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***Roll of Thunder Hear, My Cry* Pre-reading Packet**

***Snapshot:***

*Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* is only one of Mildred Taylor’s novels about the Logan family. All of the books about the Logans use the character of Cassie as the narrator. This novel takes place in western Mississippi, near Vicksburg, in 1933. It is basically a story of how Cassie learns about the inherent prejudice of whites against blacks in the South during the difficult times of the Depression.

Cassie Logan is a nine-year old girl who lives with her mother, a seventh grade teacher, and her father, who must work on the railroad to supplement the family’s farming income. Also in the house are Cassie’s paternal grandmother, and three brothers-Stacey, 12, Christopher John, 7, and Little Man. The Logans own 400 acres, and are one of the few black landowning families in the community of sharecroppers. While Cassie is secure in the love of her close-knit family, she describes a year of perplexing and hurtful insults, some serious and some small.

**STATION #1**

***ABOUT THE AUTHOR/ GLOSSARY TERMS***

***About the Author***

Taylor notes that writing is a “lonely and terrifying business.” Why might she feel this way? Share with your group how you feel when you have to write.

Take notes here:

***Glossary terms***

Read through the list of words write down each word what you think it means. After you have written down what each word means discuss these words within your group. Where have you heard them used before? What do they make you think of? Can you relate to any of these words? How do these words make you feel? Any other discussions are welcome.

Chain gang Ku Klux Klan

Commissary Lynching

Confederacy (The Confederate States of America) Mortgage

Jefferson Davis Night riders

Discrimination Plantation

W.E.B.DuBois Reconstruction

Foreclose Segregate

Integrate Sharecropper Uncle Tomming

**Station #3**

***Jim Crow***

Read through the Jim Crow informational text. With your group discuss the purpose of the Jim Crow laws and their purpose. Consider whether the Jim Crow laws were unjust to whites as well as blacks and why or why not. How could people bring an end to Jim Crow laws? What are some examples of segregation that still exist today? Where do you see it? Give some examples that relate to you personally.

Take notes here:

**Station #4**

***Racial Etiquette***

Read through the informational text about racial etiquette. While reading think of the unwritten and unspoken rules you, as a person, must follow either at school, at home, after school, in public, etc. Jot down your ideas as to why these rules exist and who they benefit. After you read discuss your thoughts with your group. Then as a group talk about how races still “play roles” in America. Give some examples of this. Then discuss whether or not some whites still act as if they are superior to other races, and if so in what ways? Share how you feel about that.

Take notes here:

**Station #5**

***Segregated Schools in the South***

Read the article, “Segregated Schools in the South”. While reading imagine how much learning would take place in schools like the ones described by Raper. Discuss with your group your reaction to this type of schooling. Also discuss if you think schools specifically designed for African Americans would solve racial problems or make them worse. Explain why you believe that.

Take notes here:

**Station #6**

***Mob Violence***

Read the article about mob violence. Write down your ideas as to what makes people act the way they do in mobs and how individuals can stop mob actions. Once you have finished reading and reflecting share your ideas with your group. What is your personal reaction to the way African Americans were treated, ie the lynching and mob violence? Would people be able to get away with something like this today?

Take notes here:

**Station #7**

***The Great Depression in the South/ An Offer to Share Crops***

***The Great Depression in the South***

Before you read write down what you know about The Great Depression or any personal family stories you may know about it and share with your group. Then read the informational text about The Great Depression in the South. Discuss with your group how you think you would handle living under those conditions. If we were going through a depression today what would your family have to give up to make ends meet? How would your family get through it?

Take notes here:

**Station #7 Continued:**

***An Offer to Share Crops***

Upon reading the statement by Percy’s grandfather consider the following questions and discuss them with your group.

Who do you think has the best side of the bargain?

What might be some ways that the bargain could break down?

What would be a better way to organize the farming system?

Take notes here:

**Station #8**

**Voices from the Civil Rights Movement/ Ku Klux Flan Oath**

***Voices from the Civil Rights Movement***

Read the statements provided. After reading, choose what you believe is the most powerful statement from these three men. Write an explanation of the meaning of the statement. Then discuss your feelings with your group.

Take notes here:

***Ku Klux Klan Oath***

Before reading discuss what you know about the Ku Klux Klan with your group. After reading through the oath discuss some reasons why an individual would join the group. Discuss how this oath makes you feel?

Take notes here:

Final Reflection

You have read about what times were like during The Great Depression, the prejudice, segregation, racism and battle for Civil Rights in our nation’s past. You have also watched a movie that follows one of the first integrated football teams in the south and the struggles they went through. Imagine yourself growing up during this time period. How would you handle all that is going on around you? What would you do to make a difference? How would you get people to change their minds? Do you think you could cross the racial lines and hang out with another student if their skin was a different color than yours (remember this is 75 years ago, not today). How would you stand your ground? Include any other feelings you have about what you have learned in this activity. (Response needs to be 1 page long)