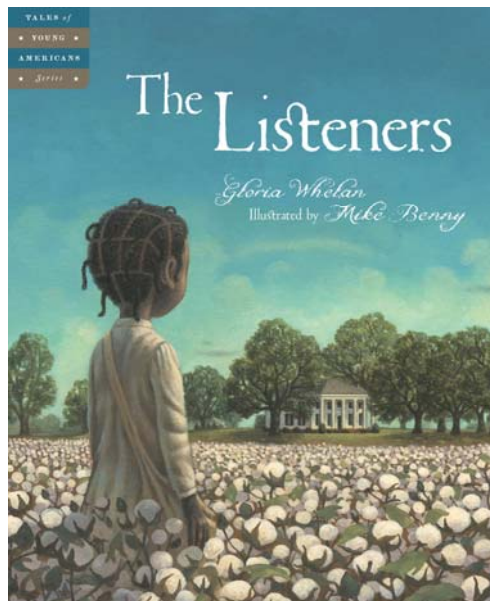


Teacher's Guide



The Listeners

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THE LISTENERS



SEEK AND FIND

Search high and low in *The Listeners* to find these answers!

1. What did the children have to do after supper each day? _____

2. How many children did Master Thomas have? _____
3. Who is the author of *The Listeners*? _____
4. What were the slaves picking in the fields? _____
5. Did the children get enough to eat when they worked in the fields? _____
6. Where did the slaves hold their own church? _____
7. Who freed the people of Israel? _____
8. Which president freed the slaves? _____
9. Why did Ella May jump on the cotton? _____
10. Name the insects that bite the children when they are listening. _____

THE LISTENERS

CORE DEMOCRATIC VALUES

Core democratic values are the ideas that make us the wonderful nation that we are. Equality states that every citizen should have equal rights and opportunities.

Equal rights include the following:

- A. The right to equal treatment under the law
- B. The right to vote
- C. The right to an equal education
- D. The equal value of each human being
- E. The right to live where one chooses
- F. The right to equal use of public places
- G. The right to equal pay for equal work
- H. The right to be hired for a job regardless of race, gender, or religion

Match the equal right denied the slaves in *The Listeners* with the core values above.

- ___ 1. Ella May could not go to school.
- ___ 2. Ella's family had to live on the plantation.
- ___ 3. William wasn't allowed to eat in the restaurant in town.
- ___ 4. Sue's daddy was sold.
- ___ 5. Black people were not allowed to vote.

THE LISTENERS

CROSSWORD



Each of the answers needed to complete this crossword can be found in *The Listeners*.

1. S _____

2. L _____

3. A _____

4. V _____

5. E _____

6. R _____

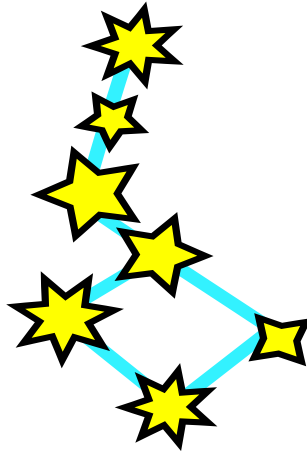
7. Y _____

1. One of Ella May's friends was named _____.
2. Abraham _____ was elected president of the United States.
3. Ella had a smile as big as an _____.
4. Daddy worked _____ hard picking cotton.
5. _____ candle in the house was lit.
6. Ella pretends her straw mattress is a bed of _____.
7. Daddy tells Ella _____ listening has just begun.

THE LISTENERS

FOLLOW THE DRINKING GOURD!

The song “Follow the Drinking Gourd” was sung by slaves and helped to guide them to freedom. The “drinking gourd” referred to the star constellation called the Big Dipper.



Explain how following the Big Dipper would help slaves to escape to the North.

THE LISTENERS

EQUALITY

What does it mean to be equal? If you split a pie into equal pieces, everyone should get the same size piece. In *The Listeners*, was there equality between the master's children and the slave children? Think about a time you have felt things weren't equal. How did you feel?

1. Write about a time you felt that you were not treated as an equal. Describe the situation and how you felt.

2. Write about a time you helped someone who was not being treated fairly. Describe the situation and how you felt.

THE LISTENERS

THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

The Underground Railroad was not underground and it was not a railroad! It was a network of people who felt slavery was wrong. These brave people helped the slaves escape from the South to the northern free states and to Canada.

Design a flag that could represent the Underground Railroad.



THE LISTENERS

Listen to Your World!

The children in the book *The Listeners* had to listen at night to the conversations in the main house to find out what might be happening on the plantation. It was important that they listened carefully and reported back to their parents.

When was the last time you just sat and listened to the sounds in your world?

Spend 20 minutes in each of the following spots just listening to the sounds around you. Write down everything you hear.

1. Your kitchen at home

2. The park

3. Inside your classroom

What did you hear? _____

What was the most important thing you heard? _____

THE LISTENERS

WHERE DID THE SLAVES COME FROM?

Look at the world map below and follow these directions.

Label the continent of Africa.

Label the United States.

Label the ocean connecting the two.

Draw a slave ship going from Africa to the United States.



THE LISTENERS

WHAT'S YOUR OPINION?

Think about the story *The Listeners*. Do your best as you answer each question below.

1. Why do you think the slaves go to the white church on Saturday night and then hold their own church service in the woods the following afternoon?

2. How did you feel when the master said slaves were cheaper than horses?

3. Was it fair for William to send the children to the big house to listen to what was going on?

THE LISTENERS

ABRAHAM LINCOLN POEM

Abraham Lincoln had a small role in the book *The Listeners*, but he had a major effect on all of the characters. Use what you know about Lincoln to write a name poem about him.

A name poem is written about a particular person.

The letters going down form the person's name.

A sentence or phrase about the person is described next to each letter. The phrase should start with the letter it is next to.

L _____

I _____

N _____

C _____

O _____

L _____

N _____

THE LISTENERS

POINT OF VIEW

Life on a plantation during slavery would be described very differently by different people.

Describe plantation life from the point of view of each of the following people.

1. Ella May _____

2. Sue _____

3. Mistress Louise _____

4. William _____

5. Master Thomas _____

THE LISTENERS

PREVIEW AND PREDICT

Before you read the book *The Listeners*, predict what it will be about by looking at the pictures and thinking about the title.

1. Why do you think this book is called *The Listeners*?

2. What skills would a listener need?

3. Look at the picture on the front cover. What can you tell about the book from this picture?

4. Predict what will happen in the book.

THE LISTENERS



Cornmeal Dumpling Recipe

Follow this recipe to enjoy making and eating cornmeal dumplings.

DOWN-HOME CORNMEAL DUMPLINGS

Ingredients

- 2 cups cornmeal
- 2 tablespoons flour
- 2 tablespoons cooking oil
- 4 tablespoons milk

Directions

Mix all ingredients in a bowl.
Drop dough by teaspoonfuls into hot broth (chicken broth works well).
Cook for 10 minutes, covered.
Enjoy.

Do you think you would like these dumplings? _____

Explain _____

THE LISTENERS

THE INQUIRING REPORTER

A reporter from the local newspaper interviewed William and his family after they left the plantation and were free. He asked each person what went through their mind when they heard they would be free. How do you think each person answered the question?

Answer using complete sentences. Write at least three sentences for each person.

1. William _____

2. Ella May _____

3. Sue _____

THE LISTENERS RIGHT OR WRONG?

Did your parents teach you that it is wrong to eavesdrop on other people? Is there ever a time when it's right to eavesdrop?

Make two lists below, one list with reasons why you shouldn't eavesdrop and one list with reasons why it's okay to eavesdrop.

OKAY TO LISTEN

NOT OKAY TO LISTEN

Have you ever eavesdropped on someone? _____

How would you feel if someone eavesdropped on you? _____

THE LISTENERS

WHAT IS SLAVERY?

As you read the book *The Listeners*, pay special attention to the lives of the slave family and the plantation owner's family.

Write a paragraph explaining slavery. Give examples of what it means to be a slave.

Write a paragraph explaining what it was like to be the slave owner. What were their responsibilities and how did they treat their slaves?

THE LISTENERS

MAKE A STORY MAP

Read the book *The Listeners*, and then complete the story map below.

Setting:

Characters:

Sequence of events:

Problem:

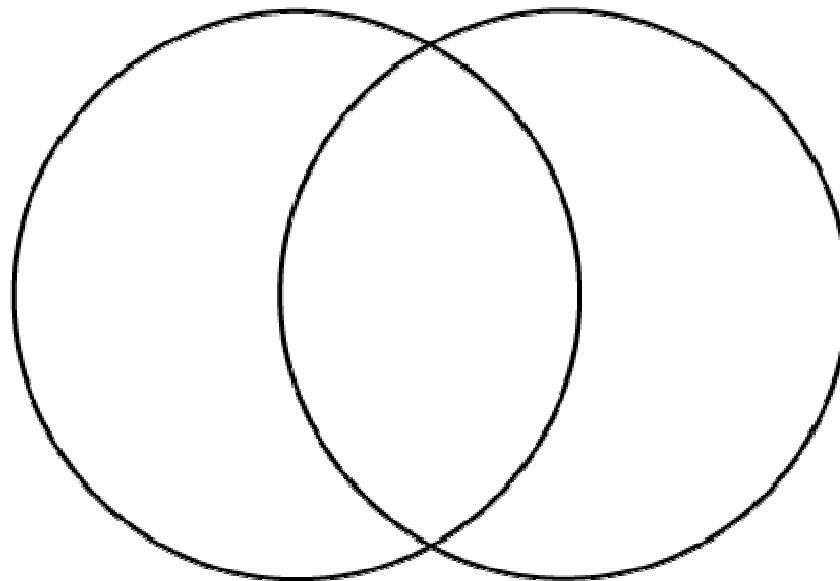
Solution:

THE LISTENERS

COMPARE AND CONTRAST VENN DIAGRAM

In *The Listeners*, read about two girls who lived very different lives on a plantation during the time of slavery.

Make a Venn diagram comparing Ella May and Mistress Grace. How are they alike and how are they different?



ELLA MAY

BOTH

MISTRESS GRACE

THE LISTENERS

ANSWER KEY

SEEK AND FIND 1) listen to the conversations at the master's house
2) 2 3) Gloria Whelan 4) cotton 5) yes 6) in the woods 7) Moses
8) Lincoln 9) to pack the bales of cotton 10) mosquitoes and sand flies

CORE DEMOCRATIC VALUES 1) C 2) E 3) F 4) D 5) B

SLAVERY CROSSWORD 1) Sue 2) Lincoln 3) alligator's 4) very
5) every 6) roses 7) your