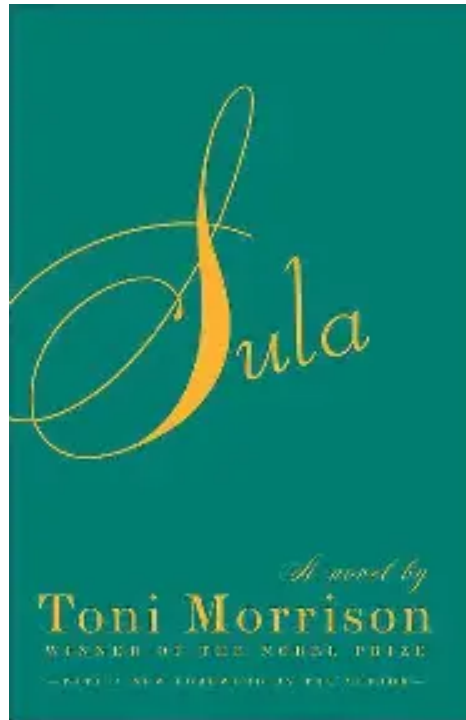


SULA

Toni Morrison



RESOURCE GUIDE

Reading + Writing + Analysis

NO PREP

PRINT & GO

HIGH SCHOOL ELA

About the Text

Sula tells the story of Sula Peace and Nel Wright, two girls growing up in a close-knit Black community known as the Bottom. As they grow older, their friendship is shaped by personal choices, expectations, and the pressures of their environment.

Through their relationship, the novel explores identity, independence, and how different life paths can affect both individuals and communities. The story highlights how choices, loyalty, and self-definition influence personal growth.

KEY THEMES

- Friendship and loyalty
- Identity and self-definition
- Community and belonging
- Choices and consequences
- Good vs evil

BEFORE YOU READ

- What makes a strong friendship?
- Can people grow apart and still care about each other?
- How does a community shape identity?
- What happens when someone challenges social expectations?

Section Breakdown

Section 1: 1919–1921

Introduction to the Bottom, Sula and Nel's childhood

Section 2: 1922–1937

Growth, identity, and changing relationships

Section 3: 1937–1941

Conflict, betrayal, and consequences

Section 4: 1941–1965

Reflection, loss, and understanding

Comprehension Questions:

SECTION 1

1. What is the Bottom, and how is it described?
2. How are Sula and Nel introduced?
3. What differences exist between Sula's and Nel's families?
4. How does their friendship begin?
5. What early experiences shape their identities?

Quick Discussion

Time to Reflect

How do childhood experiences influence identity?

Comprehension Questions

SECTION 2

1. How do Sula and Nel begin to change as they grow older?
2. What choices does Sula make that set her apart?
3. What tensions begin to develop?
4. How does Nel's life path differ from Sula's?
5. How does the community view both characters?

Quick Discussion

Time to Reflect

Why do people sometimes choose different paths in life?

Comprehension Questions

SECTION 3

1. What major conflict occurs between Sula and Nel?
2. How does this conflict impact their friendship?
3. How does the community respond to Sula?
4. What consequences follow Sula's choices?
5. How does Nel react to the situation?

Quick Discussion

Time to Reflect

*How can one decision change
a relationship?*

Comprehension Questions

SECTION 4

1. How do the characters reflect on past events?

2. What changes occur in the community over time?

3. How does Nel's perspective evolve?

4. What does Nel come to understand about Sula?

5. What message does the ending convey?

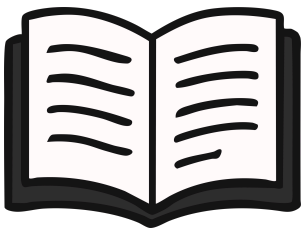
Quick Discussion

Time to Reflect

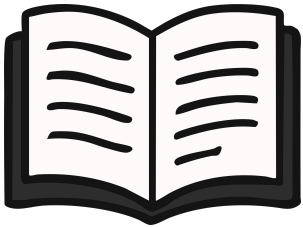
*How can understanding
change over time?*

Extension Activity

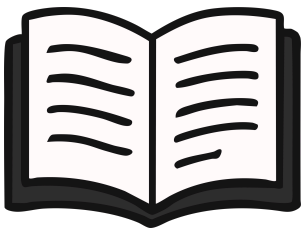
Choose one activity to complete.



- Compare Sula and Nel's life paths



- Analyze the role of the community in shaping behavior



- Create a timeline of major events and their impact

Understanding the Big Ideas

This story explores:

- **Identity is shaped by choices**
- **Friendship can change over time**
- **Communities influence behavior**
- **Growth often comes through
conflict**

How does Toni Morrison show the impact of choices on identity and relationships in Sula? Use specific examples from the text to support your response.

Final Project

Choose One:

- Character Analysis Essay

Explain how Sula or Nel develops throughout the novel

- Theme Analysis Presentation

Analyze one major theme such as friendship or identity

- Comparison Project

Compare Sula and Nel's choices and outcomes

Character Notes