

Small Group Discussion Questions

Names of Group Members:

Question #1: Setting

This story is set in segregated Mississippi during the 1930s, which was the time of the Great Depression.

A. Explain how the time period and the place cause conflicts for the Logan family.

B. Which element of the setting: **the time period** (the Great Depression) or **the place** (segregated Mississippi) has the most serious effects on the Logan family? Give at least 1 reason for your answer, and provide at least 1 detail or example from the story.

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Question #2: Characters

A. Which character in the story is your favorite? Explain your choice with 2 reasons or details from the story.

B. Mildred D. Taylor based some of her characters on people in her family. Are the characters in this story realistic (in other words, do they act, speak, and think like real people would)? Explain your answer with at least 2 details from the text.

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Question #4: Historical Accuracy

When authors write a story that is historical fiction, they do much research to learn the history of that time period. Then, when they write their stories, they use some historical truths and mix in some of their own fictional ideas. Sometimes, historical fiction accurately describes life from that time period, and sometimes the authors alter (change) the facts by using their imaginations.

- A. Explain whether “Song of the Trees” is **overall** an accurate (truthful) description of life for African-Americans living in the South during the Great Depression. Use at least 2 details from the story to support your answer.

- B. Describe 1 part of the story you feel are fictional and DO NOT accurately describe life for African-Americans living in the South during the Great Depression. Give 1 reason for your answer. IF you feel that there are not any inaccurate parts of the story, explain why you think that.

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Question #5: Evaluate

A. Do you think David (Papa) really would have blown up the forest? Why or why not? Use at least 1 detail from the story to support your answer.

B. On page 516, the story states that Mr. Andersen “hissed venomously.” This statement compares Mr. Andersen to what animal? Do you think this is a good comparison? Why/why not?

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Question #6: Symbolism

In literature, a symbol is something visible that represents (or stands for) something invisible. An example is the American flag. The flag is something visible to many people; however, it is not just a flag. When we look at it, we understand that it symbolizes (stands for) a larger, invisible idea like freedom. A heart symbol isn't just a picture; it represents the emotions of love and affection. In the Harry Potter series, the scar on Harry's forehead symbolizes his struggle to defeat Lord Voldemort.

In "Song of the Trees," the trees are a symbol. In other words, although they are visible objects, they also represent larger, invisible ideas found in the story.

A. Explain what you think the trees symbolize in the story. How do you know this? (In other words, explain what larger, invisible ideas the trees represent in the story and tell why you think that).