

Questions for “Thank You, M’am,” by Langston Hughes

Part 1: AS YOU READ, answer the following questions briefly in your notebook.

1. Look for and define the following vocabulary in your own words.

Example: Willow-wild, in paragraph 16, means wild like something in nature is expected to be. Also, willow trees have long thin branches that move in all directions, which may describe how the boy moves.

- a) **Frail**, in paragraph ____, means...
- b) **Presentable**, in paragraph ____, means...
- c) **Barren**, in paragraph ____, means...

2. Write down three examples of VERNACULAR used by the author in the story, as well as the numbers of the paragraphs where you found them. *Example: ain't – paragraphs 3, 13, 29.*

3. Consider the definitions of CHARACTER discussed today. Write down at least two details to describe the character of Mrs. Luella Bates Washington Jones. Share an action or statement that reveals her character.

Example: Mrs. Jones is strict but kind. In paragraph 22, Mrs. Jones leaves the door open, revealing that she wants the boy to feel like he is not trapped, and that she trusts him to stay.

4. Consider the definitions of CHARACTER discussed today. Write down at least two details to describe Roger's character, and share an action or statement from the story that reveals his character.

Example: In paragraph 26, Roger is curious and trusting. He goes to the sink instead of choosing to run away, revealing that he knows Mrs. Jones will not harm him and may actually be interested in what Mrs. Bates will give him or him.

5. Analyze the moment when Roger begins to change. Identify the paragraph(s) and explain the details that reveal his change.

Part 2: AFTER READING, answer the following questions thoughtfully in your notebook. Use the phrase “in paragraph __” to point to specific evidence in the story. **FINISH FOR HW**

6. Explain the boy's MOTIVATION in the story. Provide evidence to support your answer.

7. Explain the woman's MOTIVATION in the story. Provide evidence to support your answer.

8. Will Roger act differently after this experience? Why or why not? Consider the author's choice of title in your answer.

9. Discuss what the author meant when he wrote in paragraph 40, “He did not trust the woman not to trust him.”

10. Discuss what Mrs. Jones meant when she said in paragraph 46, “Shoes come by devilish like that will burn your feet.”

Part 3: SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS. Answer the following discussion questions thoughtfully with your group members. Write all of your answers in your notebook.

11. Discuss and explain why the author makes the point of saying at the end that Roger never saw Mrs. Jones again.
12. Share character details you gathered yesterday. Compare and contrast the character of Mrs. Jones and Roger.
13. Share examples of vernacular you found in the story. Discuss and explain how including this kind of language affects the experience of reading the story.
14. Discuss and explain the following statement: *It is IRONIC that Mrs. Luella Bates Washington Jones has a purse that broke off of her shoulder with a single tug from the frail boy.*
15. Discuss and explain: should Roger spend the money on blue suede shoes, or on something else?

Part 4: HOMEWORK. Submit a written or typed response on Friday on the following topic:

FINAL REFLECTION: Forgiveness, kindness, and empathy can have a positive impact on a person's life. How does Mrs. Jones's kindness toward Roger change him? Describe the changes, referring to multiple paragraphs in the text containing evidence.

Here are some questions to consider that may help you respond to the prompt.

- *What was Roger like at the beginning of the story? What was he like at the end of the story?*
- *In what ways does Mrs. Jones show that she forgives Roger?*
- *In what ways does Mrs. Jones show that she understands Roger and his reasons for his actions?*
- *What may be some reasons why Mrs. Jones gives Roger the money to buy the shoes? Consider that she might have instructed him to spend the money on something else.*
- *Did Mrs. Bates deliver on her promise that he would remember her? Does the title of the story provide a clue?*