

Asking Questions about a Text

Ethical Questions

- Was it morally acceptable for name of character to have _____ when (describe speaker, setting and situation)?
- What is our ethical responsibility when (describe a situation, choice or event from the text) occurs? How should name of character have responded to this situation?

Bias (unfairly being against or favoring an idea or people which is not based on logical reasons)

- In what ways do you think name of character is bias or has blind spots about _____?
- In what ways does name of character's mental state affect his/her belief that _____?
- In what ways does name of character dislike / distrust _____ for no apparent reason?

Stereotypes

- In what ways does the character name here as a (male, female, teen, old person, mother, father, homosexual, Latino, African American, person living in poverty, person without much education, etc.) reinforce / defy the stereotype that _____?

Identity

- Why does Name of Character most identify with those who are (shy, outgoing, oppressed, honest, outcasts, unique, underdogs, rebellious, innocent, naive, older, etc.)?
- How do you think Name of Character's (gender, race, religion, economic status, social class, age, marital status, sexual identity, etc.) influences how he/she thinks about _____?

Power

In what ways does Name of Character, Group, Political Party or Organization have more _____ (power, status, money, influence, rights, resources, etc.) than _____? Has this character / group / political party / organization used their (power, status, money, influence, rights, resources, etc.) responsibly and are there ways in which they have not?

Social Class

In what ways is it clear characters like _____ are at the top / bottom of the social class? What advantages / privileges / disadvantages / challenges does this character have because of his/her social class?

Responsibility / Blame

- Which character, name or name, is more responsible for _____?
- Which character, name or name, is more to blame for _____?

Setting

- In what ways does the setting influence the main character's belief / perspective that _____?
- A major setting in the book is _____. In what ways does this setting share similar traits to name of character?

Character Motivation (Remember to focus on what the text does NOT tell us)

- Even though the text does not say, what can we infer about why name of character _____?
- When (describe the situation and setting), what motivates name of character to _____?
- After (describe the events leading up to this point), why might name of character want to _____?
- Why would someone (describe a choice or decision a character from your book is faced with or makes)?

Contradictions

Look for situations when, without explanation as to why, a character acts the opposite way of how he/she truly thinks.

- Why would Name of Character say, "line from text here" (#) when he/she does not _____?
- Even though Name of Character thinks _____, why would he/she _____?

Mental / Emotional State

- In what ways has the traumatic event of _____ caused Name of Character to _____?
- In what ways has the loss of _____ affected name of character?
- How has being (sick, weak, near starvation, mistreated, abused, bullied, depressed, etc.) affected name of character's mindset about _____?

Characters Lying to Themselves

- When (describe the situation & setting) do you believe Character's Name when he/she says, "quote here" (#)? Why or why not?
- In what ways do you believe Name of Character is lying to himself / herself about _____? Why?

Patterns of Self-Destructive Behavior or Poor Self-Esteem

- Why does Name of Character choose to _____ when this decision / behavior could result in _____?
- Why does Name of Character continue to _____ when it causes / will cause _____?

Character Names (if the character's name sounds like or is similar to an animal, object, place, trait or quality or is a well known name from a famous piece of literature like Greek mythology, Shakespeare, the *Bible*, etc.)

- The name name of character brings to mind _____. What similarities do you see between this character and these qualities? (Example: The name Turtle brings to mind a hard shell and hiding. What similarities do you see between Turtle and these qualities?)
- The name _____ has the word _____ in it. Why might the author have wanted the reader to associate this character with this word?
- In what ways do you think name of character is similar to the traits of _____ (*the name of the animal, idea, object, place, etc. the character is named after*)?

Structure of the Text

- When (describe the situation & setting), why do you think the author left out / did not show / end the chapter by _____?
- After (describe the situation & setting), why do you think the author jumps forward to or flashes back to _____?

Reoccurring Images & Ideas, Motifs & Symbols

- The (name an object, image, animal, event, action, phrase, etc. from the text) has been seen or talked about several times. What do you think object, animal, image, place, etc. might represent?

Title of the Book / Chapter Titles

- What is the significance of the chapter titled " _____ "?

Characters Growth or Change

- Previously, Name of Character _____ but now _____. What has caused this change?
- In what ways is Name of Character transforming from _____ to _____?
- In what ways has Name of Character's belief about _____ changed from the beginning of the book?

Evaluate Character Choices

- When (describe situation & setting), do you think name of character's decision to _____ will add to his / her problems or help resolve them? How or why?
- What is the author's attitude about name of character's choice to _____ and how do you know?

Evaluate a Character's Strengths & Weaknesses

- What is name's biggest flaw or worst trait and why? What problems have occurred / will occur because of this trait?
- In what ways is Name of Character a leader? In what ways will name of character have to change to become a better leader?

Evaluate Relationships

- In what ways is Name of Character 's relationship with Name of Character a healthy / unhealthy one? (Focus on relationships where the answer is NOT obvious).

The Author's Attitude

- What is the author's attitude about _____? How can you tell? How does this compare to your own point of view?

Values

- Do you think the author / name of character values (peace, equality, tolerance, trust, material wealth, status, justice, fairness, appearances, family, etc.)? How do you know?

Compare & Contrast Characters

- Why do you think name of character is / chooses _____ while name of character is / chooses _____?
- How do you think name of character and name of character are similar? In what ways are they different? Is there evidence in the text that suggests the reasons for these similarities and/or differences?
- What causes name of character to be _____ while name of character is _____?

Evaluate Character Choices

- What is the author's attitude about name of character 's choice to _____ and how do you know?

Character Relationships

Which character - name of character OR name of character - has more influence on name of character ? Why?

Which character - name of character OR name of character - has more influence on name of character 's decision to _____?

Fears and Desires

- Do you think Name of Character is motivated more by his/her fear of / that _____ or his/her desire for/ to _____? Why?

Point of View

- How might the story be different if told from the point of view of _____? What effect might this have on how the reader feels about _____?

Unique or Unusual Punctuation & Grammar

- Why does the author write in all lower case letters, use no punctuation, etc.?

Language - Look for words, phrases & statements that are unclear about what the character or author means.

- When (describe the situation & setting) , what does Name of Character/ Author mean when he/she says, "line from the text here" (#)?

Author's Word Choice – Record a line with powerful meaning on your paper with the page # and the question below

- How would the meaning of this sentence change if the author had substituted the word "word from quote" with a similar word like _____? What are the connotations of word #1 and how are they different from the connotations of word #2? How do these differences affect the tone (author's attitude) or mood of this scene?

Unanswered Questions (Ask after you have FINISHED the book)

- When (describe the situation, setting & speaker) , what questions are left unanswered for the reader? Why do you think the author did not answer these questions? Are there clues in the text that hint at the answer and if so what do you think those answers are?
- Why do you think the text does not reveal / tell the reader _____?

