

Librarian/Book Club Guide for *Road to Tater Hill*

By Edith M. Hemingway

Discussion Questions

1. Have you lost someone in your life—a brother, sister, mother, father, grandparent, or friend? Did it help you to talk about the person or to go to a funeral? Why do you think it helped Annie to hold her rock baby?
2. What specific details make it clear that *Road to Tater Hill* takes place in 1963 and not the present day?
3. What do you think was Annie's biggest fear and why?
4. Why did Annie find it difficult to write her thoughts down in the journal?
5. Authors often use emotion to help readers connect with their characters. Look for scenes in the book where Annie felt grief, fear, anger, joy, freedom, or satisfaction. List some specific sensory details that helped you understand what Annie was feeling in those scenes.
6. Why do you think Annie started out liking blackberry jam, but by the end of the long day, she couldn't stand the taste or the smell? Have you ever associated a taste, sound, or smell with something that happened in your life? Write a short paragraph about it.
7. How did weaving become medicine for Annie? How was reading medicine for Miss Eliza?
8. What changes did Annie's friendship with Bobby go through during the course of the book?
9. Do you think Miss Eliza would have the chance for a fairer trial in the present day than she did back in the 1930s? Explain why...
10. Have you read any of Annie's favorite books? Make a list of your favorite books.

Cross-Curriculum Tie-ins

1. Language Arts – reading, journal keeping, poetry, creative writing
2. Social Studies – current events of 1963, the Kennedy presidency, North Carolina history, life in the Appalachian Mountains, social issues and justice
3. Health – family dynamics, depression, survival, determination, choices, prejudice, the grieving process
4. Music – Appalachian folk music, traditional American folk songs and spirituals, the mountain dulcimer (building from a kit, playing simple tunes)
5. Art – weaving on a simple loom
6. Science – Ecology of a mountain stream environment, geology - sedimentary rocks

Project Ideas

1. Find a poem that has special meaning for you and memorize all or part of it.
2. Keep a journal over the summer, a holiday, or the school year. Write down your thoughts, activities, and descriptions of places you go and add special mementos.
3. Think back to an event in your life that evoked strong emotion. Write about that event using specific tangible and sensory details, but never actually stating the emotion, such as anger, joy, fear, grief, jealousy, guilt, etc. See if your friends or teacher can guess the emotion you were feeling.

Recipe

Blackberry Yummies

A perfect treat for summertime or in the winter with frozen blackberries!

You will need:

3 tbsp butter or margarine	½ tbsp ground cinnamon
1 cup white sugar	1 pinch ground mace or nutmeg
1 egg	2 tbsp distilled white vinegar
1½ cups sifted all-purpose flour	1/3 cup apple juice
½ tsp salt	1¼ cup fresh or frozen blackberries
1 tsp baking soda	

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Lightly grease one 8x8-inch baking pan. In a large bowl, beat the butter/margarine and sugar together until light and fluffy. Add the egg and beat well. Combine the flour, salt, baking soda, cinnamon and mace/nutmeg. Add the flour mixture to the sugar mixture and stir to combine. Mix in the vinegar and juice. Fold in the blackberries. Pour batter into the prepared pan and bake at 325 degrees for 35 to 40 minutes. Let cool in pan and cut into squares.

Makes 16 2-inch square servings.