Chapter Response Questions

Chapters I – V

Identifying Setting  RL.8.2

The setting of a novel refers to its time period and location. It usually changes as the story unfolds. Answer the following questions to identify the initial setting of Chains.

1. What dates do the first five chapters span?
   May 27, 1776
   May 29, 1776

2. In which colony does the story begin? To what city do Isabel and Ruth travel in Chapter IV?
   Rhode Island
   New York

3. Based on what you’ve read so far and what you know about the historical significance of this time period, why will the setting play an important role in the story?
   Revolution
   New York Harbor

Determining Point of View  RL.8.6

The point of view of a story refers to the perspective from which the story is told. Chains is told in the first person point of view because the story is narrated by a character (Isabel), we can only see her perspective, and the author uses the pronouns “I” and “me” when referring to the narrator.

4. Write down a quote that shows that the story is told from the first person point of view. Circle 1 – 3 words in that quote that signal the first person point of view.
   "I wiped the mist from my face." pg 25
5. Why do you think the author, Laurie Halse Anderson, chose to write this book from first person point of view?

we could see the story through Isabel’s eyes
Feel more connection

6. As a reader, what do you gain from the first person point of view? What do you lose?

gain connection to the text
lose what other characters think

**Discovering Imagery RL.8.4**

The author, Laurie Halse Anderson, uses a lot of figurative language, words and phrases that produce vivid images in the reader's mind. Re-read the following passages. Then draw a simple sketch of the image each passage produces in your mind.

7. ... Mr. Robert dropped the heavy coins into a worn velvet bag. The thudding sound they made as they fell to the bottom reminded me of clods of dirt raining down on a fresh coffin. (p. 23)

8. They kept moving us over the water, stealing us away from our ghosts and our ancestors, who cried salty rivers into the sand. (p. 25)

9. Now find your own passage (1 – 3 sentences) from the first five chapters that produces a particularly strong image in your mind. Copy the passage and draw a simple sketch. Then explain why that passage is so powerful to you.
Analyzing Primary Sources  RH.8.2

A primary source refers to first-hand information that was created at the time of an event. Primary sources can be newspaper articles, speeches, court documents, letters, etc. The author uses a primary source excerpt at the beginning of each chapter. These quotes sometimes foreshadow the plot, add historical content, or contrast the plot and history. As you read Chains, pay close attention to these quotes and think about why Halse Anderson placed them where she did.

10. **YOUTH IS THE SEED TIME OF GOOD HABITS, AS WELL IN NATIONS AS IN INDIVIDUALS.**
    *Thomas Paine, Common Sense (p. 3)*

   a. *Common Sense* was a pamphlet published in January 1776 urging American colonists to declare freedom from their British rulers. According to its author, Thomas Paine, what is the purpose of youth?

      Practice good habits

   b. How does Paine compare an individual’s youth with a nation’s youth?

      Young nation - practice what it wants to become

      Young person - """""""he """"

   c. Why do you think Halse Anderson would use this quote to begin Chains?

      Prior to revolution

11. Re-read the primary source excerpt for Chapter III (p. 13).

   a. What is this document?

      Newspaper advertisement for a run-away slave

      *Royal Gazette*

   b. Where was it printed?

      New York

   c. What does it reveal about slavery in colonial America?

      There was slavery in the North

   d. How does the primary source excerpt fit with this particular chapter?

      Isobel & Ruth should have been freed

      Think about running away
Chapter Response Questions

Chapters VI – X

Examining Characters  RL.8.3

Authors develop a believable and likable character by giving the reader information about his/her background, family life, personality traits, and feelings. We learn about the characters in a novel by examining what they think, feel, say, and do, as well as what others say and think about them.

1. Sketch a picture of how you envision Isabel. Around the picture, write four words describing what she's like. Under the picture, pull out a specific quote from the book that supports each word. For instance, for the word "brave," you might use this quote: "I kept my face still as a plaster mask, but inside my brainpan, thoughts chase round and round. By the time the men rose to leave, I knew what I had to do." (p. 61)

- Smart - pg 37  Feel - I should have kept my temper
- Honest - pg 38  I have no use for lies I can't take it
- Devoted - pg 38  Can I get back to my sister
- Proud - pg 39  The words tasted bitter

2. Write down five things you know about Ruth (age, disability, background). Then explain how Isabel feels about Ruth and use a quote from the book to support your answer.

- 5 yrs
- Seizures
- Slow learner
- Hard worker

3. Describe Curzon. Then explain what Curzon says he is fighting for.

- Short, black, earning, funny hat
- Patriots/Freedom

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Understanding History: Focus on New York RH.6-8.7

The city of New York played a strategic role in the American Revolution. On the eve of the war, New York was the second largest city in the colonies. The city took up about a square mile at the southernmost tip of current day Manhattan. The rest of Manhattan consisted of forest and marshes, as well as some farmland and large summer estates.

The city of New York also had a large slave population, about 20 percent of the city’s population by 1770. Like all slaves, city slaves had no rights and little protection from cruel treatment and inhumane living conditions. Slaves were not allowed to marry and children were frequently sold away from their parents. In New York, slaveholdings were small, usually one or two slaves who slept in the attic or cellar of the slave owner’s home.

Although in May of 1776, the Rebels still held control of the ports and city, there were rumors that a British invasion was imminent. The Loyalists that remained in the city, like the Locktons, tried to keep a low profile and hoped that a British fleet would land soon to relieve them.

4. Re-read pages 26 – 27. Choose 5 – 8 words or phrases that Halse Anderson and/or Patrick M’Robert use to describe the inhabitants of New York.

maids w baskets
cartmen pushing wares
gentry - rich

26–30,000
1/5 slaves

5. Based on what you know about New York, why might the British might have wanted to invade the city of New York?

important harbor

6. Re-read the primary source excerpt on page 26. What is Patrick M’Robert’s point of view on slavery in New York?

doesn’t like slavery
7. Re-read the primary source excerpt from Samuel Johnson on page 36. Why does Samuel Johnson find it ironic that the loudest calls for liberty come from slave owners?

People who own slaves are hollering for freedom

8. Re-read the primary source excerpt on page 62. What is Colonel Knox's point of view on New Yorkers? Do you think Isabel would agree with Knox? Why or Why not? Do you think the author, Laurie Halse Anderson, would agree with him?

magnificent/conceited/profane
sarcastic - doesn't like them