

Required Reading Selection : *The Slave Dancer* Author: Paula Fox

Summary

During the 1600s and 1700s, African slave in North America worked mostly in indigo, rice, and tobacco plantations. When the cotton gin was invented in 1793, the demand for slaves became even greater. Slaves were put to work on cotton plantations throughout the South as well as sugar plantations in Louisiana. There were about 3-4 million slaves living in the United States by the year 1860.

The year is 1840 (Pre-Civil War). Jessie Bollier lives in New Orleans with his mother and younger sister, Betty. He helps his poor family by playing his fife for pennies. One night Jessie is kidnapped by sailors. They take him to *The Moonlight*, a slave ship. Jessie's job will be to play the fife for slaves. The slaves are required to exercise and dance to his tunes. Jessie is filled with anger and misery over this horrible situation.

The ship sets sail for Africa. When the ship arrives, Jessie sees the place where the slaves are kept ablaze. Despite the fire, many slaves are brought on board. Slaves who do not survive their first days of captivity are thrown overboard. Jessie must begin his awful job of playing his fife to "exercise" the slaves. Jessie hates this chore, refuses to play and is punished.

Conditions on the ship deteriorate. Slaves and crew members are dying. Many men are starving. Jessie befriends a young slave boy. As the ship is anchored off the shores of Cuba, the weather worsens. The Captain orders slaves thrown overboard! Working against the sailors and the storm, Jessie and the young slave boy escape on a wooden boom. They head for the Mississippi shoreline hopeful to return home. Will Jessie survive and finally return to his family?

The Slave Dancer by Paula Fox was published in 1973 and won the Newberry Medal for Children's Literature in 1974.

Requirements:

1. Read the book carefully. Read one chapter at a time/sitting. Do not skim the chapters just to find the answers to the questions. You will receive a grade for this packet. It will count as Literature test grade for first quarter.

2. Answer the questions in complete sentences. (Do not write the questions.) Number the answers.

3. Work must be typed, double-spaced, 10 or 11/ black/ Times New Roman font. Sorry, no other fancy fonts, colors or sizes will be accepted for grading.

We will review this book (vocabulary, characters, setting, plot, concepts), but we will not reread each chapter. We will reread some of them. You will have tests on the entire book.

1. Pre Reading Questions: Define or describe each of the following in 1-2 good sentences. Use Internet sources for your information.

1. Plantations of the South
2. Slave trade of 1800's
3. New Orleans, Louisiana
4. Fife (musical instrument)
5. Cuba

2. **Vocabulary:** Create a Vocabulary word list (**word + short, accurate definition**) for 15-20 words from this book.

Chapter 1: The Errand

Write a **one paragraph journal entry** describing the thoughts and feelings Jessie would have on the night he was kidnapped. **(50 words)**

Chapter 2: The Moonlight

In this chapter find 5 common nouns, 5 Proper nouns and 5 adjective with the word they modify.
Give the page for each.

Chapter 3: The Shrouds

If Jessie could have taken ***three things from home*** aboard ship what three things would he have chosen ***AND WHY?***

Chapter 4: The Bight of Benin

Where is the Bight of Benin located. **(Use the Internet)**

Chapter 5: Nicholas Sparks Walks on Water

After reading this chapter you are half way through the book!

You are becoming more familiar with Jessie Bollier.

Write a **one paragraph (50 word)** description of his character.

(Include strengths/weaknesses/personality traits)

Chapter 6: The Spaniard

In this chapter **find one metaphor. Copy it and explain it. Give the page.**

Remember, a metaphor is a word or phrase that compares one thing to another without using the word "as" or "like".

A metaphor helps readers "see" events and characters vividly.

Chapter 7: Ben Stout's Mistake

1. Define foreshadowing.

2. What words from Purvis **at the beginning of the chapter** "foreshadowed" the trouble that the crew would face.

Chapter 8 and Chapter 9: The Old Man / Home and After

Use the Internet to answer the following:

1. Where was the Andersonville prison camp?

2. When did it operate?

3. Describe the conditions at this prison.