

One Crazy Summer
Discussion Guide
Grades 4-6

Before Reading: to activate schema, build background knowledge, and set a purpose.

- Before reading, have a class discussion to activate prior knowledge about the 1960s and terms that correspond to the civil rights movement
- Frontload vocabulary (see vocabulary list)

During Reading: to engage students, check for understanding, and make connections.

- Shrink-a-Text*: Read a chapter, after each chapter, look at the title of the chapter and try to shrink it down to a sentence. Determine how the title of the chapter relates to its contents. Try to write the main idea of each chapter.
- What is Big Ma referring to when she told them to “act right”? (Ch. 1)
- Why do you think Delphine chose to place the money in her shoe? (Ch. 1)
- Describe Cecile Johnson and her relationship with the girls. (Ch. 2)
- What are the variations of a maternal figure and how do they treat their daughters. How does this apply to the girls? Who is Big Ma to the girls? (Ch. 2)
- How did the stewardess treat the two women? Do you think she was right to do this? (Ch. 3)
- How do you think Delphine feels about staying the summer with Cecile? (Ch. 4)
- Describe the girls living conditions with Cecile. (Ch. 4)
- How does Cecile feel about the girls? What does she say and how does it relate to the girls? (Ch. 4)
- Why do you think Cecile is guarding the kitchen? What do you think she is hiding? (Ch. 5)
- Explain what is happening in Cecile’s kitchen. (Ch. 6)
- Who are the Black Panthers and explain Cecile’s involvement. (Ch. 7)
- Describe Delphine’s character traits and how she is as a person. (Ch. 7)
- Predict why Cecile won’t call Fern by her name. (Ch. 8)
- What did Cecile give to Delphine and explain what happens at breakfast? (Ch. 9)
- Where did the girls have to go for breakfast? (Ch. 9)
- Why does Cecile have another name the Black Panthers refer to? Why does she choose this name? (Ch. 10)

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- Describe how Delphine feels about her name as well as what it means? (Ch. 11)
- What does the girl's morning routine look like living with Cecile? (Ch. 12)
- Why do you think Vionetta colored on Miss Patty Cake? What message is this implying? (Ch. 12)
- Why does Delphine take the girls to the grocery store instead of Mings? What does she intend on doing? (Ch. 13)
- How does Delphine use what she's learned at the center to change things around the house?(Ch. 14)
- How did Cecile respond to the girls asking for a television?(Ch. 19)
- Who was Bobby Hutton?(Ch. 20)
- What do you think the center was preparing the children for? How does Delphine feel about this?(Ch. 20)
- What does eating crow mean and why did Delphine have to do it?(Ch. 21)
- How was Delphine relating Vionetta's actions to Cecile's? (Ch. 23)
- Why do you think the family of 5 took a picture of the girls in Chinatown?(Ch. 24)
- Describe what happened when they returned to the green stucco house?(Ch. 25)
- Who helped the girls after Cecile was arrested?(Ch. 26)
- What was the meaning behind Fern's poem?(Ch. 29)
- How does Delphine stand up for herself? What's Cecile's backstory?(Ch. 31)

After Reading: to summarize, question, and reflect.

- **Micro-/Meso-/Macro Environment Systems: Levels of Setting*:** Notice the name and the aspects of a character's environment. This may be based on the author's information or on what you can infer based on text details. Then, think about which of these is important based on the conflicts that the character is experiencing.
- **Figurative Language Chart:** The author uses many types of figurative language to describe different scenarios throughout the story. Find some of the figurative languages, describe the type in which it is, and then describe how it relates to the story and what the author's intentions were for using them.

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If your students enjoyed this book...

- Encourage them to continue to discuss it and refer to it in other lessons and conversations.
- Let them explore more about the topic by reading other books with similar themes, structure, characters, or content.