

Saving Shiloh Study Guide



Saving Shiloh 

ASSIGNMENT # 1: CHAPTERS 1-4 (PAGES 1-26)

1. Read the assignment.
2. Complete all work for this assignment and bring it to your book club meeting.

READING SKILL TO PRACTICE: EVALUATE

The author, Phyllis Reynolds Naylor, dedicated this book "To anyone who ever tried to make a difference". What do you think she means by that?

Think about a time when you tried to make a difference. Write about it. First, describe the situation including who was involved, when and where it took place, what had happened or what you were worried would happen. Then, tell what you did, what you hoped to accomplish, and whether or not you felt you were successful in making a difference.

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"Saving Shiloh," written by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor, is a touching story that explores themes of loyalty, friendship, and the bond between humans and animals. This study guide aims to provide an in-depth analysis of the book, focusing on key characters, themes, plot summary, and discussion questions. Whether you're a teacher looking to facilitate a class discussion or a student seeking to deepen your understanding, this guide serves as a comprehensive resource.

Plot Summary

"Saving Shiloh" is the sequel to Naylor's earlier novel, "Shiloh." The story continues to follow the life of a young boy named Marty Preston and his beloved dog, Shiloh. The plot unfolds as Marty and Shiloh face new challenges, including the threat of Shiloh being taken away from him.

Marty's determination to protect Shiloh leads him to confront various obstacles, including the return of the dog's original owner, Judd Travers. Judd is a controversial figure in the community, known for his questionable treatment of animals. The narrative builds tension as Marty struggles with the moral dilemmas of loyalty, justice, and compassion.

Characters

Marty Preston

Marty is the protagonist of the story. He is a compassionate and determined young boy who loves Shiloh deeply. Throughout the book, Marty grows emotionally and learns valuable lessons about responsibility and courage.

Shiloh

Shiloh is a significant character in the story. As Marty's loyal dog, he represents unconditional love and companionship. Shiloh's well-being is the primary motivation for Marty's actions.

Judd Travers

Judd is the antagonist in the story. Initially portrayed as a cruel and irresponsible owner, his character is complex, revealing layers of vulnerability. Judd's past and his relationship with animals become central to the conflict in the story.

Other Supporting Characters

- Marty's Parents: They provide support and guidance, representing the adult perspective on responsibility and the moral implications of Marty's decisions.
- Maria: A friend of Marty who helps him navigate the challenges he faces with Shiloh and Judd.

Major Themes

The Bond Between Humans and Animals

One of the most prominent themes in "Saving Shiloh" is the deep connection that can exist between humans and their pets. Marty's love for Shiloh drives the plot and showcases how animals can profoundly impact our lives.

Morality and Ethics

The story raises significant questions about morality, particularly concerning how we treat animals. Marty grapples with what is right and wrong, especially when it comes to Judd and Shiloh's welfare. The book encourages readers to think critically about ethical choices.

Growth and Responsibility

Marty's journey is one of personal growth. He learns about responsibility, courage, and the importance of standing up for what he believes is right. These lessons resonate with readers and are integral to the coming-of-age aspect of the story.

Discussion Questions

1. How does Marty's relationship with Shiloh change throughout the story?
 - Discuss the evolution of their bond as they face challenges together.
2. What role does Judd Travers play in the story, and how does his character development impact the plot?
 - Consider how Judd's actions affect Marty's decisions and the overall theme of the book.
3. In what ways does "Saving Shiloh" address the issue of animal welfare?
 - Explore how the story highlights the importance of treating animals with kindness and respect.
4. What lessons does Marty learn about loyalty and friendship?
 - Analyze specific instances in the book where these themes are prevalent.
5. How do the supporting characters influence Marty's journey?
 - Discuss the impact of family and friends on his development and choices.

Key Quotes and Analysis

Quote Analysis

- "Sometimes you have to make tough choices."
 - This quote encapsulates the moral dilemmas Marty faces. It serves as a reminder that life often requires difficult decisions that test our values.
- "Love is worth fighting for."
 - This statement reflects the core of Marty's motivation throughout the story. It emphasizes the theme of loyalty and the lengths one will go to protect loved ones.

Writing Style and Literary Devices

Phyllis Reynolds Naylor's writing style in "Saving Shiloh" is accessible and engaging, making it suitable for a younger audience while still appealing to adult readers. Naylor employs various literary devices to enhance the narrative:

- Imagery: Vivid descriptions of the West Virginia landscape help readers visualize the setting and feel the emotional weight of the story.
- Symbolism: Shiloh symbolizes loyalty and love, while Judd represents the complexity of human nature, showcasing both good and bad traits.
- Foreshadowing: Subtle hints throughout the story build suspense and prepare readers for the eventual conflicts.

Conclusion

"Saving Shiloh" is more than just a story about a boy and his dog; it is a profound exploration of themes such as love, loyalty, and ethical responsibility. Through Marty's journey, readers are encouraged to reflect on their relationships with animals and the moral implications of their choices. This study guide serves as a valuable resource for understanding the complexities of the narrative and the lessons it imparts. Whether used in a classroom setting or for personal exploration, "Saving Shiloh" remains a timeless tale that resonates with audiences of all ages.

By engaging with the characters, themes, and ethical dilemmas presented in the book, readers can gain a deeper appreciation for the story and its significance in today's world.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the main theme of 'Saving Shiloh'?

'Saving Shiloh' explores themes of friendship, loyalty, and the bond between humans and animals, as well as the importance of standing up for what is right.

Who is the protagonist in 'Saving Shiloh'?

The protagonist of 'Saving Shiloh' is a young boy named Marty Preston, who is determined to save an abused dog named Shiloh.

What challenges does Marty face in 'Saving Shiloh'?

Marty faces several challenges, including dealing with the dog's abusive owner, navigating his family's views on the situation, and his own moral dilemmas about right and wrong.

How does the setting influence the story of 'Saving Shiloh'?

The rural West Virginia setting provides a backdrop that enhances the themes of nature, community, and the struggles of rural life, significantly influencing the characters' actions and decisions.

What lessons can readers learn from 'Saving Shiloh'?

Readers can learn about empathy, the importance of standing up for those who cannot defend themselves, and the responsibilities that come with caring for animals.

How does the relationship between Marty and Shiloh evolve throughout the story?

Marty and Shiloh's relationship evolves from one of rescue to a deep bond of trust and companionship, illustrating the transformative power of love and care.

What role does family play in 'Saving Shiloh'?

Family plays a crucial role in 'Saving Shiloh', as Marty navigates his family's beliefs and expectations

while trying to advocate for Shiloh, highlighting the conflicts that can arise between personal values and familial loyalty.

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