

Chapter 1: Noah explains the prominent role religion and attending church played in his life. Identify an important influence in your life and explain how it has affected you. Potential topics can be a role model, text, event, or ideology.

- Identify at least three influences.
- Select one and describe how that influence affected you. Be as specific as possible.
- Explain how the influence still affects you today.

Chapter 2: Noah writes about how his racial identity affected his relationship with his parents and situated him within his society. How does your identity affect your relationships and situate you within our community/society?

- List three words that describe your identity (could be racial, ethnic, gender, national, linguistic, spiritual, political, etc.).
- Select one, then
 - Explain how that identity has affected your relationships. Be as specific as possible.
 - Explain how that identity has situates you within our community/society. Provide a specific anecdote to illustrate your experience.

Chapter 3: Noah tells us a humorous story about a time he regretted his impulsive actions. Tell a story about a time you did something impulsive and later regretted your actions. Bonus points for making it humorous.

Chapter 4: Noah describes languages in South Africa as a hierarchy, where “English comprehension is equated with intelligence” (54). He explains: “I learned to use language like my mother did . . . It became a tool that served me my whole life” (55). He even asserts that “language, even more than color, defines who you are to people” (56). Select one of the following prompts:

- What role has language played in your life? Be as specific as possible and provide an anecdote to exemplify your experience.
- Noah has a natural talent for learning and using language to his advantage. What natural talent do you possess? How do you use this talent to your advantage? Provide a specific anecdote to exemplify your experience.

Chapter 5: In this chapter, we find out how Noah’s mother chose his name. Who chose your name? Why? What does it mean? How has your name affected you throughout your life? Include a specific anecdote to illustrate how your name has affected you.

Chapter 6: Noah’s childhood anecdotes exemplify his talents with rhetoric, curiosity, energy, and resilience. As a child, these characteristics often got him into trouble, but they also proved beneficial to him later in life. What are your characteristics that led you to cause trouble as a child but now prove to be beneficial to you?

- Identify at least three characteristics.
- Select one and write an anecdote demonstrating how that characteristic caused you trouble when you were a child.
- Explain why it is now beneficial to you. Be specific.

Chapter 7: In this chapter, Noah reveals his first heartbreak when he realizes his dog Fufi loves another boy; however, he learns a valuable lesson about relationships. Tell a story about a

time when you felt heartbroken. What valuable lesson did you learn from that experience? How have you applied that knowledge? Provide specific examples.

Chapter 8: Noah comes to the realization that "[r]elationships are built in the silences. You spend time with people, you observe them and interact with them, and you come to know them" (110). Today, when interactions between humans are often online not in-person, is there something missing from our relationships? Provide specific evidence and reasoning to support your position.

Chapter 9: Noah makes a decision to take advantage of Abel's propensity for violence to seek vengeance but later regrets his decision, demonstrating an exceptional level of insight and empathy. Tell a story about a time you made a decision you later regretted. Why did you regret your decision? What did you learn from the experience?

Chapter 10: Noah feels pressure to ask Maylene to be his Valentine due to social convention. He acquiesces despite his initial apathy toward her, and is soon caught up in hormonal excitement; however, in the end, Maylene leaves him feeling devastated. Had he been more confident in his own feelings and questioned the racism underlying the girls' insistence, he would have avoided the pain he felt in the end. Has there been a time in your life when you questioned a belief or idea? Why did you question it (or not)? What was the outcome? What did you learn from the experience?

Chapter 11: Noah uses his ingenuity to make money buying food for his peers. Describe a problem you've solved or a problem you'd like to solve. It can be an intellectual challenge, a research query, an ethical dilemma - anything that is of personal importance, no matter the scale. Explain its significance to you and what steps you took or could be taken to identify a solution.

Chapter 12: Noah recounts a time that he regrets not taking a chance by asking Zaheera to be his girlfriend. Recount a time when you chose to not take a chance. What stopped you? Why? If you could go back to that time, would you make a difference choice? Why or why not?

Chapter 13: Noah narrowly escapes expulsion from his school due to an ironic twist of fate. He realizes that the white authority figures have been betrayed by their own prejudices (159). Tell a story about a time you had pre-conceived notions about someone or something and they held you back from an experience. What was the outcome? What did you learn?

Chapter 14: Towards the end of the debacle that is Noah's matric dance, he comes to a realization about why Babiki will not get out of the car—she does not speak English. Suddenly, he sees the world from her perspective rather than wallowing in his own frustration and embarrassment. Recall a time when a realization you had sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.

Chapter 15: Noah comes to the realization that there is something missing from the saying, "Give a man to fish, and he'll eat for a day. Teach a man to fish, and he'll eat for a lifetime." Noah counters that the new fisherman can do little without a rod--knowledge is only part of the equation (190).

- Select a saying (also called a proverb, maxim, or adage) and explain what it means in your own words. It can be in a language other than English, but please translate.

- Then, identify a weakness of the saying (something it failed to consider) the way Noah did in chapter 15.
- Finally, explain how the saying (along with the missing element) applies to your own experience.

Chapter 16: Noah has an epiphany when, about to sell a stolen digital camera, he looks at the pictures on it and has second thoughts. He reflects, “In society, we do horrible things to one another because we don’t see the person it affects. We don’t see their face. We don’t see them as people. Which was the whole reason the hood was built in the first place, to keep the victims of apartheid out of sight and out of mind. Because if white people ever saw black people as human, they would see that slavery is unconscionable. We live in a world where we don’t see the ramification of what we do to others, because we don’t live with them” (221–22).

- What separates groups in our society (provide a specific example)?
- Are these structures in place with the intent to place barriers between groups of people? If so, why? If not, what is the reason for the barriers?
- What are the consequences of these structures? Who benefits? Who is harmed?
- What can be done to break down these barriers? How *are you* or *can you* be a part of the change?

Chapter 17: Noah prides himself on his ability to fit into a variety of situations and forge friendships with different groups of young people: “Ever the outsider, I created my own strange little world” (139). He continues, “Since I belonged to no group I learned to move seamlessly between groups. I was a chameleon, still, a cultural chameleon” (140). Later, when he is in a prison holding cell, he concludes that “racism exists, and you have to pick a side. You can say that you don’t pick sides, but eventually life will force you to pick a side” (240).

Identify how you act like a chameleon in your life (at least 3 examples), analyzing the benefits and costs of that ability to adapt to a number of situations.

Chapter 18: Noah explains that “[l]ove is a creative act. When you love someone you create a new world for them” (262). Noah’s mother opened his eyes to the opportunities he had in life, and in return, he created a “new world” for her as well.

How have you or will you create a “new world” for yourself and/or your loved ones? Describe a problem you've solved or a problem you'd like to solve. It can be an intellectual challenge, a research query, an ethical dilemma - anything that is of personal importance, no matter the scale. Explain its significance to you and what steps you took or could be taken to identify a solution.