

Surviving the Applewhites **Comprehension Questions**

Chapters 1-2

1. Why was Jake Semple famous? How long did it take Jake to get kicked out of Traybridge Middle School?
2. What is the name of the Applewhites' school? What was the name of their home?
3. Whose idea was it for Jake to attend the Creative Academy?
4. What did Jake learn about the power of words when he was 2 yrs. old?
5. Why were Jake's parents in jail?
6. Who/what was chasing Cordelia when Jake first saw her?
7. What does Zedediah do to show Jake that he is in charge?

Chapters 3-4

1. Why did E.D. feel that she was not a true Applewhite?
2. Why did Randolph decide to withdraw his three oldest children from public school?
3. Why did E.D. resent being told that Jake was to follow her plan?
4. Who greeted Jake on his first day at the Creative Academy?
5. Did Jake's appearance trouble Lucille? How do you know?
6. Where will Jake be staying? Describe his room.
7. Describe the school room.

Chapters 5-6

1. Why is E.D. upset over sharing her butterfly project with Jake?
2. Which butterfly is E.D. missing?
3. What does Zedediah tell Jake will be the most important thing he will learn?
4. What will happen to Jake if he goes back to Rhode Island?
5. Why was Jake worried about being sent to Juvie?
6. What does the banner in the classroom say? Why did it relate to Jake's problem?
7. Why did Jake decide to try and make the best of his stay at Wit's End?
8. How did Jake burn down his school?
9. Why did Randolph feel challenged by the opportunity to direct *The Sound of Music*?
10. What is Cordelia's semester project? What does Randolph want Cordelia to do for the production?

Chapters 7-9

1. Who is Sybil worried about after she hears the noise outside?
2. Who is Jeremy Bernstein, and why has he come to Wit's End?
3. What is Sybil's real name?
4. Why did Jeremy Bernstein make an extended visit to Wit's End?
5. Why did Jeremy want to make a documentary about the Applewhites?
6. Why did E.D. become angry after Jeremy's first dinner with the Applewhites?

Chapters 10-12

1. Why did Destiny waken Jake early in the morning?
2. Why wasn't Randolph able to supervise Jake's education on his first day at the Creative Academy?
3. What problems was Randolph having with the play?
4. What was the teaching portion of E.D.'s butterfly project?
5. What did Destiny do when he was left alone?
6. What is Jake's new responsibility in the Applewhite house?
7. Why did Jake begin to question his hair and clothes? What other aspects of his behavior were beginning to change? Why?
8. What lecture does Jake get when Lucille catches him smoking?
9. What happened when Jake went to smoke his last cigarette?
10. On page 87, the author writes "The Jake he knew, the Jake he had always been, was disappearing. And there was nothing – nobody – to put in his place." What does this mean? How is Jake changing and why?

Chapters 13-15

1. What is Jeremy Bernstein's book going to be about?
2. How did Randolph's decision to immerse himself totally in the play affect other family members?
3. Why was E.D. upset when Jake brought her a great spangled fritillary? Why did her reaction surprise Jake?
4. Why did Randolph ask Jake to come to his auditions?
5. What role does Randolph want Jake to play? What is Randolph's response to E.D. when she states that Jake is too small to play this role?
6. Why is Jake suddenly nervous? What do you think this shows about Jake?
7. Why did Zedediah offer advice to E.D.? What advice did he give her?

Chapters 16-17

1. What was Jake surprised when he saw the theatre?
2. How did Jake feel about Jeannie Ng's competition? How did he feel about his competition?
3. Why did Sybil insist that Winston attend *The Sound of Music* rehearsals?
4. Why did Sybil fear that the Traybridge Little Theatre board might cancel the show?
5. What is color-blind casting? Why is it important to Randolph? How does this transform his theatrical production? What do you think the author is saying about appearances and the way we judge people by them?
6. Who's coming to visit the Applewhites?

Chapters 18- 19

1. Why were a majority of people upset over Randolph's casting?
2. Who didn't complain about the casting?
3. Describe the guru.
4. How did Jake take advantage of Lucille's complaints about the garden pests?

5. How does Zedediah differ from the rest of the family as a teacher?
6. What did Jake decide to read instead of *A Midsummer's Night Dream*? Why?
7. Why did E.D. feel betrayed by her family's response to her computer problem? What did this attitude reveal about her character?
8. What problem is Sybil facing with her book?
9. Why did Randolph call another emergency meeting with the family?
10. How did the family members respond to Randolph's request for help with the play? Explain how each of the family members is going to assist Randolph.

Chapters 20-21

1. Who and what has adopted Jake?
2. What does Destiny call Jake?
3. Why did Destiny become Jake's responsibility?
4. Why were meals at Wits End better than usual?
5. Why was it critical for Jake to bring things to amuse Destiny at the rehearsal?
6. What events occur because of Destiny's boredom during two different rehearsals?
7. Why does Randolph have to find a new Gretel?
8. How did E.D. attempt to change Mrs. Montrose's mind about canceling the show?
9. Why did the family members pressure Randolph to go along with E.D.'s plan for Priscilla Montrose?

Chapters 22-24

1. Whom does Jake now have a crush on?
2. Why did Destiny release Wolfie and Hazel?
3. What does Wolfie do the first time that he is released?
4. Why was dinner with Mrs. Montrose and her daughter a complete disaster?
5. What happens the second time that Wolfie is released?
6. What do Jake and Destiny make for the butterfly to drink?
7. Who is Randolph going to cast as Gretel? What will Mrs. Montrose do because of this decision?
8. List two reasons why Jake is upset that the play may be canceled.

Chapters 25-26

1. Why did E.D. hope that the Applewhites would find a way to put on the play?
2. Why did Destiny put Kool-Aid in his hair?
3. Why was everyone at Wit's End angry with Randolph?
4. Name four complaints that the family gave to Randolph when he told them the play had been canceled.
5. Who was E.D. going to have to tell the play was canceled and why?
6. How did E.D. propose to rescue the production?
7. Describe Hal.
8. Why did Jake stop fixing his hair like it had always been?
9. How did Jake and Zedediah's shopping trip for props become a learning experience?

Chapters 27-28

1. What steps did E.D. take to ensure that her plan to move the play to the barn would succeed?
2. Why did Winston snarl at Jake?
3. Why is the bad press starting to bother Jake?
4. Describe Marcia Manning. Make sure that you include a physical description and a description of her behavior.
5. Why did Marcia Manning annoy everyone at Wit's End?
6. Why did Marcia decide to scrap the interview with Jake?

Chapters 29-30

1. How did the performers overcome the noise of the thunderstorm?
2. After the power dies, why would Rolf's (Jake's) final scene be ruined if E.D. had not been able to think of a solution to the problem?
3. How did E.D. overcome the power outage?
4. Why did Randolph begin to consider doing future productions at Wit's End?
5. What is Hal's new title?
6. Why did Jake decide to send a copy of a play review to his social worker in Rhode Island?
7. What happened to the producer of the TV spot and Marcia Manning?
8. What is E.D. going to put in her curriculum plan to fill the spot of the butterfly project?
9. What is Jake's answer to Zedediah's question of what brings him joy?
10. How does the play transform E.D. and Jake? Why is it such an important experience for each of them?