

Ninth Ward Study and Reading Guide

Use as you read for better comprehension...and for reading class points!

A) Section One, "Sunday," p. 1 to the page break halfway down p. 12

DUE _____ 10 pts.

Character ID

Character Identification phrases – For Lanesha, list details on age, personality, location, and 2 pieces of information regarding her background. For everyone else, first identify her or him in terms of his or her relationship with Lanesha. Then describe 2 personality traits and 2 pieces of information regarding background.

****Lanesha –**

****Mama Ya-Ya –**

****Lanesha's mother –**

Chapter questions MUST be written out in complete sentences. For full credit, you MUST remember to use a capital and an end mark.

1. How old is Lanesha?

2. Use a dictionary to look up the word *caul*. What does it mean?

3. What facts can you piece together from this chapter about Lanesha's family? Write as many as you read about.

4. What special gift does Mama Ya-Ya say Lanesha was born with? What happens in this chapter to show Lanesha's gift?

5. What are synopses? Try to define by context (what you read in the story). p. 5

6. There's an example of foreshadowing on p. 6. What do you think it is? What is being foreshadowed?

7. How does Lanesha compare her parents to Romeo and Juliet?

8. On page 11, Lanesha says it was a good birthday. Reflect over the chapter to this point – what made it “a good day,” “a perfect day”?

9. How do we know Mama Ya-Ya has more than one set of religious beliefs?

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B) Section Two: rest of "Sunday" and all of "Monday," p. 12 to p.25

DUE _____ 10 pts.

Chapter questions MUST be written out in complete sentences. For full credit, you MUST remember to use a capital and an end mark.

10. What do the room and puzzle descriptions help us see indirectly about Lanesha's character? p.13-14

11. What's Lanesha's definition of symbolism on p. 15?

12. Give an example of one of Mama Ya-Ya's signs for good luck and another for bad luck. Make it clear in your sentence which is which.

13. Why do you think Lanesha chooses the numbers 8 and 4 to add up to her age? (Hint – look at Mama Ya-Ya's discussion of the symbolism of numbers on p. 16-17.)

14. Describe how Lanesha feels about the "ghosts" she sees.

Character ID:

Character Identification phrases – First, identify the character in terms of his or her relationship with Lanesha. Then describe 2 personality traits and 2 pieces of information regarding background.

****Jermaine:**

****TaShon:**

15. What can we infer (piece together) about the way Lanesha is treated at school, considering her special gift?

16. What's one reason TaShon is probably picked on at school?

17. How does TaShon behave in class?

18. What does Mama Ya-Ya have to say about the number of good signs versus bad signs in the world?

19. What's the vocab word in Miss Perry's class at the end of "Monday," and what does it mean?

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Section Three, "Tuesday," p. 27 to the page break on p. 41 --DUE _____ 5 pts.

You MUST write your responses in full sentences for credit.

1. What makes Lanesha's school seem "brand-new" all the time?

Character Identification phrases – First, identify the character in terms of his or her relationship with Lanesha. Then describe 2 personality traits and 2 pieces of information regarding the character.

****Andrew:**

2. What does Lanesha offer Andrew that she hasn't ever before?

3. How does Lanesha explain her need for signs, dreams, words, word problems, and math?

4. How does Miss Johnson inspire Lanesha? What career idea does she put in Lanesha's head?

5. Where does Lanesha think she'll build her first bridge?

6. What does Mama Ya-Ya say about senses on p. 35?

7. There's more important foreshadowing on p. 35! When Lanesha imagines "bridges in the sky," what will her structure be useful in helping?

8. In the bullying scene, why doesn't the boy Lanesha pushes hit her or push her back?

Character Identification phrases – First, identify the character in terms of his or her relationship with Lanesha. Then describe 2 personality traits and 2 pieces of information regarding the character.

****Max:**

9. How does Lanesha react to Max calling her "uhhh-gee" on p. 37?

10. In what ways is "stray" a fitting description of TaShon, according to Lanesha? (p. 40)

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Please remember to write complete sentences!

A) Section Four, page break halfway down p. 41 to bottom of p. 57 -- DUE _____ 5 pts.

1. Explain how the author (in Lanesha's voice) indicates Mama Ya-Ya's age.
2. Mama Ya-Ya makes two predictions early in this section – what are they?
3. Read the reactions of the neighbors to Spot. How do they react? What does this tell you about the way the neighborhood gets along?
4. Who are the neighbors mentioned in this section?
5. What makes this day special, after Lanesha had been thinking it would be ordinary?
6. According to the news, where is the hurricane right now?
7. Detail the sights and sounds in the neighborhood.
8. Why does Lanesha say “Who needs a dumb Uptown family?” on p. 46?

9. Who else can see Lanesha's mother's ghost?

10. When Lanesha goes down for breakfast, what are all the signs that Mama Ya-Ya wants to talk seriously about her dream?

11. To what storm does Lanesha compare the impending one, and when did it happen?

12. What does Lanesha bring up that she doesn't usually?

13. Why did Lanesha tell Ginia no about going to the mall?

14. What excuse does Lanesha give Ginia for not hanging out after school, and how does Ginia respond?

15. Why is Lanesha preoccupied throughout the school day?

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A) Section Five, p.58 – p.79 DUE ____ 5 pts.

Character ID:

Character Identification phrases – First, identify the character in terms of his or her relationship with Lanesha. Then describe 2 personality traits and 2 pieces of information regarding background.

Ginia:

Questions: You MUST write your responses in full sentences for credit.

1. In what way are Lanesha and Mama Ya-Ya rich on the first of every month, and how?
2. Mr. Ng first says the weatherman says the hurricane is going where?
3. What do Mr. Ng and Mama Ya-Ya discuss when they talk together?
4. Ginia reveals something about her grandmother. What is it?
5. Explain how Mr. Palmer spends his days.
6. Why is the weatherman Lanesha sees on Mr. Palmer's TV making her nervous?
7. What does Lanesha see in the colors on the weatherman's map?
8. According to Mama Ya-Ya, red can mean what?
9. Next weatherman Lanesha sees is at home, after Ginia leaves. How does this weatherman "talk math" about the hurricane?
10. What's Lanesha do after dinner?

11. What does Lanesha own that Mama Ya-Ya paid \$3 a week for 3 years?
12. What two Bible stories are mentioned on p. 66?
13. At the start of the new chapter, what's the day of the week and date?
14. What does Mama Ya-Ya keep muttering?
14. Sum up the detailed info from the new weather report on 70.
15. What does Lanesha now realize isn't important in the weather reports?
16. How does Mama Ya-Ya show her worry over the forecast this morning?
17. What news does TaShon bring that Lanesha has to go see for herself?
18. Describe the sights at school.
19. What's Miss Johnson doing and why?
20. To what does Lanesha compare her confused feelings about getting new friends and her worries over the storm?
21. What does Miss Johnson give Lanesha for the "long weekend?"

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A) **Section Six**, p. 81 to p. 98 -- DUE _____ 5 pts.

Complete sentences are necessary for study guide credit!

1. It's now Friday, so what's the date?
2. Why is the weatherman "breathless" on p. 82?
3. Who watches TV with Lanesha?
4. Describe reactions of two different people interviewed on TV.
5. Why doesn't Mama Ya-Ya get money from the government to care for Lanesha?
6. Why does Lanesha decide to go get more water and food?
7. On p. 87, it's now Saturday, so what's the date?
8. According to Lanesha, what are several ways Mama Ya-Ya shows her love?
9. According to Mama Ya-Ya, why didn't the special tea work when she was trying to save Lanesha's mom?

10. What do you think this means?

11. How does Mama Ya-Ya respond to the mandatory evacuation announcement?

12. Why can't Lanesha and Mama Ya-Ya go with Mrs. Watson?

13. What are three reasons Lanesha gives for why she and Mama Ya-Ya can't leave?

14. How many days is it until the next Social Security check arrives?

15. Where is TaShon's dad taking TaShon to spend the storm?

16. On p. 97, Lanesha says, "But it's all different." What's different now with her relationship with TaShon? Why is it different?

17. What does Lanesha agree to do for TaShon during the storm?

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Section Seven, “Still Saturday” and “Sunday,” p. 99 to p. 118 -- DUE _____ 5 pts.

You MUST write your responses in full sentences for credit.

1. What does Mama Ya-Ya ask of Lanesha, since she doesn't understand her dream?
2. Why doesn't Lanesha say yes right away?
3. Write a sentence of dialogue from the text that is foreshadowing.
4. Describe what Lanesha sees on TV reports early this day.
5. What word describes the TV images for Lanesha?
6. Describe Mama Ya-Ya's appearance this morning and what it means to Lanesha.
7. Lanesha says she sees no ghosts in the living room. What's Mama Ya-Ya's reply?
8. How old was Laneha's mother when she died?
9. How does Lanesha's mother's ghost react to Lanesha's questions?
10. What makes the TV images seem scarier on p. 108?
11. What's wrong with the neighborhood Sunday morning, according to Lanesha?

12. Lanesha's fears come out on p.113. List three things she's afraid of.

13. What does Lanesha decide to do to combat her fears?

14. Who comes to visit while Lanesha is busy in the kitchen?

15. What does this visitor offer?

16. How does Lanesha respond?

17. How long til the hurricane arrives, at the end of this section?

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Section Eight, “Still Sunday” p. 119 to part way through “Monday” – stop at page break on p. 145 --
DUE _____ 5 pts.

You MUST write your responses in full sentences for credit.

1. Why hasn't Mama Ya-Ya left the bed today?
2. On p. 120, how does Mama Ya-Ya sum up what she believes about spirits?
3. At the bottom of p. 121, how does Lanesha feel about the approaching storm?
4. What does Lanesha mean by “I want to crush the entire neighborhood in my arms” on p. 122?
5. What's different now that makes Lanesha afraid of the ghosts (p. 125)?
6. What's Lanesha's best proof that they'll survive the hurricane on p. 127?
7. Describe a few ways the author builds suspense before the storm.
8. List several things the storm is compared to.
9. Where does Lanesha take Mama Ya-Ya, Spot, and herself for safety?

10. Why does the storm pause and then continue a few times around them? (Hint: p.133)

11. Why does Lanesha say “Thank you, Mama,” on p. 136?

12. Huge foreshadowing on p. 137 – Where does Mama Ya-Ya mean when she says “We’ll be up there soon enough?”

13. Lanesha is happy after the storm. What does bring out for breakfast?

14. What does Mama Ya-Ya say on p. 140 to confuse Lanesha’s happiness?

15. Summarize what Mama Ya-Ya means regarding what she’s learned about having the sight, and list the twists and turns she has had in her life (p.141-142).

16. What does Mama Ya-Ya seem to be saying on p. 143?

17. Why has Lanesha’s mother’s spirit not left, according to Mama Ya-Ya?

18. Who shows up at the end of this section?

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Section Nine, page break on p.145 to bottom of 165 -- DUE _____ 5 pts.

You MUST write your responses in full sentences for credit.

1. Why has TaShon come to Lanesha's house?
2. Describe 3 conditions at the Superdome.
3. What happened to the structure of the Superdome during the storm?
4. What made TaShon especially scared during the storm?
5. How does TaShon react the first time Lanesha asks how he got there, on p.149?
6. Describe 3 things TaShon saw while he was walking.
7. How did TaShon actually get the whole way to the Ninth Ward?
8. Does Lanesha think TaShon's parents will be there soon? Explain.
9. What does Mama Ya-Ya tell TaShon about his parents?
10. What's different about Lanesha's mother's ghost on p. 155?

11. When Lanesha pushes TaShon to tell what he sees, what does he say?

12. On p. 157, what does Mama Ya-Ya tell Lanesha that she and Lanesha's mother will help Lanesha do? Explain what she means.

13. Where must they go, according to Mama Ya-Ya?

14. What has Lanesha's mother's ghost done for the first time ever on p. 160?

15. How does Lanesha prepare for the move to the attic?

16. How does Lanesha react to the water filling the yard?

17. What's Lanesha doing at the end of this section? (This is a suspense-building technique.)

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Section Ten, page break on p.167 to 187 -- DUE _____ 5 pts.

You MUST write your responses in full sentences for credit.

1. When Lanesha wakes up, where is the flood water?
2. What's coming true that Mama Ya-Ya foreshadowed, regarding where they will take refuge?
3. What does Lanesha ultimately decide upon questioning where the water came from?
4. Why can't most Ninth Ward residents swim?
5. How does Lanesha calm TaShon on p. 168?
6. What three things have to last?
7. What does Lanesha see floating in the flooded stairwell, and what's her reaction.
8. What does TaShon say he wants to be when he grows up?
9. Why does Lanesha feel the need to stay awake (two reasons)?
10. What meaning does Lanesha find in the digits of Mama Ya-Ya's age?

11. What are Lanesha's last words to Mama Ya-Ya? What does this show about her relationship with Mama Ya-Ya?

12. How high is the water outside, when Lanesha gets a peek out the window?

13. When the water starts coming into the attic, what do Lanesha and TaShon do?

14. Describe what happens from p. 185 to the end of the chapter.

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Section Eleven, page break on p.189 to end -- DUE _____ 10 pts. Total – last question worth 5 pts.

You MUST write your responses in full sentences for credit.

1. What is the mantra (repeated expression) in the minds of Lanesha and TaShon?
2. Describe what Lanesha can see from her stranded position.
3. Once Lanesha accepts that no help is coming, how does she go about helping herself and Tashon? What motivates them as they struggle with the task?
4. Sum up what happens once Lanesha is in the flood water.
- 5 .What does Mama Ya-Ya's ghost say to Lanesha?
6. How do they stay together while rowing?
7. Consider carefully the last few chapters. What is the theme of *Ninth Ward*? Write a full sentence that conveys the theme message, then state at least three events that helped you form this opinion. This is a 5 pt. question. Give it a try!