

Literature Circle Questions

Use the questions and activities that follow to get more out of the experience of reading *Shiloh* by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor.

1. Where does Marty find Shiloh? How does he finally get the dog to follow him?
2. Besides the fact that Judd Travers is cruel to animals, what are the other reasons Marty dislikes Judd?
3. How does Marty explain the food he saves at the end of each meal for Shiloh?
4. Judd is always complaining about how much Shiloh disobeys him, so why does he care so much about getting Shiloh back?
5. Marty takes his can-collecting money and buys leftover food for Shiloh. Why does he worry that the butcher will think it's for his family to eat? Why is Marty embarrassed when the neighbors start leaving more and more food for his dad to pick up on his mail route?
6. How does finding Shiloh change Marty's opinion about the way all animals should be treated? For instance, how does he say he would get rid of a snake?
7. After praying, Marty decides that it's okay to hide Shiloh from Judd Travers because he's protecting the dog, and God would approve of that. How does Marty discover that one lie, no matter how noble, leads to another?
8. Why does Marty's mother refuse to keep Shiloh a secret from Marty's father? What does she say will happen if he finds out she lied to him, even just once?
9. After discovering Shiloh, why does Marty's mother give him a day before revealing his secret? What does Marty plan to do when morning comes, and does he really believe he'll be successful?
10. On the morning he has to return Shiloh, Marty marches over to Judd Travers's place to confront him. How does he plan on negotiating with Judd before he sees Judd kill the doe? Do you think Marty would have been successful negotiating with Judd without being able to blackmail him for hunting out of season?
11. Why is it so important for Marty to work every minute of the twenty hours he owes Judd, even after Judd suggests he might not follow through on the deal?

12. Marty wants to believe he can hide Shiloh forever, but how was it easy for you, the reader, to tell that Shiloh would be discovered soon? Describe how Marty might have been caught, if the Bakers' dog hadn't attacked Shiloh.

13. What kind of person does Judd Travers turn out to be at the end? Does he seem as evil at the end of the book as he does at the beginning? Give examples from the story to support your answer.

14. Why does Marty say, at the end of the book, "nothing is as simple as you guess—not right or wrong, not Judd Travers, not even me or this dog I got here." What do you think he means, and what does this idea have to do with the events in the book—the strong feelings he has for Shiloh, his desire to treat animals well, and the anger he has toward Judd?

Note: These literature circle questions are keyed to Bloom's Taxonomy: Knowledge: 1-3; Comprehension: 4-6; Application: 7-8; Analysis: 9-10; Synthesis: 11-12; Evaluation: 13-14.

Activities

1. Before making the deal with Judd, Marty considers all kinds of ways to buy Shiloh — collecting cans and bottles, delivering papers. Have you ever had to earn money fast in order to buy something you really wanted? Was it difficult to earn the money, like it was for Marty? How did you end up doing it?

2. Imagine, five years down the line, Marty finds another one of Judd's escaped dogs and wants to keep it. Judging by the mature way they resolve their differences at the end of Shiloh, how do you imagine they might negotiate a similar problem?

3. Write a set of set-by-step instructions for a friend who's taking care of your pet. Besides feeding it, what special things do they need to do — take it for a walk, give it a favorite toy or treat? Show your friend all the tricks you've taught your pet and how they can teach pets too. Use simple illustrations to help explain.

4. Do you have a special pet like Shiloh? Did you find it or have to rescue it somehow? Or did you get it from a pet store or the Pound? Write a story where you describe how you got the animal and all the qualities that make him or her so special.

The Shiloh Story continues...Read these books to find out what happens between Judd Travers and Shiloh.

Shiloh Season, Aladdin Paperbacks, July 1999

Saving Shiloh, Aladdin Paperbacks, February 1999

