannette when she back-talks her mother? Why does Jeannette feel that her father is “in a tighter spot” than she was?
* What two decisions does Jeannette make after her dad whips her backside with the belt?
* Who were Ken Fink and Bob Gross?
* What place does Lori begin to see as her Emerald City?
* How is Lori different from most of the kids at Welch High School?
* What is Elvis, and how did it come to live with the Walls family?
* Why are Jeannette’s legs covered in blue and green spots?
* When Lori was a finalist for the national merit scholarship, how/why did she botch the test?
* What happens to Lori’s sculpture of William Shakespeare?
* What deal does Jeannette work out with Mrs. Sanders?