

Riddle of We at the Heartwood Tree – Close Reading Guide

Ch. 1 – Setting and characters focus:

- Draw the cave. What colors does the author use and what do they represent? What does the spiral mean.
- What color are the synergy pals? Why do you think the author chose those colors? What details does the author use to reveal each character's personality?
- What shape and color do the animals become when they travel? Why do you think the author chose to do that?
- How does each character make you feel? Why?
- Predict – What is the purpose of the journey? How do you think it will go?

Ch. 2 – The Adventure Begins

- How does bond feel about the whistle/camp? How can you tell? How would you feel? Why?
- Reflect – how does Bond get along with his peers? Highlight details the author uses to support your answer.
- How did Bond act toward Bliss? How did he feel afterwards? How do you think she felt? Why do you think he did it?
- What does Bond vow? How do you think that will go?
- Summarize each main character (actions, thoughts, words). Make a drawing and label it.
- Compare and contrast each character on a Venn diagram. Which character are you most like? Why? Are there any parts of the other characters that are a part of you?

Ch. 3 – Different Drums

- Highlight a quote from Forrest that could be a theme statement.
- Each main character makes a statement for each synergy pal. Make a drawing to match them. How does the synergy pal match the character?
- What do you think the wind might represent in the story?
- Explain what each character did on their quiz. Why do you think they did that?
- Choose a motto to represent each character. Use words that the character said in this chapter to help you.

Ch. 4 – Mind Boggling Bonfire

- Explain the internal conflict that each character seems to be dealing with. Which one seems closest to you?

- What advice does each synergy pal give the characters at the bonfire?

Ch. 5 – Running Start

- Highlight a possible theme statement about nature in this chapter.
- Explain how each character uses their own special talents in this chapter
- How does a group need everyone's unique talent to succeed? Name some examples of groups in real life that operate the same way.
- Do you think they should have taken the nest? Why or why not? Explain some things that could happen as a result. (Cause and effect graphic organizer)
- Draw a picture, design, or create a diorama to show what happened at the end of this chapter.

Ch. 6 – A Rocky Path

- Do you think it's better if a group has a leader, or if a group makes decisions together?
- What could be the significance of Bliss's yellow scarf?
- Evaluate – what do you think of Will's leadership in this chapter? How could he have handled things differently?
- Who rescued Bliss? Act out the words and actions of how he/she did it.
- Visualize the cave pictures. Now draw a picture of what you visualized. Be sure to add color!

Ch. 7 – Separated

- Do you think it was a good idea to separate?
- Describe the important event from this chapter.

Ch. 8 – Dream of Things to Come

- What does Bliss imagine to help her feel better?
- Why do you think the animals approached Bliss?
- What gift did Feelabout Kaola give her?
- What do you think the animals meant by the riddle, the gift, and the path?

Ch. 9 – All Children are Special

- What do you think Thinkabout Owl means by, "Too true . . . it's facts for you"?
- What did Kay represent in this scene?

Ch. 10 – Cave of Fear and Possibilities

- What do you think the heartbeat sound is coming from?
- In this chapter, the author explains that Will is not thinking about the danger of falling crystals. What is he thinking about instead?
- Explain the foreshadowing the author uses in this chapter.

Ch. 11 – Bliss Blockers

- What does Kay represent in this chapter?
- What is the significance of the wooden board?
- What advice does Talkabout Chimp give Bliss?
- Why do you think this chapter is called Bliss Blockers? How does Bliss block her own happiness? What are the other character's bliss blockers?

Ch. 12 – Focus To See Things Whole

- How does Will react when he thinks he's alone in the cavern?
- How does chaos present herself to Will?
- What advice does he get from Lookabout Lion?

Ch. 13 – Flip Flopper

- How does chaos present herself to Bond?
- What advice does he get from Feelabout Koala?
- What is the map? What does emotion map?

Ch. 14 – Bliss's Journey

- Explain how Bliss was able to shatter the invisible wall.
- Who is Bliss's guide?
- Explain synergy soup and what it has to do with Mark Twain.
- Why does Bliss set herself apart from others?
- What do revolutionaries and innovators need? How does that relate to the characters in the book?
- According to Mark Twain, what makes a good story?
- What synergy pal might represent Mark Twain? What other historical figures might fit this same synergy pal?

Ch. 15 – Will's Journey

(This chapter would taste even better while eating grapes!)

- How does Will think of and use each character on his journey?
- How does chaos pick at Will along the way? How does he overcome it?
- Who is Will's guide?
- What made Cesar Chavez a great leader?
- Highlight the advice he gives to Will.
- Draw a symbol of Cesar Chavez's leadership.
- What synergy pal might represent Cesar Chavez? Dolores Huerta? What other historical figures can you think of that might fit this same synergy pal?

Ch. 16 – Faith's Journey

- Why does the compass work but not the moss trick?
- How does chaos present herself to Faith?
- How does she overcome it? Who is Faith's guide?
- Explain the irony in Sacajawea's story.
- What advice does she give to Faith?
- What synergy pal would fit Sacajawea? What other historical figures might fit this same synergy pal?

Ch. 17 – Bond's Journey

- Who is Bond's guide?
- Explain the trap she describes to Bond. How can he get himself out of it?
- Which synergy pal fits Sojourner Truth the best? What other historical figures might fit this same synergy pal?

Ch. 18 – Stuck in the Mud

- How was Bond able to help Faith? How was he able to talk her into following him?

Ch. 19 – Rapids Ahead

- How was Bond able to make Faith feel comfort and strength?

Ch. 20 – Reunited

- What is Bliss's plan for someone to find them?
- Do you think it will work?

Ch. 21 – Rekindled Hearth

- Why do you think Bliss whistles the songs she does?
- Explain how the characters behavior towards each other has changed. Use examples from the text.
- What do you think caused such a change?

Ch. 22 – Chaos Foreshadowed

- Describe the effect of the orange fog.
- How was Bond able to change his bubble?
- Draw each character and color in the color their bubble changed to

Ch. 23 – The Heartwood Tree

- Draw a picture of the heartwood tree using the details the author uses to describe it and the words the historical figures have to share about the friendly universe.

Ch. 24 – The Map is the Prize

- Draw a picture of what the map looked like in color to represent each character.
- What did the characters earn as their prize?
- Highlight some dialogue from this chapter that could represent a theme statement for the story.

Ch. 25 – Best Friends Forever

What lesson did each character learn?

What would you say the theme of the story is?

How can we apply this theme to our regular lives?

Culminating Projects:

Act it out – choose a series of action scenes from the book and have friends help you act them out in sequence. Film them to share if possible! Be sure to use dialogue from the story as well as details the author used to describe each scene.

Comic Strip – Design a comic strip of one important scene from the story. Make sure you add color!

Sequel -- Write a sequel that included each character. What will they all be doing in 10, 20, or 50 years? What would be the conflict of your story? What tools could the characters use to overcome the conflict?

Research – The story introduced us to several historical figures. Research one historical figure that you are interested in learning more about. Present your information in a genre that would be appropriate for the character (for example, you could use a travelogue for Sacajawea).

Choice – Design your own project that relates to the story? What did you learn from the story? How can you apply your learning to your own life?