

A Novel Study Guide

The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate

Content ⇒ Process ↓	People	Places	Events	Themes	Connections within the novel and with the readers experience.	Structure and Methods (Use of a range of reading strategies)
Knowledge In The Book: Right There			What is “Chicago’s Finest Wind Machine”?	What is in the jar on Granddaddy’s shelf and how is it significant to the story?		
Comprehension In the Book: Think and Search	This novel is set in 1899. We learn a lot about Granddaddy through his war stories, but he never mentions the name or purpose of the war (p. 40). Which war did he fight in? How do you think Granddaddy’s experiences in that war affect his relationship with Viola? Do you find their relationship to be unusual for that time? How does Viola fit into the Tate family?	Much of the book’s action is set in the heat of the summer. How might the weather affect the characters?	Viola calls Calpurnia “Miz” (p. 224) for the first time as she instructs her to mix the ingredients to make apple pie. As Calpurnia is introduced more and more into womanhood by her mother and other women in her life, how do you think her relationship with Viola changes?	What is the first thing Callie will learn to bake? What would you like to learn to cook?		Jacqueline Kelly uses rich vocabulary throughout <i>The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate</i> , and you may not be familiar with all the words. Write down any unfamiliar words and find out the meaning of the following words. efficacious (pg. 230) debacle (pg. 247) pestiferous (pg. 3)
Analysis & Application In My Head: Author and Me			Calpurnia is the only daughter of six sons. She is expected to learn cooking, sewing, knitting and other domestic skills to be a good wife and mother. Why does Calpurnia struggle with her mother about a woman’s role in the household?	?	Why do you think the author chose <i>The Evolution of Calpurnia Tate</i> as the title of the book?	A simile is a literary device that uses “like” or “as” to compare two things. How does Calpurnia use similes? Find some examples in the book. How do Calpurnia’s similes help readers understand her character and the story?
Synthesis In My Head: On My Own	Throughout the novel, Calpurnia is always claiming Granddaddy and Harry as “mine” (p.		In chapter 8, Granddaddy and Calpurnia examine a fuzzy, probably			

	<p>166) and she is always nervous when other people come between her and them. Why does she react this way?</p>		<p>poisonous, caterpillar. When Calpurnia questions the “sting” (p. 109) of the caterpillar, Granddaddy replies, “I suppose you could touch him and find out. Which raises an interesting point: How far are you willing to go in the name of science?” (p. 109). How does this question relate to</p>			
<p>Evaluation In My Head: On My Own</p>			<p>The year 1900 begins with a rare snow storm. What does this symbolize for Calpurnia and her family? Do you think that Calpurnia will continue her observations in science or do you think she is going to become the woman her mother wants and expects her to be?</p>			