

## College Book 2011

### The Help by Kathryn Stockett

#### **Chemistry**

P. 23 “. . . that old stinky white fella that live behind the feed store, the one lost his mind from drinking the shoe polish . . .”

What is it in shoe polish that caused this condition, if in fact it can?

#### **Child Development**

What do you think motivated Hilly? On the one hand she is terribly cruel to Aibileen and her own help, as well as to Skeeter once she realizes she can't control Skeeter. Yet she's a wonderful mother, or don't you agree? Do you think it is possible to be a wonderful mother and at the same time a deeply flawed person?

Do you think that had Aibileen stayed working for Miss Elizabeth, that Mae Mobley would have grown up to be racist like her mother? Do you think racism is inherent, or taught?

Do you think the author was Mae Mobley as a little girl?

#### **English**

Like Hilly, Skeeter's mother is a prime example of someone deeply flawed yet somewhat sympathetic. She seems to care for Skeeter— and she also seems to have very real feelings for Constantine. Yet the ultimatum she gives to Constantine is untenable; and most of her interaction with Skeeter is critical. Do you think Skeeter's mother is a sympathetic or unsympathetic character? Why?

How much of a person's character would you say is shaped by the times in which they live?

Do you believe that Minny was justified in her distrust of white people?

Do you think, had Aibileen stayed working for Miss Elizabeth, that Mae Mobley would have grown up to be racist like her mother? Do you think racism is inherent, or taught?

Do you think there are still vestiges of racism in relationships where people of color work for people who are white?

Can someone really understand what racism is like if they only have observed and not lived it?

Minnie's mother had a list of rules (pp. 38-39). What rules would have been on Skeeter's mother's list? On Hilly's list?

Do you think the author was Mae Mobley as a little girl?

### **History**

Find a primary source (something written at the time of the event) about Rosa Parks.

### **Psychology**

Do you think, had Aibileen stayed working for Miss Elizabeth, that Mae Mobley would have grown up to be racist like her mother? Do you think racism is inherent, or taught?

### **Sociology**

Do you think there are still vestiges of racism in relationships where people of color work for people who are white?

Can someone really understand what racism is like if they only have observed and not lived it?