



ROLL OF THUNDER, HEAR MY CRY: POST-READING RESPONSE PROMPTS



After you finish reading *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*, choose five of the following prompts to respond to.

<p>A.</p>	<p>In <i>Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry</i>, the Logan family's land plays a significant role in the story. What does the land represent for them?</p> <p>For the Logans, land represents security and independence. The Logans don't have much money. However, because they have land, they are much better off than their sharecropper neighbors, who are taken advantage of by plantation owners and storekeepers.</p>
<p>B.</p>	<p>Name three of Cassie's character traits, and evaluate how they help or hinder her throughout the story. Choose specific instances or events in the story that demonstrate each character trait, and explain whether it helps Cassie or causes her problems.</p> <p>Cassie is outspoken, intelligent, and confident.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Her outspokenness causes some unpleasant consequences, such as when she speaks out about poor textbooks and receives a whipping. Another example is when she speaks out about the unfairness of having to wait to be served and is publicly humiliated by the storekeeper. • Her intelligence helps her come up with a way to get back at Lillian Jean without bringing consequences back on herself or her family. • Her confidence helps her remain strong even when others don't treat her with respect.
<p>C.</p>	<p>Describe the relationship between the Logan family and Mr. Morrison. How do the Logans help him? In what ways does Mr. Morrison help the Logans?</p> <p>The Logans give Mr. Morrison food, shelter, and a job during a time when it's hard to find work. They're kind to him, and he comes to see them as the children and grandchildren that he doesn't have. Mr. Morrison helps the Logans by working and staying on the farm while Papa is away, providing them with some protection. After the incident in Strawberry, Mr. Morrison keeps Hammer from confronting Mr. Simms and possibly being hurt or killed. He helps protect Papa and Stacey on their way back from Vicksburg, bringing Papa home after he's attacked by the Wallaces.</p>
<p>D.</p>	<p>Think about the different ways the Logan children and Logan adults experience racial injustice. What are some of the similarities and differences in how they respond? Cite specific events in the story that illustrate their responses.</p> <p>The Logan children and adults respond similarly by protesting the injustice, though one exception is when Big Ma backs down in Strawberry and makes Cassie apologize to Lillian Jean Simms, even though Cassie wasn't in the wrong. The children tend to respond more often with anger and revenge, while the adults respond carefully and thoughtfully as they consider the impacts to the community.</p> <p>Here are some examples of the children's anger and revenge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They secretly dig a ditch for the Jefferson Davis school bus. • Cassie leads Lillian Jean into the forest and then beats her up. <p>Here are some examples of the adults' careful and thoughtful responses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mama pastes paper over the offensive wording in the poor-quality textbooks. • Mama and Papa organize a boycott of the Wallace store in response to the brutal treatment of the Berrys and the unfair treatment of sharecroppers. • Papa rescues T.J. and his family from the night men by setting his own cotton field on fire.



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<p>E.</p>	<p>Many people living in rural Mississippi during the Great Depression faced extreme poverty, and in many situations, Black families experienced more severe poverty because of their race. In the story, Mr. Granger, a wealthy white landowner, drives an expensive car—a symbol of wealth and status. Uncle Hammer comes to town driving the same type of car. How is owning the car different for someone like Mr. Granger and someone like Uncle Hammer?</p> <p>Mr. Granger's family used to own the plantation land that many of the local families, like the Averys, sharecrop on, and his family used to own part of the land that belongs to the Logans. Mr. Granger is wealthy and influential, holding power over many people and businesses. The wealth and influence he holds is a result of his family's affluence, and he's the only one in town with a luxury vehicle. Though Uncle Hammer grew up in poverty in Mississippi, he moved to Chicago for more opportunities. With a good-paying job, he's able to wear nice clothes and buy an expensive car. This shows that Black people are able to earn more money and are treated more fairly in the North than they are in the South.</p>
<p>F.</p>	<p>T.J. Avery is consistently involved in conflict throughout the story, which affects his relationships with others. Evaluate T.J.'s friendship with Stacey and his friendship with R.W. and Melvin Simms. Why does T.J. behave the way he does, and what consequences does he face? Explain your response with reasons and evidence from the text.</p> <p>Even though Stacey is consistently a good friend to T.J., like when he takes a whipping for T.J. for the cheating instead of telling on him, T.J. isn't a good friend to Stacey. He lets Stacey take the blame for his cheating at school, and he ultimately causes Stacey's mother to lose her teaching job, which he denies. T.J. teases Stacey about his new coat until Stacey gives it to him, and then he flaunts it. T.J. takes advantage of Stacey and their friendship, which causes Stacey to distance himself from T.J. and the trouble he causes. T.J.'s friendship with R.W. and Melvin Simms gives him the opportunity to get things he wants, such as new clothes and the pearl-handled pistol in the mercantile. He gets attention and approval from them, even if they're laughing at him and using him. Ultimately, his friendship with the Simms brothers brings T.J. trouble with the law—trouble he's unlikely to get out of.</p>
<p>G.</p>	<p>Describe Jeremy Simms's attitude toward the Logan children. How is his attitude different from that of his other family members and the other white children in the community? How does Jeremy show friendship to the Logans? Why do you think the author included this character in the story?</p> <p>Jeremy is kind to the Logan children and shows interest in being friends with them when he walks to school with them instead of taking the bus to his school. Though his siblings and the other white children in the community mistreat the Logans because they're Black, Jeremy doesn't participate in the unjust and unkind treatment. He takes Cassie's side against Lillian Jean, his own sister, in Strawberry, he makes and gifts a wooden flute to Stacey, and he offers to show the Logan kids his treehouse and help them build their own. The author likely wanted to illustrate how complicated and difficult friendships were between white people and African American people at that time. The author may have also wanted to show that racial attitudes are a choice, despite the beliefs held by those around you.</p>



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<p>H.</p>	<p>Stacey Logan, the oldest Logan child, is forced to grow up quickly because his father works out of town. How does Stacey demonstrate his responsibility, and how does he handle his role? Cite a moment in the story when Stacey's actions were most admirable and explain why you chose it.</p> <p><i>Stacey is a leader among his siblings, and he looks after them. After the kids experience the repeated humiliation of walking to school as the Jefferson Davis school bus splashes them with mud, Stacey comes up with the plan to create the huge ditch that crashes the bus. However, he's still a 12-year-old kid who makes poor decisions sometimes. He chases T.J. to the Wallace store, even though his parents have ordered the Logan children to stay away from the store. Student responses about Stacey's most admirable actions will vary, but may mention his decision to distance himself from T.J. to avoid trouble or his loyalty and bravery in helping T.J. at the end of the book.</i></p>
<p>I.</p>	<p>Chapter 11 begins with lyrics from an African American spiritual, which is a type of song that enslaved people sang. Why do you think the author used a phrase from this song in the book's title and included the lyrics in the story?</p> <p><i>The lyrics originally spoke to the struggle of enslaved people against their slaveholders. In <i>Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry</i>, the lyrics apply to the struggle of the Logans and their Black neighbors in the post-slavery era in which they live. The author may have wanted to use the lyrics to point out that, even though slavery is over, the struggle for justice for African Americans continues.</i></p>
<p>J.</p>	<p>The author Mildred T. Taylor uses the word "thunder" several times in the book—fourteen to be exact! Most uses of the word occur in the context of storms that happen during major events in the story, like on the night Papa gets shot by the Wallaces and when the night men come to take T.J. away. What idea or mood do you think the author is trying to convey with the use of this word? What comparisons or connections can you make between a thunderstorm and the events in the story?</p> <p><i>The author might use the word "thunder" to convey a dark, ominous, or angry mood. Just as thunder sometimes happens before a storm, the occurrence of thunder in the story foreshadows danger or injustice. Thunder is loud and explosive, mirroring the anger that the Logans feel toward the racial injustice they and their community experience.</i></p>