

# ***The Bean Trees* Figurative Language Journals**

**Figurative language** uses a concrete image to express an abstract idea through a comparison to something else.

**For each journal you will be expected to find three examples of figurative language from within the chapters for that quiz.**

Your journal responses should include:

- 1) The figurative language example, page number, and the type of figurative language: e.g. metaphor, simile, analogy, symbolism, personification.
- 2) A sentence explaining what effect or what purpose the figurative language has on the narrative, characters, or setting.

**SIMILE:** A simile is an *explicit* comparison using *like* or *as*.

**METAPHOR:** A metaphor is an *implicit* comparison between two objects (that does not use *like* or *as*).

**ANALOGY:** An extended metaphor used for the purpose of clarification.

**PERSONIFICATION:** Using personification allows a writer to give an inanimate object a human quality.

**SYMBOLISM:** Most works of literature contain various symbols within them. These are concrete objects that become loaded with more than their literal meaning and usually have an important relation to a theme of the work. Symbols can be universal (these take on a similar meaning in all literature) or particular (these take on a unique meaning for the individual piece of literature).

## ***Questions to think about--you do not need to answer them in your journal.***

### Questions for Chapters 1-3

- What is Missy's attitude toward dreams?
- What does Missy's mother mean when she says, "A person isn't nothing more than a scarecrow"?
- What does Missy/Taylor mean when she writes, "I found my head rights, Mama. They're coming with me."
- Why does Lou Ann think about problems but do nothing about them?
- On page 34 Lou Ann says, "You never know what kind of thing could be down there under the water." What does she mean? How is Lou Ann's attitude different from Taylor's?
- Taylor says of Turtle, "Just don't let her get hold of anything you do't want to part with." What might she be saying about the expectations of all children and about her relationship with Turtle?
- What does Taylor mean when she says, "In Tucson, it was clear that there was nobody overlooking us all"?

### Questions for Chapters 3-6

- What does this say about Missy's idea of dreams: "You'll see the big ones the ones nobody was ever going to hook, slipping away under the water like dark-brown dreams"?
- Explain what Missy's mother means when she says, "A person isn't nothing more than a scarecrow."
- Missy/Taylor says, "in Kentucky you could never see too far since there were always mountains blocking the other side of your view, and it left you the chance to think something good might be just over the next hill." What does this tell us about her attitude toward life and her future?
- What does Missy/Taylor mean when she writes, "I found my head rights, Mama. They're coming with me"?
- Why does Lou Ann think about problems, but not do anything about them?
- On page 34 Lou Ann says, "You never know what kind of thing could be down there under the water." What Does she mean? How is Lou Ann's attitude different from Taylor's? (see question 1)
- Taylor says of Turtle, "Just don't let her get hold of anything you don't want to part with." What might she be saying about the expectations of all children and about her relationship with Turtle?
- What does Taylor mean when she says, "In Tucson, it was clear that there was nobody overlooking us all"?

### Questions for Chapters 4-6

- In what ways is Lou Ann's self consciousness revealed in the novel? Why does she feel so negatively about herself? Can you identify with her in any way?
- List some of the problems Taylor encounters as a single parent?
- Why does it bother Lou Ann that her mother focuses on the line of a hymn which says, "All our sins and griefs to bear"?
- Explain what Taylor means when she says of the airplane stewardess, "I remember just how she looked hanging onto that rope. Like Turtle."
- Explain Mattie's comment: "'That's the cycle of life, Taylor, The old has to pass on before the new can come around.'"
- What does the following suggest to Taylor: "Please note: Parts are included for all installations, but no installation requires all of the parts"?

### Questions for Chapters 7-16

- What is the difference between heaven and hell according to Estevan's story. What secret have the people in heaven discovered?
- Explain what is miraculous about the Miracle of Dog Doo Park.
- Explain what Taylor means when she says, "[. . .] trees full of bird sounds made you sense the world differently. That life didn't just stop at eye level."
- Why doesn't Taylor want to think of or live in a world where people have to make choices" like the one Estevan and Esperanza made?
- What did Taylor learn in Nutter school?
- What truth has Taylor been avoiding that, had it been a snake, "could have bitten [her] a long time ago"?
- Mattie says that "things that looked dead were just dormant." What double meaning might this have? What might it foreshadow?
- What is unique about the night-blooming cereus? What ideas does it represent?
- Why does a sunset make Taylor sad? What does that show about her?
- Taylor says, "All four of us had buried someone we loved in Oklahoma." What does she mean?