

Mississippi Trial, 1955 Study Guide

Directions: Use your novel, notes, comprehension questions, and charts to review the following topics/ answer questions. Assign chapters to important sections.

Plot:

1. Why does Hiram want to return to Mississippi?
2. How does Hiram know R.C. and his family?
3. How does Hiram save Emmett's life?
4. What is Hiram's relationship with Naomi like?
5. R.C. encounters Emmett while he is fishing with Hiram. What does he do to Emmett when they meet?
6. How does Greenwood treat the Remington brothers? Why?
7. What do Bryant and Milam do to Emmett Till?
8. What was the motive behind what they did?
9. What choice did Hiram have to make? Who gives him advice about that choice?
10. What is the race and gender of the jurors hearing Emmett Till's case?
11. What does the defense lawyer, Mr. Breland, do to discredit the witnesses speaking on behalf of Emmett?
12. Why does Mrs. Bryant say that she doesn't know Emmett Till?
13. What is the final verdict?
14. What do Chatham and Breland say in their final statements?
15. Where was R.C. when Emmett was kidnapped and murdered?
16. When R.C. beats up his father, what happens to Naomi?
17. Describe Hiram and his father's relationship.
18. What clues foreshadow Grampa's involvement in the kidnapping and murder of Emmett Till?

Setting:

1. Where and when does the story take place?
2. What is the South like in 1955?
3. How does this affect your understanding of the events of the novel?

History and Fiction

1. Where is Emmett from? How do Emmett's expectations and behavior in the South reflect where he is from?
2. What is lynching?
3. Which parts of *MS Trial, 1955* are fact?
4. Which parts of *MS Trial, 1955* are fiction?
5. In "A Just Appraisal" what is the attitude of the South toward Emmett's death?

Characterization

1. How does Grampa feel about the integration of schools?
2. How does Mr. Paul feel about the integration of schools? How does Mr. Paul feel about African Americans in general?
3. Which characters are dynamic in the story? Explain.
4. Which characters are static in the story? Explain.
5. How does R.C. feel about African Americans? How do you know?
6. How does Naomi feel about African Americans? How do you know?

Topics for themes: Come up with theme statements for the following topics.

Being a bystander

Empathy

Tradition vs. Change

Justice

Racial discrimination