

The Lions of Little Rock
Reading Questions Part 1



Answer all questions in complete sentences.

Chapter 1

1. What is the **setting** of this chapter?

2. Why do you think the **setting** might be important to the conflict of this novel? _____

Chapter 2

1. Why were the high schools in Little Rock closed in September 1958? _____

2. How does Daddy feel about the integration of the schools?

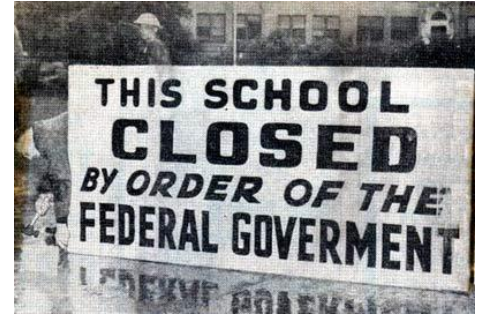
Cite an example from the text to support your answer. _____

3. How does Mother feel about the integration of the schools? _____

Cite an example from the text to support your answer. _____

5. As a reader, what do you gain from a

first person point of view? _____



Sputnik

On October 4, 1957, the Soviet launched the world's first artificial satellite - called *Sputnik* - into orbit around the earth. Panicked government officials of the United States and other countries worried about Soviet missiles falling from weapons factories in the sky. *Sputnik* served as a wake-up call for American scientists and bureaucrats who had taken their supposed technological superiority for granted. Because of Sputnik, the U.S. government pumped more funding into math and science programs and an emphasis was placed on students learning about math and science in school.

Chapter 3

1. Why did Marlee's father start driving her to school last year? _____

2. Who is Queen Elizabeth? _____

Describe Marlee's first impression of her. _____

3. Throughout the book, Marlee uses **similes** and **metaphors** to compare people to drinks.

Complete the following table comparing characters to drinks.

Character	Drink	What does this comparison tell us about how Marlee views this character?
David	sweet iced tea on a hot summer day	
Judy	ice cold Coca-Cola from the fridge	
Miss Taylor	vinegar at the bottom of a jar of pickles	
Mother	hot black tea, so strong, she's almost coffee	
Sally	strong cough syrup	
Nora	weak fruit punch	

4. What drink would you be? _____

Why? _____



5. In the box below, write three words/phrases that describe what you know about Marlee. Then, give an example from the chapter to support your observations.

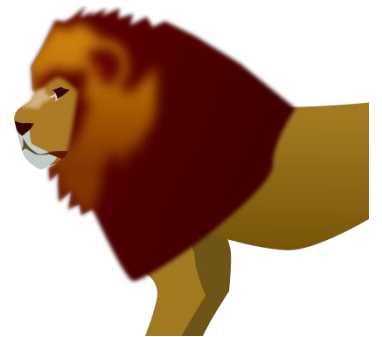
Marlee is...	example

Chapter 4

1. What will happen in September 12, 1958? _____

How does Judy feel about this? _____

2. Explain why Marlee wishes she were more like the lions at the nearby zoo.



Chapter 5

1. Who is JT? _____

How does Marlee feel about him at the beginning of the chapter? _____

Cite textual evidence to show how you know this. _____

2. Who is Red? _____

How does Marlee feel about him at the beginning of the chapter? _____

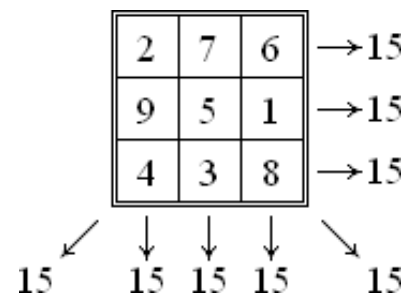
Cite textual evidence to show how you know this. _____

3. What does JT do that disappoints Marlee? _____

Do you think her feelings for him will change? _____

Chapter 6

1. What are magic squares? _____



Based on what you know about her character, why do you think Marlee likes them so much? _____

2. What does Liz mean when she tells Marlee: "It's important to face your fears...It makes you a better person" (35)? _____

Do you agree? Why or why not? _____

Chapter 7

1. How does Marlee feel about Judy switching rooms? Why? _____

2. Explain what Marlee means when she says: "Turns out, Betty Jean wasn't just plain water after all. She had a twist of lime that was all her own" (53).

3. Who is Marlee's new roommate? _____

What is **symbolic** about Marlee having this particular pet in her room? _____

Examining Non-Restrictive Elements

Writers sometimes use non-restrictive elements - like commas, dashes, or parentheses – to add detail to a sentence. A non-restrictive element is a phrase or clause that interrupts a sentence to add a piece of information. You can recognize such an element because the sentence can still make sense without it. Examine these examples from *The Lions of Little Rock*.

non-restrictive clause set off by commas



EX: My sister, **the one I could always talk to**, didn't want me around anymore.

non-restrictive clause set off by dashes



EX: I was embarrassed she'd even asked me – **like I was her boss or something** – and gestured for her to go ahead.

non-restrictive clause set off by parentheses



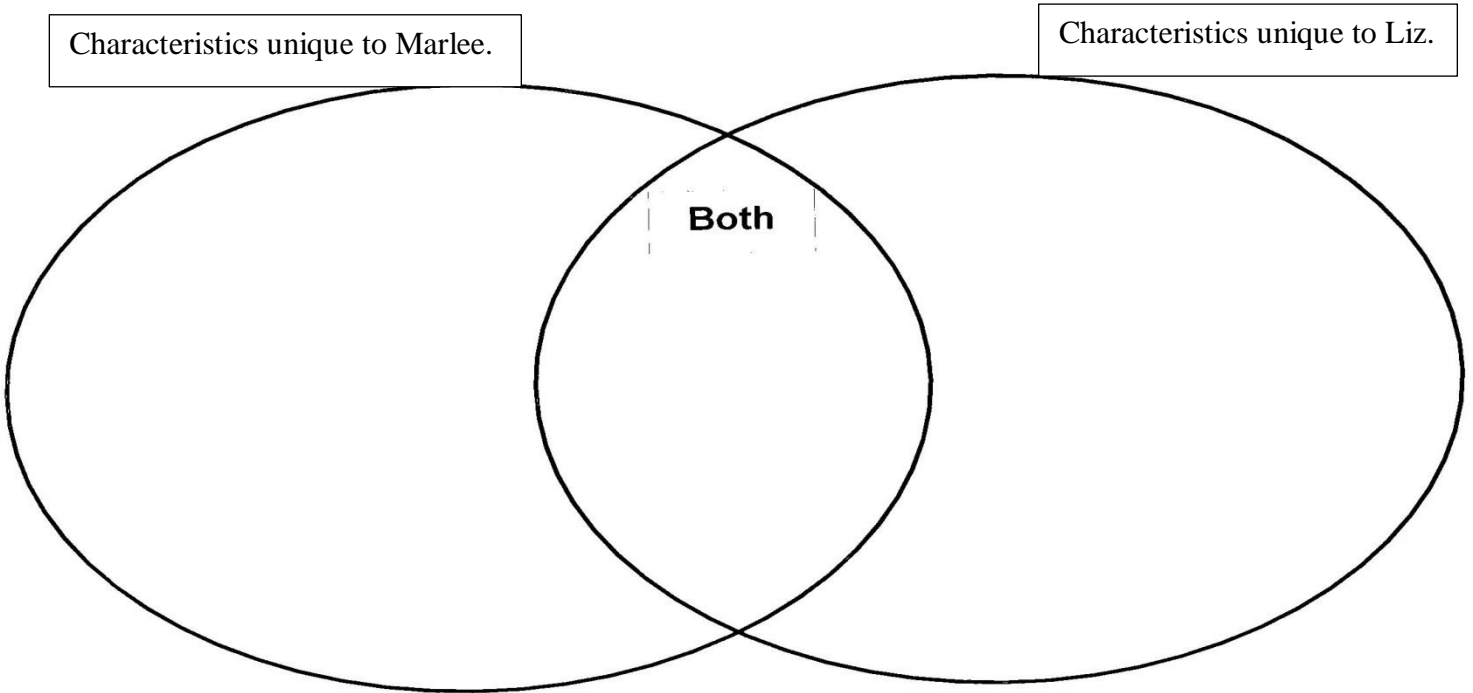
EX: She had neatly trimmed fingernails (**which reminded me to stop chewing on my pinkie**) and a lovely tan too, like she'd been at the pool all summer, though I hadn't seen her there once.

Now reread the following sentences from the book. Circle the nonrestrictive element in each sentence.

4. I always walked home from school – guess Daddy figured I'd be safe enough with all the other kids around.
5. JT, which was what everyone called him, was tall and blond and played football too.
6. It was beautiful – black and orange – and fluttered like a tiny, pulsing heart in his hand.
7. I knew Negroes were allowed to use the library now – that rule had passed a few years ago – but I didn't see them there much.

Chapter 8:

Complete the following Venn Diagram comparing Liz and Marlee. On the left, list characteristics unique to Marlee including items about her appearance, personality, background, lifestyle, etc. On the right, do the same for Liz. In the center, list characteristics that both girls share.



Chapter 9

1. How does Daddy feel about the decision to start up the football program? _____

2. Do you agree with Daddy? Why or why not? _____

Chapter 10

1. Why do Mother and Daddy **disagree** about the governor's decision to keep the high schools closed?

2. What is a correspondence course? _____

How does Judy feel about taking one? _____

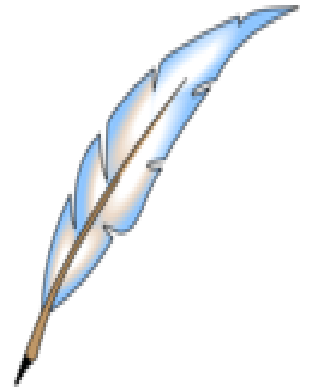
3. What is "behind the grin" of David? _____

Chapter 11

1. What is a talisman? _____

2. What talisman does Liz give Marlee? _____

What is Marlee supposed to do with it? _____

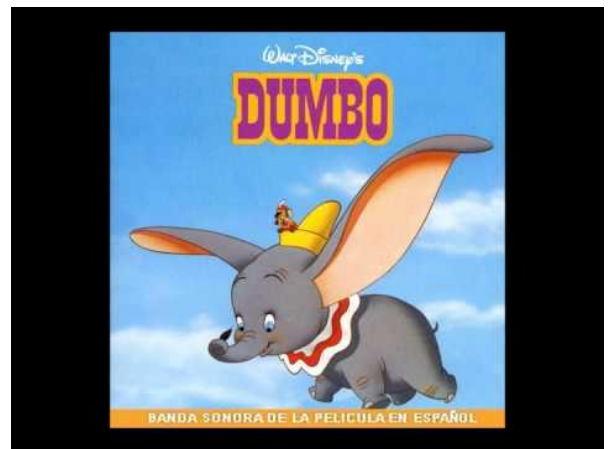


Symbolism

A symbol is something (an object, place, or person) that stands for something else. Authors often use symbols to communicate a deeper meaning.

3. What do you think that the feather symbolizes to Marlee? _____

4. Crows and crow feathers sometimes symbolize *omens* or bad luck. What omen(s) might the author be **foreshadowing** for Marlee?



Chapter 12 Focus: characterization, conflict

1. Why does Marlee like going to the “rock crusher”? _____

2. Why does Marlee ride the horse? _____

3. How does she feel while riding the horse? _____

What does this reveal about how she is changing?

Activism = Communism

It was a widely held belief by segregationists throughout the South that those who attempted to create social change were associated with the Communist Party. Therefore, integrationists were seen as a communist threat to America. Equal rights activists were seen as so threatening, Governor Faubus of Arkansas held hearings intent on exposing integrationists as communists.



Chapter 13

1. How does Marlee feel the morning of the presentation?

Cite an example from the text to support your answer.

2. According to Sally, why did Liz withdraw from school? _____

3. Why do you think that Marlee does the presentation without Liz? _____

Interpreting Mood

A **mood** refers to the general feeling in a novel (or in part of novel like a chapter).

For instance, the mood of a chapter could be described as *fearful*, *anxious*, *somber*, *light-hearted*, *serious*, or *suspenseful*. An author usually conveys various moods throughout a novel and sometimes even within a chapter.

Example:

That night it was a quiet as a graveyard in my room. Even the roaring of the lions couldn't break the silence. I missed the sound of Judy breathing, the squeak of the bed as she rolled over, even the ticking of the clock (32).



The mood is sad, forlorn, hopeless.

4. Describe the mood at the **beginning** of this chapter. **Cite** an example from the text that the author uses to create this mood.

Mood –	Citation

5. Describe the mood at the **end** of the chapter. **Cite** an example from the text that the author uses to create this mood.

Mood –	Citation

Chapter 14

1. According to Betty Jean, what does “passing” mean? _____

Why did some people do it? _____

2. How does Betty Jean feel about passing? _____

Mother? _____

Marlee? _____

Chapter 15

1. What is the result of the vote on whether to reopen the schools? _____

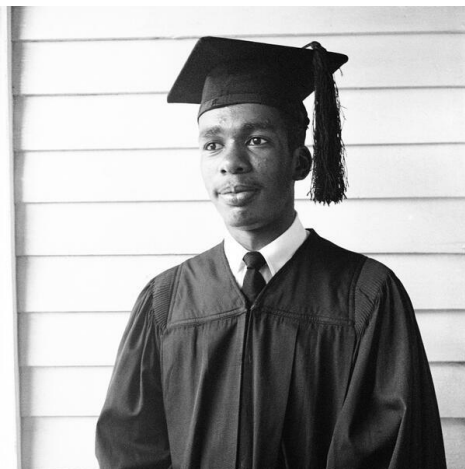
How does Daddy feel about the result? _____

2. This vote is historically accurate. Are you surprised by the numbers? Why or why not?

3. Daddy says that, “. . . those of us who believe in integration . . . We can’t seem to find our voice” (75). In what ways can Marlee relate?

How can she help Daddy get his voice back? _____

4. How is the last sentence of the chapter **foreshadowing**? _____



Ernest Gideon Green was one of the Little Rock Nine, a group of African-American students who, in 1957, were the first black students ever to attend classes at Little Rock Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas

Chapter 16

1. Reread page 21. How has Marlee's opinion of J.T changed since the beginning of school?

What are some of the reasons for the change? Give at least two reasons.

A. _____

B. _____

2. Why is Judy being sent away? _____

Chapter 17

1. In what ways is the black Baptist church similar to Marlee's white Methodist church? (give two)

A. _____

B. _____

2. Why do you think Pastor George acted as if he didn't know who Liz was?

Analyzing and Writing a **Simile**

3. Reread the following simile and explain the author's purpose for using this comparison: *Judy's green suitcase sat by the door like a wart.*

4. Now write your own simile. Your simile can be about anything in the book, as long as it compares two unlike things. Explain what you want the reader to understand with this comparison.

Simile: _____

Meaning: _____

Chapter 18

1. **Summarize** Mother and Daddy's argument about T.J. Raney High School. _____

2. How is Marlee's family like Pretty Boy? _____



Chapter 19

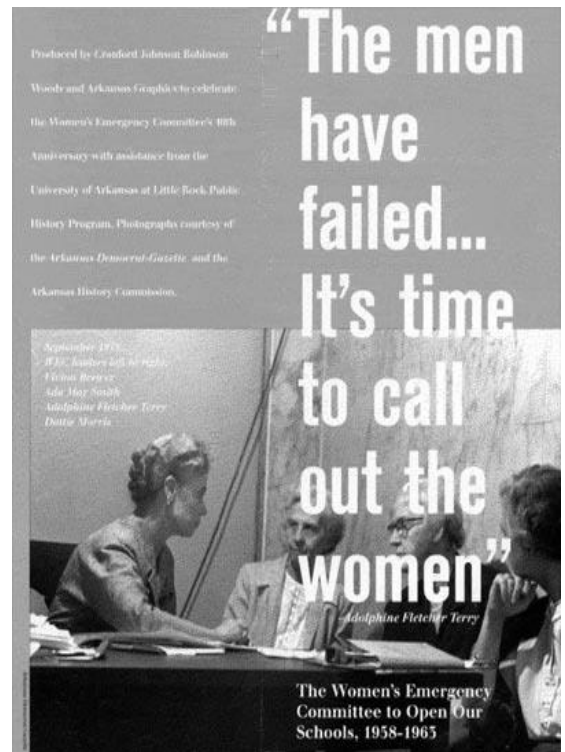
1. Why did Liz try to “pass” at West Side Junior High? _____

2. Why is it so dangerous for Marlee and Liz to meet again? _____

Chapter 20:

1. What is the WEC? _____

2. Why doesn't Mother want to join the WEC? _____



3. Why do you think Marlee joins the WEC? _____

4. What might the Bible verse in this chapter **foreshadow**? _____

Chapter 21

1. What are the three good things that the title of the chapter suggests?

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____



Chapter 22

1. Reread Marlee's description of entering the movie theater on page 108. How did you feel after reading that passage? _____

2. What did you think about Marlee when you read that description? _____

Chapter 23



1. Why do you think Betty Jean decides to keep Marlee's secret?

2. What does Liz want Marlee to teach her? _____

Why? _____

3. For the first time Marlee wonders if being quiet is a strength rather than a weakness. Do you think it is a strength? Why?

Chapter 24

1. List 3 **adjectives** to describe Red. _____

Circle one adjective from your list above and **give** two examples that support that adjective.

A. _____

B. _____

2. Why do you think JT defends Marlee? _____

Does this surprise you? Why? _____

3. Has your impression about JT changed in this chapter? How? _____

Chapter 25

1. Why was Betty Jean's son arrested? _____

2. Who was Emmett Till? _____

How did his death impact Daddy? _____



Emmett Till

July 25, 1941-
August 28, 1955

Chapter 26

1. Find and copy two quotes from this chapter that illustrate how much Marlee has changed and grown since the beginning of the book. Then explain how the quotes show Marlee's growth.

Citation 1	How does it prove Marlee's growth?
Citation 2	

2. Reread the last sentence of this chapter. Authors use sentences like this to **foreshadow**, or indicate a future event. What might the author be foreshadowing here? _____

Chapter 27

1. What **metaphor** does Marlee use to describe Mrs. Dalton? _____

Why does she use that comparison? _____

Where does Marlee think Mrs. Dalton got her scar on her eyebrow? _____

2. On pg. 136, why do Mrs. Brewer and Miss Winthrop get into a small disagreement? _____

3. What does the phone call at the end of the chapter tell you about the **mood** of the time period?

Chapter 28



1. Do you think Marlee's idea of having Liz carry around a notebook will work? Why or why not?

2. Why does Marlee feel betrayed by Judy? _____

Chapter 29

1. Why can't Liz go to the parade? _____

How does Marlee react? _____

2. What did Marlee learn from Betty Jean? _____

Chapter 30

1. Why was the school board deadlocked again? _____

Why was that significant? _____

2. What does Little Jimmy warn Marlee about? _____

3. What more do you learn about the Dalton family in this chapter? _____

