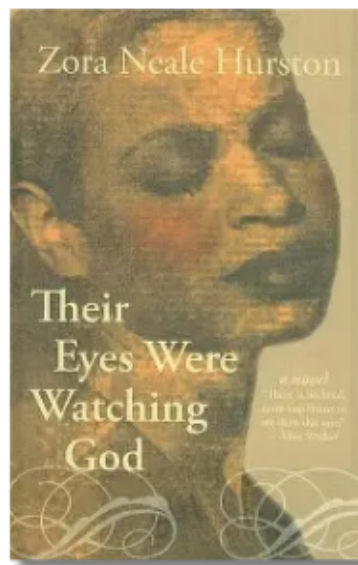


# THEIR EYES WERE WATCHING GOD

*Zora Neale Hurston*



## **RESOURCE GUIDE**

***Reading + Writing + Analysis***

**NO PREP**

**PRINT & GO**

**HIGH SCHOOL ELA**

# About the Text

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*Their Eyes Were Watching God* tells the story of Janie Crawford as she reflects on her life, relationships, and journey toward independence. Growing up in the early 1900s, Janie searches for love, identity, and a sense of purpose while navigating expectations placed on her by society and the people around her.

Through her experiences, the novel explores how voice, choice, and personal growth shape identity. Janie's journey shows how finding your own path often requires challenging expectations and learning from life's experiences.

# Section Breakdown

- **Section 1: Chapters 1–4**

Introduction to Janie, her background, and early ideas about love and identity

- **Section 2: Chapters 5–9**

Life with Joe Starks, control, and loss of voice

- **Section 3: Chapters 10–15**

Meeting Tea Cake, new love, and freedom

- **Section 4: Chapters 16–20**

Conflict, loss, and Janie's growth and self-realization

# *Comprehension Questions:*

## *SECTION 1: Chapters 1–4*

1. How is Janie introduced at the beginning of the novel?

2. What does Janie's conversation with Pheoby reveal about her story?

3. How does Nanny influence Janie's early life?

4. What does the pear tree symbolize for Janie?

5. Why does Janie marry Logan Killicks?

# Quick Discussion

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## Time to Reflect

*How do early experiences shape a person's identity?*

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# *Comprehension Questions*

## *SECTION 2: Chapters 5–9*

1. How does Joe Starks change Janie's life?

2. What role does Eatonville play in the story?

3. How does Joe treat Janie in their marriage?

4. What does Janie begin to realize about her voice?

5. What conflict develops between Janie and Joe?

# *Quick Discussion*

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## **Time to Reflect**

*Why is having a voice important in relationships?*

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# *Comprehension Questions*

## *SECTION 3: Chapters 10–15*

1. Who is Tea Cake, and how does he differ from Janie's previous husbands?

2. How does Janie's life change with Tea Cake?

3. What does Janie learn about love in this section?

4. How is freedom shown in Janie's relationship?

5. What challenges begin to appear?

# Quick Discussion

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## Time to Reflect

*How can love change a person's sense of freedom?*

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# *Comprehension Questions*

## *SECTION 4: Chapters 16–20*

1. What major events occur during the hurricane?

2. How does the setting impact the characters?

3. What conflict arises between Janie and Tea Cake?

4. How does Janie respond to loss and hardship?

5. How does Janie's journey come full circle?

# Quick Discussion

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## Time to Reflect

*How do difficult experiences lead to personal growth?*

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# HISTORICAL CONNECTION

## **Early 20th Century Black Life & Community**

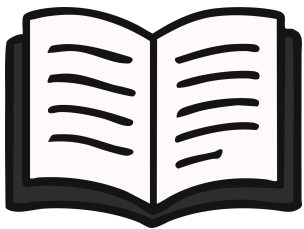
The novel reflects life for Black Americans in the early 1900s, including the development of all-Black towns like Eatonville and the impact of social expectations on women.

## **Connection to the novel:**

Janie's journey shows how race, gender, and community shape identity and opportunity.

# Writing Prompts

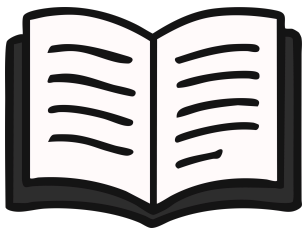
**Choose one activity to complete.**



How does the novel show the relationship between fear and decision-making?



How does environment shape Bigger's identity?



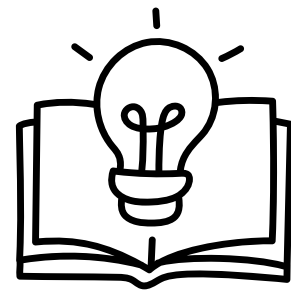
What message does the novel communicate about power and control?

# *Understanding the Big Ideas*

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**This story explores:**

- **Identity and self-discovery**
- **Voice and independence**
- **Love and relationships**
- **Power and freedom**



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***How does Janie's journey reflect her search for identity and independence? Use examples from the novel to support your response.***

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# Final Project

## **Choose One:**

- Analyze Janie's character development
- Compare Janie's three relationships
- Create a presentation on the novel's themes

# Character Notes