

Swallowing Stones
By: Joyce McDonald
Freshman Summer Reading

Swallowing Stones begins with a free and joyful act--but from then on, Michael finds it impossible even to remember what it felt like to be free and joyful. When he fires his new rifle into the air on his seventeenth birthday, he never imagines that the bullet will end up killing someone. However, a mile away, a man "is" killed by that bullet as he innocently repairs his roof. Michael keeps desperately silent while he watches his world crumble.

Meanwhile Jenna, the dead man's daughter, copes with desperation of her own. Through her grief, she tries to understand why she no longer feels comfortable with her boyfriend and why a near stranger named Michael keeps appearing in her dreams.

Suspenseful and powerfully moving, this is the unforgettable story of an accidental crime and its haunting web of repercussions.

***Please complete the entire study guide on a separate sheet of paper.**

LITERARY TERMS:

Directions: Using a dictionary, define the following literary terms.

1. Conflict (Listed below are the six types of conflict...you only need to define the word conflict, but be sure you know the six types as well.)
 - a. Man vs. Man
 - b. Man vs. Society
 - c. Man vs. Technology
 - d. Man vs. Nature
 - e. Man vs. Himself
 - f. Man vs. Supernatural
2. Flashback
3. Imagery
4. Setting
5. Suspense
6. Mood
7. Irony

VOCABULARY:

Directions: After you have located the vocabulary word in the book, use a dictionary to define the word by the context as it is used in the sentence.

1. Trajectory
2. Ballistics
3. Absentmindedly
4. Impish
5. Unceremoniously
6. Conspiratorially
7. Irrational
8. Inconspicuous
9. Futile
10. Plausible
11. Disconcerting
12. Circumstantial
13. Manslaughter
14. Accessory
15. Precariously

CHARACTERS:

Directions: Using complete sentences, write at least two character traits, physical or personality wise to describe who they are.

1. Darcy Kelly
2. Michael MacKenzie
3. Jenna Ward
4. Josh MacKenzie
5. Meredith Ward
6. Joe Sadowski
7. Amy Ruggerio
8. Andrea Sloan
9. Doug Boyle
10. Dave Zelenski

QUESTIONS:

Directions: Answer each question in complete sentences on a separate sheet of notebook paper.

Chapters 1-5:

1. How has Michael's relationship with Darcy changed since the accident?
2. Explain some reasons Jenna becomes upset with Chief Zelenski.
3. What is ironic about Michael's Party being rated the best party of the summer?
4. Did Michael pass his drivers test? If not, what caused him to fail?
5. Which of the six conflicts is Michael suffering the most from?
6. Describe Jenna's reaction to her father's death.

Chapters 6-10:

7. What swarms Jenna's house after her father's death?
8. How does Jenna cope with her father's death?
9. How has Jenna's relationship with her boyfriend changed since the death?
10. Explain Jenna's feelings/emotions when she dreams about the Ghost Tree.
11. Describe Michael's terrifying dream.
12. Describe Michael's progressive relationship with Amy and explain how Darcy reacts when she finds out.

Chapters 11-20:

13. Why does Jenna cry for the first time?
14. Why is Jenna frustrated with God?
15. Describe Jenna's idea of "justice" in regards to her father's killer.
16. What bad habit does Joe take on?
17. Describe Michael's thoughts/emotions as he watches the young boy playing baseball.
18. What are the legends of the Ghost Tree? (Give at least 3)

Chapters 21-25:

19. Who could possibly be an accessory to the crime? Why?
20. Jenna finally realizes why she is so uncomfortable around Jason. Why?
21. Why is Amy able to connect emotionally with Jenna Ward?
22. How has Jenna's relationship with her mother changed since the death of Charlie?
23. How has Michael been trying to tell Jenna all along that he committed the murder?
24. In reality, what is swallowing stones all about?

Short Answer:

Directions: Please answer in AT LEAST 8 complete sentences. Include an introduction with a statement of purpose, a body with textual evidence and a conclusion leaving the reader with a final thought. DO NOT USE "I" or "YOU" and DO NOT WRITE IN CONCLUSION!

Explain the tragedy that happened to a ten year old girl at the lake years ago. Relate the incident to Michael's situation.