

HOW THE WATER FALLS QUESTIONS

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1. The opening of the book introduces the main characters after a series of non-main characters at the Truth and Reconciliation trials. What do you think this structure establishes for story development? How does it carve out the historical drama which affects Joanne, Lena, and Hans?
2. What is the connection of “The Little Drummer Boy” in chapters One and Twenty-Four that foreshadows Jared’s fate?
3. Discuss the psychological references to Jim Jones, *The Three Faces of Eve*, and the Stanford experiment and how they pertain to the mindset of Jared.
4. How do the historical and political references, (such as Steve Biko, Robert Sobukwe, Botha, de Klerk, the Mandelas, Vlakplass, *Vrye Weekbald*, Ruth First, Helen Suzman, Anton Lubowski, Albie Sachs, the storming of the Trade Centre, and the Boipatong massacre,) tie into the progression of the story?
5. Why would Lena compare her situation in the townships similar to that of the Holocaust?
6. There is gender discrimination throughout the book. Discuss the differences and similarities between Joanne and Lena based on their races.
7. Define the stereotypes among the black Africans, Afrikaners, and white Africans who are of English heritage.
8. What historical moments have indicated the dismantling of apartheid?
9. Why does the African National Congress (ANC) and the Inkatha

Freedom Party (IFP) dislike each other? And how does Hans use this dislike to his advantage?

10. Give samples of how corruption had worked under apartheid.
11. At what point does the relationship change with Joanne and Jared?
12. Discuss the process to which both Lena and Jared heal from their traumas. Why should their experiences be compared despite coming from entirely different backgrounds?
13. Why did Lena wish to remain a virgin for so long? And why did it take her so long to trust men?
14. Compare the results when Joanne went to trial with Hans versus when Lena went to trial with Hans. Why were the results different?
15. How has Joanne influenced changes within Jared?
16. Why is the relationship between Jared and Hans violent? How do their viewpoints differ despite coming from the same upbringing? What events have caused changes in their relationship?
17. What role does Father Mulalo play? What does he represent in the story? And how does his message of peace contrast to the surrounding friction within the townships?
18. Compare the direction to which Lena takes after the 1976 riots to that of Bheki. Why did each take different paths? And in what ways did their fates almost parallel?
19. Although written in third person omniscient, Lena, Robert, Jared, Topsy, Joanne, and Hans have personal stories they shared. How do their stories connect to each other and the formation of plot development?
20. The scene with Seema unveils the presence of Indians in society. Although in the minority, what historical influences do Indians have

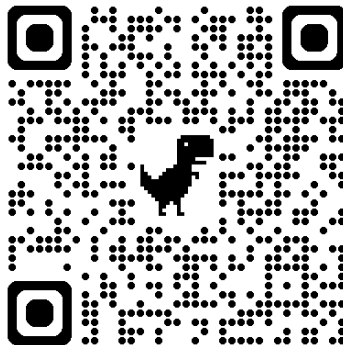
within South African culture? And how do those influences partake under the apartheid system?

21. Discuss how the color orange is symbolic in the novel, and how Lena understands its philosophical significance.
22. How is Adriaan both helpful and contrary toward Joanne's ideals?
23. Sicelo and Topsy are both informants, but how do they differ in beliefs? And how did both come to work for Hans?
24. There are references to "responsibility" in the novel. How do the characters define "responsibility" or provide excuses for not taking "responsibility" against inequality and corruption?
25. What do you think the message of this novel means? What lessons are to be learned from it?

How The Water Falls Project: Legacy of South Africa's Apartheid

This book, although based on real historical content and people, is a work of fiction. Take a look at the inspiration behind the motivation of the novel.

"Water is life. Without the flow of water, there can only be death."



CHARACTERS



Joanne Carey: Her character personifies the need to question and investigate apartheid's corruption from a white reporter's perspective. Although her intentions begin with idealism, no matter how naïve, as the years pass while the system is failing, she crosses the threshold of what it means to be caught up inside the belly of the beast.



Lena Skosana: As a banned activist who is inspired by her predecessors such as Steve Biko and Nelson Mandela, she is among the minority of black women to peacefully battle for equality, even if her struggle is indicative of sacrificing her health and safety. She and Joanne eventually become friends through their interviews together.



Colonel Hans Borghost: He is Johannesburg's Commissioner of Police who, like all those before, has a military background before pursuing a law enforcement career. Violent, manipulative, and controlling, he incarnates the image of South Africa's perpetrators.



Jared Borghost: He is the younger brother of Hans, and like his brother, has a military background; but unlike Hans, he internally combats between his sense of duty and morality. His inconsistency indicates a conscience that leaves one to ponder whether Jared is either a perpetrator or victim or both. As his surname suggests, Bor-GHOST represents the "ghosts" that haunts the family's past. He later becomes Joanne's lover.



Johannes Mkize: He is Lena's love interest who is a widower with two children and business owner. He helps Lena with her emotional healing.



Wanda: She is Joanne's aunt who works for the Black Sash which is a group of white middle class women who are socially and politically motivated to help the black communities.



Adriaan Venter: He is the chief editor of *The Daily Harbour* and is Joanne's boss. He is both contrary and supportive toward Joanne's articles while contending with censorship and harassment from the police.



Robert Mlambisi: A co-worker of Joanne's, one of the few black reporters working for a white newspaper, who is friends with both Joanne and Lena.



Chris Fields: He is a pessimistic photojournalist who is attracted to Joanne and is Jared's rival.



Sicelo: He is a veteran informant who has been working for Hans since the 1976 Soweto massacre.



Bheki Goniwe: Unlike Lena, he descends down a more radical and violent path for the fight of freedom. His life sporadically intertwines the lives of the Borghost family, often leaving behind death and destruction as much as the Borghost name has left behind in the black communities.



Topsy: He is a younger informant who often partners-up with Sicelo, and is the cousin of Bheki. He is also a part of the Inkatha Freedom Party, a Zulu political branch that used to be an opposing force to the ANC (African National Congress.) Historically the Inkathas were a violent party that inflicted much damage within the black townships from 1984-1994.



Father Mulalo: When Lena rejoins the church, he becomes her best advocate for peaceful protests. He represents the church movement that became politically active under apartheid.