

## There Are No Children Here

### Second Quarter Book Assignment

Directions: As you are reading *There Are No Children Here* (by Alex Kotlowitz), you should answer the following question; ~~also, for each reading, cite one quote that you find relevant, telling, or important.~~

#### PREFACE

1. What is the background to the book?
2. Lafayette said, "If I grow up, I'd like to be a bus driver." What is telling about this quote?
3. Explain the title of the book.
4. How many children live in poverty? In the United States? In Chicago?

#### SUMMER 1987

##### Chapter 1

5. Briefly describe the family the book will be following.
6. What happened at the railroad tracks?

##### Chapter 2

7. Describe the city. What was there and what was no longer there?
8. Who is LaJoe? Describe her family.
9. Describe Henry Horner.
10. What are the differences and similarities between Pharoah and Lafayette?

##### Chapter 3

11. What was the controversy behind the 1949 housing issue?
12. What good memories did LaJoe have? What happened?
13. What was the population and crime rate in the city?
14. Describe their apartment.
15. James figured "the only way to make it out of Horner was 'to try to make as little friends as possible'." Explain.

##### Chapter 4

16. Describe the two sides of Jimmie Lee.
17. What did the gangs do in the neighborhood?
18. What was Lafayette's first encounter with death?

##### Chapter 5

19. Who is "Bird Leg"? What did he go? What happened to him?
20. What is your reaction to the last three lines of the chapter?

##### Chapter 6

21. "Denial is simply a means of survival here." Explain the context of the quote and provide your reaction.

#### FALL 1987 – SPRING 1988

##### Chapter 7

22. What was Pharoah's reaction to school? Why?
23. What kind of school discrimination occurred in Chicago?
24. Describe Suder Elementary school, including Principal Brenda Daigre.
25. What was Ms. Barone's effect on Pharoah?

##### Chapter 8

26. Why did Pharoah's friendship with Rickey seem odd to outsiders? (Be specific)
27. Why did Lafayette want his brother to hit him?

Chapter 9

28. What happened between LaJoe and Paul?
29. How did Terrence go from spoiled to ignored? What happened to him?
30. What crimes had Terrence committed?

Chapter 10

31. How much did LaJoe make per month? Where did the money go? How else did she make money to support the family?
32. Why was she being investigated?
33. What do the stories about Campbell and Dam highlight about inequity?

Chapter 11

34. Describe the jail and justice system in their area?
35. What happens in the visit?
36. What does Terrence tell Lafayette?

Chapter 12

37. What do you learn about Pharoah from the spelling bee experience?

**SUMMER 1988**

Chapter 13

38. Who is Craig and what did he do in Henry Horner? What does that say about the living experience there?
39. Was Terrence guilty of the crime? How do you know?
40. Why were they having a feast? (Hint: It's not because of three obvious answers!)
41. "And together, they wrote one of the rare success stories of Henry Horner Homes." Explain the context of this quote.

Chapter 14

42. What happened with Unica at the trial?
43. What happened at Lee's trial?
44. Why do you think the author included these stories?

Chapter 15

45. Explain the food trip?
46. Where did Pharoah go to clear his mind?

**FALL 1988 – WINTER 1989**

Chapter 16

47. What did Ricky and Lafayette do? What happened to them?

Chapter 17

48. How did kids earn money at games?
49. Why was the relationship between the stadium and neighborhood tense? The policy and neighborhood?
50. What happened between Lafayette and the police?
51. What was the "funky four corners" protest?
52. How does the conversation go between Pharoah and Paul?

Chapter 18

53. Where does LaJoe take the kids? What is the experience like for her? For them?
54. What happened to Terrence?

Chapter 19

55. What does she put on layaway?
56. What does the talent show reveal about the community?

57. Why was the week before the spelling bee a disturbing time for the family?

**SPRING 1989**

Chapter 20

58. What happened to Craig Davis?

Chapter 21

59. How does Pharoah do in the spelling bee? What is everyone else focused on at home?

60. What was curious about the killing?

Chapter 22

61. Why and how had Lafayette changed?

Chapter 23

62. What group did Rickey and Lafayette join?

63. What was Pharoah's new interest?

Chapter 24

64. What was the status of Terrence?

65. Who is Keith? What did he do and what happened?

Chapter 25

66. What did the CHA report reveal about Henry Horner?

67. What was happening in the neighborhood?

68. Why were Dawn and Demetrius still in Henry Horner?

**SUMMER 1989**

Chapter 26

69. Why was it a good few weeks for Pharoah?

70. Why did Pharoah want to "change a lot of rules"?

71. What reminded LaJoe of the true character of Horner?

Chapter 27

72. Who was Vincent Lane and what did he do?

73. What were the problems he had to deal with and what did he promise? Why couldn't things change?

Chapter 28

74. What happened to Lafayette?

75. What was the court hearing procedure like?

Chapter 29

76. What happened between Lafayette and his father?

Chapter 30

77. What is the symbolism behind Pharoah chasing the rainbow?

**SEPTEMBER 29, 1989**

Chapter 31

78. How did court go?

79. What do you learn about the legal process from this chapter?

Epilogue

80. Where are the main characters one year later?

81. How does the book end? Why do you think it ends this way?