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American Studies English

*The Color Purple*

**Guided Reading Questions**

**Pages 43-61**

As you read *The Color Purple*, respond to the following questions. These questions will help you identify key ideas and details from the text. **When you respond,** **please write down the page number where you located the answer to each question.**  This will help you during activities, writing assignments, and class discussion.

1. What has happened to Shug Avery? What other rumors are circulating?
2. What is revealed about Mr.’s character when he doesn’t stand up for Shug in church?
3. Why do you think Celie wants to change her dress when Mr.’s wagon returns after five days?
4. How does Mr. introduce Shug to Harpo?
5. When Shug first arrives at Mr.’s home, how is she described? How does Celie react to her appearance?
6. What is the first thing that Shug says to Celie? How do you think that makes Celie feel?
7. How does Shug speak to Mr. when he visits her in her room? How does this contrast to Celie’s relationship with Mr.?
8. Why is it significant when Mr. says to Celie “You don’t want her here, just say so”? (48).
9. What does Mr. say about Shug that makes him tear up?
10. How many children do Shug and Mr. have together?
11. Why does Celie stare at Shug when she gives her a bath?
12. Consider what we learn about Shug’s children. Where are they? What do Celie and Shug have in common?
13. Why do you think Shug rejects Celie’s offering of “ham, grits, eggs, biscuits, coffee, sweet milk or butter milk, flapjacks. Jelly and ham” (51) and demands coffee and a cigarette?
14. How does Celie get Shug to eat breakfast?
15. How do you think Celie feels when Shug tells her that the song she is humming is “Something you help scratch out my head.” (53)?
16. Who is Old Mr.?
17. How does Old Mr. feel about Shug?
18. How does Old Mr. treat Mr.? What connection can you make between their relationship and the relationship between Mr. and Harpo?
19. Who is Tobias?
20. Why does Tobias come to visit?
21. How long has Shug been staying with Mr. and Celie?
22. At the end of page 57 Celie says, “For the first time in my life, I feel just right”(57). What has changed in Celie’s life that allows her to say this?
23. The name of the quilt pattern that Celie and Sophia use is “Sister’s Choice” (58). What does this suggest about the relationship between Celie and Sophia?
24. What does Sofia reveal about Harpo’s new eating habits?
25. According to Sofia, what does Harpo like to do around the house? What does she like to do around the house?
26. Why do you think Harpo might be trying to bulk up by eating so much?
27. What does Sofia wear when she does work around the house? What might be the significance of this?