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Activity One



Character On Trial

There are many characters in *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* that were responsible for doing something wrong. The Wallace brothers, Mr. Granger, the Simmses, T.J., and even the Logans did things that could be considered 'wrong'. In groups of 6, choose a character that could be accused of something bad. As a group, outline the situation.

In your groups, you will need to decide who will take the following roles:

- prosecutor, victim, witness # 1 (a character who knows something about what happened)
- defense attorney, accused, witness # 2 (a character who knows something about what happened)

The Prosecution Team:

The Prosecutor	Will need to prepare	-2 questions to ask the victim that will help prove the accused is guilty -2 questions to ask witness # 1 to help prove the accused is guilty -1 question to ask the accused that will help prove they are guilty -1 question for witness # 2 to help prove that the accused is guilty
The Victim	will need to prepare	-Answers to the prosecutor's questions to help prove the accused is guilty
Witness # 1	will need to prepare	-Answers to the prosecutor's questions to help prove the accused is guilty

The Defense Team:

The Defense Attorney	Will need to prepare	-2 questions to ask the accused that will help prove the accused is innocent -2 questions to ask witness # 1 to help prove the accused is innocent -1 question to ask the victim that will help prove the accused is innocent -1 question for witness # 1 to help prove that the accused is innocent
The Accused	will need to prepare	-Answers to the defense attorney's questions to help prove the accused is innocent
Witness # 2	will need to prepare	-Answers to the defense attorney's questions to help prove the accused is innocent

Once the preparation is done, the accused will be put on trial. The prosecutor will have a chance to ask the victim and their witness questions. The defense attorney will have a chance to ask the accused and their witness questions. Then, the prosecutor will have a chance to ask the accused and witness # 2 their questions. The defense attorney will be able to ask the victim and witness # 2 their questions.

The rest of the class will act as the jury. After all the questions are asked, they will need to come up with a verdict of guilty or not guilty and an explanation of why. Get creative! Get into character and have fun role playing.

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Activity Two



Multimedia Advertisement

Individually or in pairs, you must come up with an advertisement for *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* which could appear on a variety of media types. First, you will need to do some research about what makes a successful advertisement. Some prompts for your search could include:

- What makes a good ad?
- Most successful ads of 2019.
- Audio book advertisements.
- How to market a book.

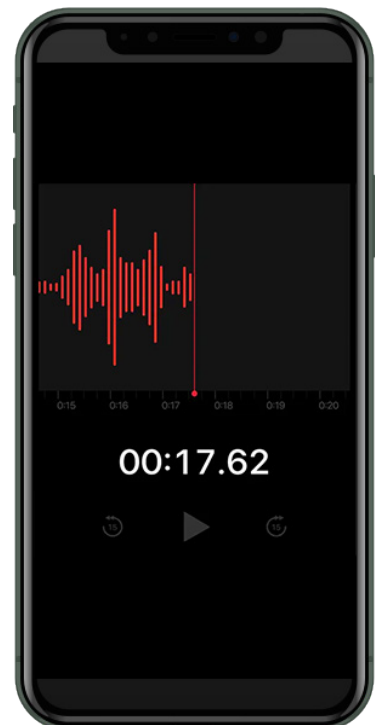
Make notes on what you discover. Then, using your research notes, you will need to write a script for the advertisement. Make sure the script is catchy and interesting. You want your ad to make the listener want to buy the book.

Next, you will need to record your advertisement. Make sure to record in a quiet place with no background noise. Speak clearly and slowly. If you are doing the recording with a partner, make sure you do not talk over each other. Once you are happy with your recording, edit it to add any other elements that you may want to include.

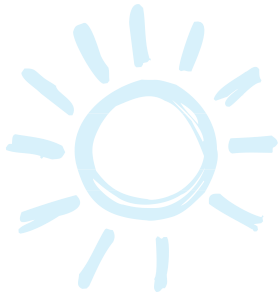
Some suggestions for what you could include in your ad are:

- Background music that fits with the mood of the novel.
- A short excerpt of the novel—read clearly and use character voices.
- A cliffhanger—this will make the listener want to know more.
- A catchy intro—you want to grab your listener’s attention immediately.
- A synopsis or summary of the novel—make sure you don’t give away spoilers!

When you are done, share your advertisement with your classmates. The class will then vote on which advertisement was the most enticing! As a class, discuss why you think it was the best ad.



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Activity Three



Talk Show

In groups of at least 4, host a talk show with characters from *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*. As a group, choose a minimum of 3 characters that you are going to interview. Try to choose characters that have different views to make the interview interesting. Decide who will be the host and who will play each character. If you are representing a character, try your best to stay as true to the character depicted in the novel as possible. Once you have determined your roles, come up with a catchy name for your talk show.

Role	Responsibilities
Host	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• introducing the talk show• introducing the characters• asking interesting questions• mediating the conversation• making sure the show sticks to the assigned time
Characters	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• prepare interesting answers to the host's questions• prepare for how you will represent your character (how do they talk, dress, walk? What are their views? How will they interact with the other characters on the talk show?)

When your discussion points, questions and answers are prepared, decide how you will deliver your talk show.

Will you present it to the class in person?

Will you film it as if it is on TV?

Record it and deliver it as a podcast?

Deliver it as a live stream and take questions from online viewers?

Be as creative as you can!

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Activity Four



Rewrite the Dialog

The dialog in *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* is of a specific dialect. A dialect is a style of language or vocabulary that is specific to a certain region or cultural group. Words, slang, vocabulary, tone and sentence structure can change depending on the region or the time. In this book, most of the dialog is written in a dialect of rural Mississippi in the early 1900s. Choose any chapter and analyze the dialog between characters. On a separate piece of paper, answer the following questions:

- What words/terms do they use that are unique to their dialect?
- What abbreviations or slang do they use in the novel?
- What is their sentence structure? Are they full sentences or incomplete sentences?
- What is their tone?
- What words do they use to show their emotion? What emotion do these words show?

Think about your own dialect and answer the following questions:

- What part of your identity has influenced your dialect?
- What abbreviations do you use on a regular basis?
- What are some examples of slang that you use on a regular basis?
- What is your sentence structure like? Do you normally use full sentences or incomplete sentences?

Now that you have thought about your own dialect, choose an interaction between two or more characters from the chapter you analyzed. Rewrite the dialogue from the novel using your own dialect. Think about:

- word choice
- vocabulary
- slang
- sentence structure
- tone



Try to make it sound as natural to you as possible. In groups, compare the dialog from the book to your own. Discuss in your group: What are the similarities? What are the differences?

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Activity Five

Song Lyrics



In Chapter 9, we learn about something called the chain gang. A chain gang is when prisoners are chained together in a row and have to do a task all together as a form of punishment. This task would often be physically challenging, making it even more difficult when chained to others. This was a common punishment especially for African-American prisoners starting before the Civil War. Mr. Granger threatens to put his sharecropping families on the chain gang if they boycott the Wallace Store.

In 1960, an African-American soul singer named Sam Cooke released a song called *Chain Gang*. The song is quite upbeat, but the lyrics talk of men spending their days working on the chain gang.

*All day long they work so hard
Till the sun is goin' down
Working on the highways and byways
And wearing, wearing a frown
You hear them moanin' their lives away
Then you hear somebody sa-ay*

*That's the sound of the men working on the chain ga-a-ang
That's the sound of the men working on the chain gang*

Find *Chain Gang* online and listen to how Sam Cooke describes the experience of working on the chain gang.

Then, write your own lyrics (or poem) about one of the themes in the novel. You could write about racism, slavery, inequality or injustice. You could also choose to write about a specific character or event in the novel. Be creative and have fun!



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Activity Six



Bonus Chapter

Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry ends with some uncertainty. T.J. is taken to jail with the possibility of being put on the chain gang or even killed. Much of the Logan cotton is burnt and the Wallaces are still angry at Papa and Mr. Morrison for injuring them and for trying to boycott their store. The novel does not end with a strong conclusion as many events are still left up in the air.

In groups, brainstorm the answers to the questions below:

- What happens to T.J.?
 - Is he killed?
 - Put on the chain gang?
 - Freed?
- What happens between the Wallaces and the Logans?
 - Do the Wallaces let go of their grudge?
 - Do the Wallaces get revenge on Papa and Mr. Morrison? If so, how?
- With some of their cotton burnt, how do the Logans make mortgage payments on the land?
 - Do they lose their land?
 - Do they sell it back to Mr. Granger?
 - Do they start sharecropping on Mr. Granger's land?
 - Do they find another way to make enough money to make the payment?
- How are the Logan kids affected by what they saw on that final night?
 - Do they choose to lay low and stay out of trouble?
 - Do any of them want to get revenge for T.J.?

Use your answers to these questions and any other ideas you may have to write a 13th chapter. You can do this individually or in a group. Your chapter may be more conclusive than the real ending or it may give the reader another set of questions to think about. Be prepared to share your bonus chapter with the class.

Bonus task: After hearing all of your classmates' bonus chapters, come together as a class and decide on a whole class bonus chapter. Take the best ideas from each group or person and create your class's bonus chapter.