



## **EYES BEHIND BELLIGERENCE QUESTIONS**

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- 1.) Why do you think the beginning of the novel starts with a suicide? And how does it bring out the cultural prejudices?
- 2.) Compare Russell's friendships between Dave and Leo and why do you think he is friends with both?
- 3.) How does Mr. Yoshimura demonstrate his leadership in the community? And how is it taken away after Pearl Harbor?
- 4.) Why does Maria's father distrust Russell and how does his distrust impact their relationship?
- 5.) The introduction of Katsuji at Jim's house begins with agitation and arrogance. What role does Katsuji play in the development of the pro-Japan movement? And what points are understandable to Katsuji's plight of being a Kibei?
- 6.) There is some dispute about the Hamaguchi's Samurai sword. How is the respect of the sword handled between the local police and the F.B.I. and why do you think there is a contrast?
- 7.) The Yoshimuras and Hamaguchis have different family cores. In what ways make these two families contradictory in values even though they are from the same community?
- 8.) Why do you think Russell tries to help out Jim when Jim is beaten by the school's bully even though they are not friends at this point?
- 9.) How do you think the death of Jim's brother has impacted him to the point that when Jim is sent to the principal's office he doesn't defend himself? And how does it continue to resonate throughout the novel?
- 10.) How do you see the symbolism of the photo that hangs in Jim's room of his ancestor and the implications of clashing cultures?
- 11.) How do you see the irony of arriving at Manzanar on April 1st?
- 12.) Mr. Woodard is a historical figure, as well as General DeWitt, Dorothea Lange, Fred Korematsu, and Ansel Adams. How are these real figures relevant to the storyline?
- 13.) The color yellow is frequently intertwined throughout the novel. What do you think it represents?
- 14.) How do the camp's conditions affect the characters physically and morally?

15.) *Little Women* and *Of Mice and Men* are mentioned in the book. What do you think the significance of these references to gender and friendship mean between the characters?

16.) At what point in the novel do Jim and Russell finally become friends? And how does their shared experiences solidify their friendship?

17.) Why do you think Russell befriends someone like Shig? And why does Russell choose to make Shikami his enemy?

18.) Why do you think Russell wants to shed off his Japanese traditions so badly? And at what point does he decide to embrace them?

19.) How would you describe Jim's relationship with his father and how it changes after years of separation?

20.) Describe the conflicts between the Japanese-American community in regards to gender, generational gaps, where a person was born, and other races. Discuss the cultural differences between Japanese traditions and American ideals.

21.) How are Russell's love interests different and why is he attracted to both? What makes each girl unusual in the Japanese traditional sense of courtship?

22.) Why is Jim leery about wanting to date Tomiko? And what is it about their past which unites them?

23.) Sadaye has a love interest via letter writing. Why would it be forbidden for her to engage in such a romance?

24.) What do you think the canary in Jim's dream symbolizes?

25.) Why is the Terminal Island Gang so feared?

26.) Why are the Zoot Suits greeted with great apprehension within the community?

27.) When Tom joins Ted Tanka's group, how do you see the prejudices within their own community?

28.) There is a common theme about changing identities, therefore what do you think the growth of Tom's mustache represents? And what does it mean when he finally shaves it off?

29.) While Mr. Yoshimura is awaiting trial in Montana, why do you think his own people grow resentful towards him?

30.) When do you start seeing political problems inside Manzanar? And what are the events that lead up to the riot?

31.) What roles do Director Bridges, Assistant Director Petty, Katsuji, Sadaye, Ted, Saburo, and Choichi play in the development of the riot?

32.) How does the aftermath of the riot transform Russell, Jim, Ikki, Tom and Rose?

33.) Compare the bitterness Mr. and Mrs. Hamaguchi harbor for each other and how it contrasts based on their gender.

34.) Morning Glories are mentioned in Jim's dream and are given as a gift by Tomiko. What do you think these flowers represent?

35.) Describe the mixed reactions when an army recruiter tries to enlist men into the military.

36.) What significance do you see when Russell makes the references to Andy Rooney being short and still was able to establish a career? How does Russell wish to make that connection? Particularly in American culture where men who have strength and power are often tall and white?

37.) What are the reasons the Bainbridge Islanders want to leave Manzanar and relocate to Minidoka? Why do you think they never quite felt comfortable living in the same space as those from California? And why was Russell reluctant to tell his Californian friends about the move?

38.) What is the significance of Russell standing up to Callis?

39.) When Rose is asked if she is Korean, why doesn't she correct the passenger?

40.) How does Russell feel when reuniting with the rest of his family in Minidoka?

41.) Describe the mixed reactions to the questionnaire that is required of everyone to answer and what is the purpose of this questionnaire?

42.) Even though Jim has been separated from his father for quite some time, in what ways does he start emulating his father but is oblivious to it? In what ways is he still different from his father?

43.) What is the fight about between Jim and Russell and how do their decisions about their future formulate a rift in their friendship?

44.) Parts four and five greatly tie up the family connection. How does this unify identity and community relations?

45.) At what point does Jim finally stand up for himself?

46.) Even in boot camp, why do you think there still is prejudice within their unit? Especially Shig who is distrustful of Roku?

47.) With the understanding of the Quaker's past as peacemakers in American history, how does their influence continue to help the Japanese-American camps? How does that make them different from the rest of American society?

48.) Aside from the racism that Russell encounters, other forms of racism are apparent. How are these experiences similar and different for Russell and Shig while in Mississippi?

49.) How do you see the irony of Mr. North's name who lives in the South?

50.) At what point does Russell finally stand up for what he believes in? How does he handle the situation with Earl Ray, Shig, and the young woman whom he meets at the USO?

51.) What is the importance of Kunio joining the MIS (Military Intelligence Service)? And how would this experience help him accept his dual heritage?

52.) How do you sense Mr. Hamaguchi's disappointment with his life at the funeral?

53.) What is the significance of Jim replacing his brother's memory with Russell's friendship?

54.) How does Bethany feel isolated while sitting in her classroom? And how does she feel with all the changes going on around her while she is still stuck in camp?

55.) How does Jim take on responsibilities at Tule Lake which emulate following his father's path in the Japanese-American community?

56.) Describe the encounter between Jim and Shikami and how they regard each other differs from their experiences in Manzanar.

57.) Compare Russell's and Shig's reactions of Dachau in correlation to their familiarity with American concentration camps.

58.) Ikki has a very different perspective of the war. How does it contrast with Russell's view?

59.) How has Russell's war experience led him to choose to use his birth name again?

60.) Why would the circumstances be different for Shig and Russell to take war trophies from dead Germans than if they were to take them from Japanese soldiers?

61.) How does Mr. Hamaguchi finally let go of his experiences in camp?

62.) Why does Jim feel compelled to leave the U.S. for Japan? And how does his view differ from that of Tomiko?

- 63.) What is the significance of Kunio reuniting with his mother's side of the family?
- 64.) There are two references about using sand as metaphors for both Kunio and Goro. How are these relevant to paying homage to returning to one's birthplace?
- 65.) When Goro encounters Leo again on the ferry, how have the dynamics of their childhood relationship changed?
- 66.) While Jim is in limbo as to where he should go after leaving Tule Lake, his father makes a visit. How has their relationship changed?
- 67.) There is a constant referral to making promises. What does each of these promises mean and how do they reflect the development of the characters?
- 68.) There's a list of cultural references throughout the novel such as "Sold American," "The Shadow," "Little Orphan Annie," *The Letter*, *My Favorite Spy*, *The Human Comedy*, "You're a Sap Mr. Jap," "All God's Chuldrun's Got Rhythm," "Let's Get Away from it All," Lon Cheney, *The Odyssey*, *The Great Dictator*, *Born Free and Equal*, "Don't Fence Me In" and "Sentimental Journey." These were chosen to represent other themes. What do you think each reference represents in regards to the development of the story?
- 69.) What is the significance of Goro's family Samurai word being returned?
- 70.) What is the significance of Jim cashing in Bush's apology check?

Complimentary to the book, a documentary about the Manzanar experience:  
***Blood in the Sierras: Manzanar's Mutiny*** on YouTube

