

Discussion Questions

Chapter One

What do the items in Abby Kate's suitcase reveal about Texas life in the year 1900?

Why is Mrs. Linden so worried this particular morning?

Why does Abby Kate get off the train in Houston?

What do you think will happen next?

Chapter Two

What is her first impression of the members of the Wilson family?

What nickname has Houston earned, and why did it earn such a name?

What does the railroad conductor tell Abby Kate and Louis about the growth of the railroad?

Chapter Three

How did people keep food cold in 1900?

What do we learn about Abby Kate's relatives in this chapter?

What surprises Abby Kate the morning after she arrives in Galveston?

Abby Kate and her cousin Jane explore many parts of the island in this chapter. Which do you find most interesting?

Chapter Four

What does medical student Ian Blackwood tell the Linden girls regarding yellow fever?

What is Jane's newest hobby and how does the rest of the Linden family view it?

How does Abby Kate react to the letter from Austin? Why does she feel that way?

What happens at the beach?

Chapter Five

What is coquina stew, and how do you make it?

What does Uncle Robert tell the girls about the Civil War?

Describe where the different occupants of a 1900 clipper ship live and work. What job/position would you have wanted on the ship and why?

What role do outhouses play in this chapter?

Chapter Six

What do you think of the decision to go to the beach?

How does the author show you in this chapter that the storm is getting dangerous?

What do you think will happen next?

Chapter Seven

How did you feel about what happened in this chapter?

Is there anything you wish you could change?

What types of problems face the people of the island?

Chapter Eight

What similarities do you see between how communities dealt with disasters in 1900 as compared to current day?

How is it different today when disasters strike?

Do you think a hurricane like this could happen again?

Chapter Nine

Do Abby Kate's feelings in this chapter seem realistic to you?

What do you think will happen next?

Chapter Ten

What do you think of how the story ends?

Do you have any ideas for a different type of ending?

General Questions

What examples of foreshadowing can you find in the book? Is it effective at setting the stage for events that happen later in the story?

Does anything in the book remind you of your own life?