



A LONG WALK TO WATER: POST-READING RESPONSE PROMPTS

After you finish reading *A Long Walk to Water*, choose five of the following prompts to respond to.

<p>A.</p>	<p>The title of the novel is <i>A Long Walk to Water</i>. The “long walk” represents the journeys taken by both Nya and Salva. Provide an alternate title for the novel and explain what it represents from the book.</p> <p><i>Student answers to this question will vary, but may include the ideas of hope, difficulty, and perseverance.</i></p>
<p>B.</p>	<p>The author alternates between telling the story of Nya’s life in 2008 and the story of Salva’s life in 1985. What impact does this narrative technique have on the story?</p> <p><i>Switching between Nya and Salva’s lives shows the similar difficulties faced by both characters in their separate journeys. Introducing two lives in different decades also leads the reader to wonder if and how these two characters are connected.</i></p>
<p>C.</p>	<p>Describe Salva. Explain what kind of person he is and how his character traits help him throughout the story.</p> <p><i>Salva is a young boy from the Dinka tribe in Sudan. He is level-headed, thoughtful, and determined. He thinks about larger goals and not just the trouble he faces in the present. He finds ways to stay hopeful even when it seems like hope is nowhere to be found. These traits help him survive his journey with the other boys and men. He finds the strength to keep walking and keeps reminding himself of what he needs to do to make it just a little bit farther.</i></p>
<p>D.</p>	<p>How is hope important to Salva? How does he remain hopeful throughout the novel? Explain your answer giving specific examples from the text.</p> <p><i>Hope is important to Salva because it allows him to keep going on his journey. He stays hopeful by focusing on positive ideas, thinking of his family and the future, and not becoming stuck when upsetting things happen. Student answers to the final part will vary but should include relevant arguments and story details.</i></p>
<p>E.</p>	<p>Salva is a member of the Dinka tribe. Other Sudanese tribes include the Nuer and the Atuot. How does this tribal system appear in Salva’s story?</p> <p><i>In Salva’s culture, it is traditional for people to associate with others from their own tribe. They often have specific beliefs about other tribes and may see them as dangerous. For Salva, at least at the beginning of his journey, safety is found only among members of the Dinka tribe.</i></p>
<p>F.</p>	<p>Given the role that the tribal system plays in Sudan, what is surprising to Nya about Salva’s work? What does Salva’s work show about him?</p> <p><i>Nya finds it surprising that a man from the Dinka tribe would help the Nuer people. Salva’s work to bring safe water to Nya’s village shows that he wants to help people who need help, regardless of their tribe. It also shows that people of different tribes can work together.</i></p>



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<p>G.</p>	<p>Describe Uncle Jewiir. How does he have a lasting effect on Salva?</p> <p>Uncle Jewiir is a family member whom Salva looks up to. He is a strong and caring person who helps Salva during their journey by teaching him how to focus on one small task at a time. Salva remembers Uncle’s words long after he is gone, thinking to himself that he needs to just take one step at a time to reach his destination. This philosophy helps him to become a leader among the Lost Boys and even gives him the courage to pursue his project to help the people of Sudan once he lives in America.</p>
<p>H.</p>	<p>Throughout the novel, Salva faces different conflicts. Many of them are external conflicts, such as the physical difficulties of walking through the desert. Others are internal conflicts, such as Salva worrying about his family. Explain two external conflicts and two internal conflicts. Do you think that some of these conflicts are more difficult for Salva to overcome than others?</p> <p>Salva faces external conflicts such as the heat and the lack of food and water. Wild animals, soldiers, and the general threat of war are additional external conflicts. Salva’s internal conflicts are emotional and mental. Salva doubts whether he will survive the journey and is uncertain about where he will end up. He also deals with the stress of not knowing if his family is still alive and whether he will ever see them again. <i>Student answers may include conflicts not listed here, and answers to the final question will vary.</i></p>
<p>I.</p>	<p>Compare and contrast Salva’s life in Sudan with his life in Rochester. How does his time in Rochester have an impact on him?</p> <p>In Sudan and during his journeys through Ethiopia and Kenya, Salva lives in uncertainty and fear. He does not know where he will end up or if he will see his family again. In Rochester, Salva lives in a comfortable home with a family who helps him. He has access to clothing, technology, and food. He does not have to worry about things like finding water or escaping physical danger. Because he can focus on his studies and his future in Rochester, Salva is able to make plans to help the people of Sudan.</p>
<p>J.</p>	<p>What does Salva do when he returns to Sudan at the end of the novel? Why do you think he does this?</p> <p>Salva creates an organization to drill wells across Sudan, including in Nya’s village, to give people access to clean water. He does this because he wants to help other people from his country. He understands what it is like to struggle because of his own journey as a refugee. He wants to use the resources he has to help prevent other Sudanese people from having to struggle as well.</p>



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K.	<p>The novel ends with a note from Salva that reads, “To young people, I would like to say: Stay calm when things are hard or not going right with you. You will get through it when you persevere instead of quitting. Quitting leads to much less happiness in life than perseverance and hope.” What does Salva mean by this? How has he found happiness through perseverance?</p> <p>Salva wants for others to understand that they need to face difficult situations and try to make it through those situations. Salva found happiness by continuing on a long and hard journey with the hope that finishing his journey would be better than giving up. With this perseverance, he eventually made it to America, where he was able to improve his life and begin helping others.</p>
L.	<p><i>A Long Walk to Water</i> is based on the true story of Salva Dut. Does knowing that this story is based in reality change your opinion of the book? Why or why not? Given that the events in the book are true, which parts of the story surprised you the most?</p> <p>Student answers to this question will vary, but should include a personal opinion and reference specific parts of the book.</p>