

**Exploring Life in 1898 Wilmington & the Wilmington Race Riot with *CROW*,  
 a novel for young adults**

**Overview**

*CROW*, a novel for young adults by Barbara Wright, is an excellent way to engage students in learning about the 1898 Wilmington Race Riot and related themes such as slavery, Jim Crow, democracy, the rule of law, overcoming adversity, and more. Written from the perspective of 12-year-old Moses Thomas, the novel gives students a personal perspective of the thriving African American community of Wilmington and how its rights and freedoms were violently challenged in the only successful coup d'état in US history.

This guide provides resources for using *CROW* in either the Social Studies or Language Arts classroom, or ideally, as an interdisciplinary unit for both courses. Through the attached detailed reading guide, teachers can engage students in chapter by chapter discussions that encourage critical reading and higher order thinking. The numerous activity options provided allow students to creatively explore the fictional life of the characters as they relate to real world historical events through group work, drama, art, creative writing, deliberation, examination of primary source documents, and more. Teachers should preview the questions and activities provided and choose which best meet their particular course's learning goals.

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- **Teacher Note:** *Teachers are not expected to implement all questions and activities contained in this document. Rather, this provides numerous options for the Social Studies and/or Language Arts teacher to choose between.*

**Common Core Standards for Social Studies, Grades 6-8**

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.3 Identify key steps in a text's description of a process related to history/social studies (e.g., how a bill becomes law, how interest rates are raised or lowered).

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.5 Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.6 Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author’s point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.7 Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.8 Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.9 Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.10 By the end of grade 8, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

### Common Core Standards for 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Literature and Writing

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.1: Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.2: Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.8.3: Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.7: Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.9: Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

### Essential Questions

- What were Jim Crow laws? What types of consequences did African Americans and other minorities risk when breaking one of these laws or expectations?
- Why was Wilmington, NC, considered a symbol of ‘black hope’ in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century?
- What were the events of the 1898 Race Riot in Wilmington, NC?
- How did the existence of Jim Crow enable the Wilmington Race Riot to occur?
- What impact did propaganda and gang mentality have on the unfolding of 1898 events?
- What does *CROW* highlight regarding slavery, Jim Crow, democracy, the rule of law, and the Wilmington Race Riot?
- How are the characters in *CROW* impacted by the 1898 Race Riot?
- How did the events of 1898 impact African American progress?

## Materials

- Accompanying Power Point, available at <http://civics.sites.unc.edu/files/2013/05/1898CROWppt.pdf>
  - To view this PDF as a projectable presentation, save the file, click “View” in the top menu bar of the file, and select “Full Screen Mode”
  - To request an editable PPT version of this presentation, send a request to [cnorris@unc.edu](mailto:cnorris@unc.edu)
- Wilmington, North Carolina, 1898: Prelude to a Riot (8 minute video): [http://www.teachersdomain.org/asset/bf10\\_vid\\_wilming/](http://www.teachersdomain.org/asset/bf10_vid_wilming/)
- Wilmington Race Riot (4 minute video): [http://www.teachersdomain.org/asset/bf09\\_vid\\_lossrights/](http://www.teachersdomain.org/asset/bf09_vid_lossrights/)
- Attached activity handouts:
  - White Declaration of Independence, Declaration of Citizens’ Rights assignment & outline (pg. 13-16)
  - Remembering Jackson Thomas assignment sheet (p. 17)
  - Sample Obituary & Eulogy assignment (p. 18)
  - *CROW*, the Movie assignment (p. 19)
- Discussion Questions (attached on pg. 20-31)

## Additional Resources

- Author website for *CROW*: [http://www.barbarawrightbooks.com/BW\\_Books/Crow.html](http://www.barbarawrightbooks.com/BW_Books/Crow.html)
- Wilmington Race Riot Commission: <http://www.history.ncdcr.gov/1898-wrrc/>
- The NC Election of 1898: <http://www.lib.unc.edu/ncc/1898/1898.html>

## Preparation

- Students should have a basic understanding of the Wilmington Race Riot prior to reading *CROW*. As an optional homework assignment to provide the evening before introducing *CROW*, assign LEARN NC’s overview reading on the Wilmington Race Riot: <http://www.learnnc.org/lp/editions/nchist-newsouth/4360>.
- For a more in depth Social Studies lesson on the Wilmington Race Riot, see the Consortium’s lesson at <https://database.civics.unc.edu/files/2012/04/WilmingtonRaceRiot8.pdf> and accompanying Power Point at <http://database.civics.unc.edu/files/2012/04/WilmingtonRaceRiotPPT.pdf>. This lesson makes an excellent prelude to introducing *CROW*, or alternatively, various pieces of this lesson can be intermingled throughout the reading of the book as each historical event is alluded to.
- While *CROW* and the history it refers to deals with sensitive topics, it is important for students to explore the events of 1898. In order to study this history effectively and safely however, teachers must have established a safe classroom with clear expectations of respect, open-mindedness, and civil conversation. See the Consortium’s “Activities” section of the Database of K-12 Resources <http://database.civics.unc.edu/> for ways to ensure a classroom environment conducive to the effective exploration of controversial issues.
- Teachers should explicitly prepare students in advance that they will encounter numerous examples of racism and racist language when reading *CROW* and studying this time period. It is important to make it clear that such racist language used in the book should not be repeated outside the context of quoting a particular passage and/or discussing the historical time period.

## Procedure

### An Introduction to *CROW* & a Review of 1898 Wilmington

1. Begin by holding up a copy of the book *CROW* (or projecting an image of the book cover, available on [slide 2](#) of the accompanying Power Point) and tell students to examine it. Ask:
    - Based on what you see, what do you predict this book might be about? What specifically makes you think this?
  2. Tell students that *CROW* is set in 1898 Wilmington, North Carolina, and its main character, Moses Thomas, is a 12-year-old African American boy growing up there. Ask students if they have any additional predictions based on this information. Further discuss:
    - What do you already know regarding southern society in 1898?
    - In particular, what types of challenges did African Americans and other minorities face in 1898?
      - Project [slide 3 & 4](#) to review Jim Crow laws and [slide 5](#) to review some of the expected etiquette during Jim Crow.
    - What types of consequences do you imagine African Americans and other minorities received when breaking one of these laws or expectations?
    - Even though the South was plagued by these unfair laws and expectations, Wilmington, NC, was considered a symbol of “black hope” in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century – why?
    - What occurred that crushed such “black hope” in 1898 Wilmington? What do you already know about the Wilmington Race Riot?
- **Teacher Note:** While the historical background knowledge provided on 1898 Wilmington is well suited for a Social Studies classroom, Language Arts teachers implementing *CROW* without the participation of a Social Studies teacher can still make use of the material as a brief introduction to the novel. The video clips and subsequent discussion can be done in as little as 20 minutes. Much can still be gained from the novel even without such historical background, however; so if necessary, teachers can also choose to omit the historical overview/review in the beginning and provide information to students as needed throughout their reading.
3. Remind students that even with Jim Crow looming throughout the south, African Americans in Wilmington, NC, were able to form a strong middle class and in many ways prosper. However, a series of events occurring around the 1898 elections in Wilmington ushered in a wave of racism where Jim Crow and fear reigned. Show the short 8 minute video, “Wilmington, North Carolina, 1898: Prelude to a Riot” to help students review/and or understand better the events of 1898 Wilmington: [http://www.teachersdomain.org/asset/bf10\\_vid\\_wilming/](http://www.teachersdomain.org/asset/bf10_vid_wilming/) then discuss:
    - Why were African Americans so successful in Wilmington? Why is their success even more admirable considering the existence of Jim Crow laws throughout the south?
    - Who was Alex Manly?
    - Why did the white population in Wilmington grow fearful of African Americans?
    - In particular, why were white fears of white women being abused by black men so ridiculous?
      - Teachers should discuss the hypocrisy of such fear, given that one of the known cruelties of slavery involved the abuse of enslaved women by white masters.
        - **Teacher note:** While this is a sensitive subject to discuss, it is important to address it given that it was such a major part of the fear campaign that resulted in the 1898 race riot. Tell students that you trust they can handle the references to this in the book and subsequent discussions in a mature fashion; for tips, see “Preparation” above.)

- What impact did this fear, combined with propaganda, have on the 1898 election? How did white men such as Charles Aycock, Josephus Daniels, and Alfred Waddell strategically use such fear and how did it escalate to the point of the 1898 race riot?
  - What was the gist of Rebecca Felton’s speech and how did Alex Manly respond? In what ways did Alex Manly’s response to Felton’s speech unfortunately play right into the fear? Why do you think some African Americans in the community considered Manly’s response “A truth unwisely said”?
  - What were the various ways whites tried to intimidate black men to not vote?
  - What was the response of some of Wilmington’s black women to the idea of African American men not voting?
4. After discussing, play 4 more minutes of video to conclude the review of the Wilmington Race Riot: [http://www.teachersdomain.org/asset/bf09\\_vid\\_lossrights/](http://www.teachersdomain.org/asset/bf09_vid_lossrights/). Discuss:
- Alfred Waddell said, “We shall win tomorrow if we have to do with guns. If we have not the votes to carry the election, we must carry it by force. If you find the Negro out voting, tell him to leave the polls. If he refuses, kill him, shoot him down in his tracks. We shall win tomorrow if we have to do it with guns.” (Project slide 6 which contains this quote.) As an African American living in 1898, how would you feel hearing this?
  - Why do you think many African Americans still showed up to vote, even with the threats?
  - What were the results of the election? What transpired after the election?
  - Why were African American business owners and other prominent black citizens run out of town?
  - How did President McKinley respond when African Americans from Wilmington residents contacted him for help?
  - Overall, how did Wilmington change after the 1898 election and subsequent riot?
5. Explain to students that they are going to be reading the book *CROW*, and that while it is a work of fiction, it is based on the very real events that unfolded in 1898 Wilmington as experienced in the life of 12-year-old Moses Thomas. Read the following as an introduction/“teaser” to the book:
- “The year is 1898 – 33 years after the conclusion of the Civil War – and the end of slavery. Although the 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, and 15<sup>th</sup> Amendments to the Constitution have ended slavery and granted Negro Americans due process and voting rights, segregation and racism are alive and well in Wilmington, North Carolina, where 12-year-old Moses Thomas lives in ‘Darktown’ with his family. Moses’s father, a professional journalist and one of the city’s first ‘colored’ aldermen, has raised his son to believe that education and the democratic process will level the playing field between the races, yet Moses is beginning to understand the realities of being black in the South: insults, humiliations, and worst of all, the Jim Crow laws that legalize segregation. When the editor of the Negro newspaper publishes an editorial that challenges racist conceptions, tensions rise, and in the words of Moses’s grandma, Boo Nanny, ‘Big trouble’s a-brewing.’ As the city teeters on the brink of a race war, Moses must face the truth about the hatred that surrounds him, and figure out a way to save his family from disaster.” (Source: *Educators Guide for CROW*)

### **Reading Guide for *CROW***

6. Teachers should go through the book at whatever pace works best for their class. Teachers may want to alternate between having students read independently in class, independently at home, in partners in class, as well as reading particular parts of the book out loud. Chapter by chapter

discussion questions are attached; upon finishing each chapter, these questions can be discussed as an entire class, can be assigned as written responses (i.e., journal entries, short essays, etc.), or can be discussed in small groups. Teachers do not need to use all questions provided; rather, they should choose those that best meet their particular learning objectives for students to discuss.

### Activities for CROW

7. The following activities can be implemented during the reading of the book or after students finish the book in either a Social Studies or Language Arts classroom. Teachers should pick and choose which activities best meet the goals for their particular course, and/or which activities best fit within the time frame available for implementation.

### Integrating Primary Sources

Teachers may want to project actual photographs of the historical events and/or people that are referred to in each chapter. These not only provide excellent fodder for discussion, but also remind students that while CROW is a work of fiction, it is based on very real events. Several images are included in the accompanying Power Point. For additional images and other primary source documents, consult the sources noted under “Additional Resources.”

- Slide 7: Images of Millie Christine (Chapter Three)
  - Are you surprised that Millie Christine isn’t a fictional character?
  - What can we learn regarding tolerance, diversity, differences, etc. from Millie Christine?
- Slide 8: Alex Manly (Chapter 5)
- Slide 9: Rebecca Felton (Chapter 5)
- Slide 10: Red Shirts (Chapter 8)
  - Describe the men in this picture.
  - What do you think occurred before and/or after this photo was taken?
  - If you could ask these men a question, what would you want to know?
- Slide 11: The burning of *The Record* (Chapter 11)
  - What do you see? What first strikes you about these images?
  - What is the attitude of the men posing in front of the destroyed *Daily Record*?
  - Why do you think they had their picture taken in front of the building?
  - What do you think happened to the back issues of the newspaper? What impact will this have on the historical record of Wilmington’s black community?
- Slide 12: Wilmington Light Infantry escorting African Americans out of town (Chapter 13)
  - How do you think the African Americans being escorted out of town feel in this moment?
  - If you were standing on the sidelines watching this occur, how would you feel? What would you want to say?
  - Why do you think the Wilmington Light Infantry participated in the 1898 riot?

### Design an Advertisement from 1898

*This activity can be assigned at any point after reading Chapter 6*

- a) In chapter six, Moses creates an advertisement for the bike contest, which he doesn’t win due to the unfair and racist mentality of the store owner. Inform students that they are going to be creating their own advertisement, designed to appear as if it was created in 1898. Project slide 13 of the accompanying PPT, which contains samples of old advertisements. Allow students a minute or two to silently view the images. Then, discuss the following questions with the class:
  - What do first notice about these ads? What is the purpose of each ad?

- Do these ads have slogans? If so, what are they? What does the slogan tell you about the product?
  - What do these ads tell us about the time during which they were created?
  - How are these ads different from ads you see today?
- b) Tell students that they are going to design their own 1898 advertisement and that similar to the examples they viewed, it must contain a slogan, descriptive text, and an image. Teachers should determine the subject matter of the advertisement; choices include:
- Have students research various products that would have been used in 1898 by Moses and his family. Students should choose one such product and design their ad.
  - Have students design an ad for the novel *CROW*, as if it were being advertised in 1898. (If choosing this option, teachers may want to delay this assignment until students have finished the book.)
  - Have students design a thematic ad promoting tolerance, anti-hate, open mindedness, or another quality that was lacking in 1898 and thus contributed to the occurrence of the race riot. While the sentiment of the ad will be modern day, the design should be as if it were created in 1898.
- c) Let students know when their ad is due. On the due date, students can either share their ads in small groups, or post them around the room and allow the class to do a “gallery walk” at the beginning of class, during which they rotate among the images. Provide each student with a post-it note and tell them to place their post-it by their favorite ad. After the gallery walk, discuss the ads with the class, asking what they particularly favored about the ad they chose as their favorite.

### **Responding to the White Declaration of Independence**

*This activity is best implemented after completing Chapter 10.*

- a) Upon finishing Chapter 10, ask students to imagine that they are living in 1898 Wilmington and that they have been chosen by the African American citizens to write the response to Alfred Waddell’s “White Declaration of Independence”. Divide students into groups of 3 – 5 and provide each student with a copy of the attached “White Declaration of Independence,” as well as the “Declaration of Citizen’s Rights” assignment and outline. Assign the following roles to students in each group:
- *Chair*: Responsible for keeping everyone on task and making sure that everyone in the group has a chance to participate.
  - *Timekeeper*: Keeps track of time remaining to ensure group finishes on time; the Timekeeper also reads the group’s final response aloud.
  - *Reporter*: Takes notes of the group’s discussion and records the group’s formal response.
- b) Review the handout of instructions with the class. Answer any questions and let students know when their final response is due. (Teachers may choose to have students present as soon as the end of class, or during another class period.)
- c) On the day the responses are due, review the expectations of respectful audience members and have the Timekeeper of each group read his/her group’s response to the class. Once all of the groups have presented, allow students to vote on the most effective response to deliver to Waddell. In addition to the questions provided in the reading guide for chapter ten, further discuss:

- Why do you think Alfred Waddell gave the African American citizens of Wilmington less than 24 hours to respond to his Declaration?
- Why didn't the response reach Waddell by the deadline? Do you think it would have mattered if the response was on time?
- How do you think African Americans felt when reading the "White Declaration of Independence" and why?
- One of the big complaints from Alfred Waddell was that African Americans were taking jobs from whites; do you think this is true? Why or why not?
- Why did Waddell want to destroy the newspaper, the *Record*?
- Why do you think the Wilmington Race Riot was allowed to escalate and take place? Could something like this happen today? Why or why not?

### Create a Sensory Figure

*This activity can be assigned at any point once students have a sense of the various characters.*

- Instruct students to create a "Sensory Figure" for a particular character from *CROW*. (Teachers may want to assign each student a character to ensure a fairly even number of figures per character are created.) Instruct students to:
  - Visualize what you imagine your assigned character to look like (consider physical characteristics, clothing, accessories, etc.) As best you can, draw the character as you imagine him/her to appear.
  - Next, consider this character's thoughts, emotions, dreams, struggles, etc. What are the major aspects of your character's overall personality and core nature/motivation?
  - Connect the major aspects of your character to various parts of your drawing. For example, you might draw a line to the character's heart and fill in the statement, "I dream..." You might also draw a line to the character's head ("I think..." or "I hope..."), eyes ("I see..."), ears ("I hear..."), etc. Connections and statements can be literal or abstract.
  - Your final sensory figure should have at least 7 statements.
- On the day the Sensory Figures are due, have students hang their work around the room. Teachers should have all the same characters placed in the same section for easy comparison. Provide students a few minutes to browse the various figures, then assign a group of students to each particular character/section and instruct them to discuss the following questions for a few minutes. (Teachers might purposely assign students to alternate characters from the one they focused on for their homework assignment.) After group discussion, each group should report out on their assigned character.
  - Based on what has taken place in the book thus far, and based on the various sensory figures, how would you describe <insert character name>?
  - How is your character different from the other characters in *CROW*? How is he/she similar?

Depending on when this is assigned, teachers can also refer to the overall questions relating to the book's characters that are provided in the reading guide.

### Remembering Jackson Thomas

*This activity should be assigned after finishing the book.*

- Inform students that they will assume the role of Moses Thomas from *CROW* and that they are responsible for memorializing Moses' father, Jackson Thomas. Explain to students that they will



choose to either write a short obituary or present a eulogy about Jackson, and then choose one other way to memorialize him, either by choosing a song that represents his life to be played at his funeral, designing his tombstone, or choosing an object from the book to leave at his gravesite. Distribute the attached "Remembering Jackson Thomas" handout and review the instructions with the entire class.

Discuss:

- What is the purpose of an obituary and a eulogy? (Teachers may want to distribute or read the attached sample obituary and eulogy.)
- How do you think Jackson Thomas would want to be remembered?
- What might some of the characters from *CROW* say about Jackson Thomas (i.e., Moses? Sadie? Boo Nanny? Alex Manly?)

- a) As students begin to consider how to memorialize Jackson, let them know that if they choose to present a eulogy, they will be doing so in front of the class (or in small groups, depending on time constraints.)
  - b) Answer any questions students may have about the assignment and provide them with a due date.
  - c) Allow students to use the remaining class time to begin working on their memorial projects. On the day that the assignments are due, have students share their work in small groups. Afterwards, discuss:
    - What events from Jackson's life did you choose to remember? Why?
    - What events did you leave out? Why?
    - Who did you choose to quote for Jackson's obituary or eulogy? Why?
    - Why did you make the choices you made concerning the hymn/tombstone/object?
    - What do you consider to be a "good life?" Do you think Jackson lived a good life? Why or why not?
- **Teacher Note:** If time is limited, teachers can choose one of the activities in the memorial project to instruct students to complete rather than assigning all components or offering all choices. Alternatively, teachers with additional class time to devote to this activity can have students host a full funeral for Jackson Thomas in class, during which they assume the roles of 1898 mourners, come dressed in funeral attire, present their eulogies & songs, lay their objects by their designed tombstones, etc.

### ***CROW, the Movie***

*This activity should be assigned after finishing the book.*

- a) Tell students to imagine they have been hired by Universal Pictures to turn *CROW* into a movie. Students should think about what famous actors might play each character in the book, where the movie would be filmed and what action will make the movie a box office hit. Distribute the attached assignment sheet and go over the instructions with students.
- b) Teachers should determine:
  - Whether to assign this individually or as a group project
  - How much class time and/or homework time to provide for completion; this can be a quick activity to be completed in one class, or can be more extensive with students working on it over the course of several classes.

- Whether students will perform their work in class (either acted out in front of the entire class, read out loud for the entire class, or read out loud in small groups.)
  - If students perform, teachers should likewise determine how elaborate to make the project (i.e., whether to have students wear costumes)
- c) On the day projects are due, ensure students understand respectful audience expectations if scenes are being read aloud or performed. After each scene, have the audience provide feedback:
- What did you like about that scene?
  - Did you gain any insights into any of the characters based on this interpretation?
  - What questions do you have?

### **“The Stories that Bind Us”**

- a) In a New York Times article, Bruce Feiler cites studies showing that children who know their family stories are more confident and better able to face life's challenges. He calls this a strong "intergenerational self." (Access the article at <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/03/17/fashion/the-family-stories-that-bind-us-this-life.html?pagewanted=all& r=0>) One could argue that Moses exemplifies this concept. Discuss with students:
- In what ways does Moses benefit by having the love and influence of two generations (his parents and Boo Nanny?)
  - In what ways do Jackson and Boo Nanny react to the world differently? How do their own experiences and personal stories shape their reactions and what they impart to Moses?
  - Why is it important for Moses to discover what Boo Nanny went through while enslaved? (Discuss how it is important not only because he can better understand who she is, but also because it gives him a feeling of belonging to a story bigger than himself.)
  - What can we gain from learning about the history of our families, particularly by sitting down and talking with older generations (“intergenerational communication”)?
- b) Instruct the students to interview someone from their family who is older (i.e., a grandparent, an aunt or uncle, another close relative, etc.) about their life. (Teachers should be sensitive to the fact that some students may not have extended family with whom they are able to speak, so make sure students know they can alternatively speak with a neighbor or a family friend should they choose.) The students will report back orally and/or write a short piece regarding the interview.
- c) Go over the following steps for completion with students:
- Brainstorm people who you could interview. Consider who might be most comfortable talking about themselves, and/or who might have the most compelling story to tell. Decide who to interview then schedule a time to talk to that person, either via phone or in person.
  - Prepare for your interview by thinking about what you’d like to know about this person’s life, such as:
    - Family history, traditions, stories, etc.
    - Life highlights/moments of which the person is most proud
    - Challenges faced/times when he or she overcame adversity
    - Lessons learned
    - Differences in today’s society and that during which they grew up
  - Create open ended questions to ask. (Questions that can’t be answered with “yes” or “no.”) Also make sure your questions are sensitive and respectful.

- Take detailed notes during the interview. Afterwards, reflect on your conversation and compile your notes into a narrative about the person and his/her life. The narrative should:
  - explain the interviewee's role in your family/relationship to you
  - summarize some of the memories and experiences shared and what they mean in terms of your family's history
  - compare and contrast their childhood to society today. What things have changed? What things have stayed the same? How is our society today impacted by this history?
  - reflect on your new understanding this person gave you regarding your family history.
- Be prepared to share a summary of your narrative in class in small groups on the due date. Be prepared to answer questions your group mates may have.

# Activity Attachments

## White Declaration of Independence

Believing that the Constitution of the United States contemplated a government to be carried on by an enlightened people; Believing that its framers did not anticipate the enfranchisement of an ignorant population of African origin, and believing that those men of the State of North Carolina, who joined in forming the Union, did not contemplate for their descendants subjection to an inferior race:

We, the undersigned citizens of the City of Wilmington and County of New Hanover, do hereby declare that we will no longer be ruled, and will never again be ruled by men of African origin. This condition we have in part endured because we felt that the consequences of the War of Secession were such as to deprive us of the fair consideration of many of our countrymen. We believe that, after more than thirty years, this is no longer the case.

The stand we now pledge ourselves to is forced upon us suddenly by a crisis and our eyes are open to the fact that we must act now or leave our descendants to a fate too gloomy to be borne.

While we recognize the authority of the United States, and will yield to it if exerted, we would not for a moment believe that it is the purpose of more than sixty millions of our own race to subject us permanently to a fate to which no Anglo Saxon has ever been forced to submit. We therefore, believing that we represent unequivocally the sentiment of the White People of the County and City, hereby for ourselves, and as representing them, proclaim:

- First, that the time has passed for the intelligent citizens of the community owning 90% of the property and paying taxes in like proportion, to be ruled by negroes.
- Second, that we will not tolerate the action of unscrupulous white men in affiliating with the negroes so that by means of their votes they can dominate the intelligent and thrifty element in the community, thus causing business to stagnate and progress to be out of the question.
- Third, that the negro has demonstrated by antagonizing our interest in every way, and especially by his ballot, that he is incapable of realizing that his interests are and should be identical with those of the community.
- Fourth, that the progressive element in any community is the white population and that the giving of nearly all the employment to negro laborers has been against the best interests of this County and City and is a sufficient reason why the City of Wilmington, with its natural advantages has not become a city of at least fifty thousand inhabitants.
- Fifth, that we propose in the future to give to white men a large part of the employment heretofore given to negroes because we realize that white families cannot thrive here unless there are more opportunities for the employment of the different members of said families.
- Sixth, that the white men expect to live in this community peaceably; to have and provide absolute protection for their families, who shall be safe from insult or injury from all persons, whomsoever. We are prepared to treat the negroes with justice and consideration in all matters which do not involve sacrifices of the interest of the intelligent and progressive portion of the

community. But are equally prepared now and immediately to enforce what we know to be our rights.

- Seventh, that we have been, in our desire for harmony and peace, blinded both to our best interests and our rights. A climax was reached when the negro paper of this city published an article so vile and slanderous that it would in most communities have resulted in the lynching of the editor. We deprecate lynching and yet there is no punishment, provided by the courts, adequate for this offense. We therefore owe it to the people of this community and of this city, as a protection against such license in the future, that the paper known as the "Record" cease to be published and that its editor be banished from this community.

We demand that he leave this City forever within twenty-four hours after the issuance of this proclamation. Second, that the printing press from which the "Record" has been issued be packed and shipped from the City without delay, that we be notified within twelve hours of the acceptance or rejection of this demand.

If the demand is agreed to, within twelve hours we counsel forbearance on the part of all white men. If the demand is refused or if no answer is given within the time mentioned then the editor, Manly, will be expelled by force.

*Edited for formatting by the NC Civic Education Consortium from the following source:*  
<http://www.history.ncdcr.gov/1898-wrrc/report/Chapter4.pdf>

**The Chair will lead your group in a discussion of the following questions:**

- What are your first reactions to this document? What did it make you think and/or how did it make you feel?
- What is the tone of this document? Why are the authors of this document upset?
- What is the purpose of this document?
- Who does this document target and why? What demands do the authors of this document make of the African American citizens of Wilmington?
- Why do they single out Alex Manly? What do you think the authors mean when they say he "will be expelled by force"?
- Why do they want to destroy the newspaper, the *Record*?
- How does this document above differ from accounts of African American life in Wilmington as portrayed in *CROW*?
- The document discusses the rights of Wilmington's white citizens. How might you respond in order to stand up for the rights of African Americans and all citizens in Wilmington?

## Declaration of Citizen's Rights

**Directions:** In Chapter Ten of *CROW*, the protagonist, Moses Thomas, describes a meeting of Wilmington's African American citizens in a barbershop. At the meeting, the group discusses their response to Alfred Waddell and the Committee of Twenty-Five's, "White Declaration of Independence". Imagine that you and your group members have just attended the barbershop meeting and that you have been asked to write the response to the "White Declaration of Independence" that will be delivered to Alfred Waddell.

### I. Assume one of the following roles:

- **Chair:** Responsible for keeping everyone on task and making sure that everyone in the group has a chance to participate.
- **Timekeeper:** Keeps track of time remaining to ensure group finishes on time; the *Timekeeper* also reads the group's final response aloud to the community
- **Reporter:** Takes notes of the group's discussion and records the group's formal response; the Reporter also reads the group's final response aloud to the community.

### II. Complete the following steps:

- a) As a group, carefully read the White Declaration of Independence together. As you read, underline or star any part that strikes you in some way (makes you angry, confuses you, makes you think of something you'd like to respond with, etc.)
- b) After reading, the Chair will lead a discussion using the questions provided. If your group has any questions regarding any part of the document, make a list of them. If you are unable to find the answers yourselves, raise your hand to discuss with your teacher.
- c) Together, begin to brainstorm the most effective response. Although your response is predominantly regarding African Americans, you want to draft your response keeping the rights of all of Wilmington's citizens in mind. Use the sample outline provided to help you. You do not have to follow the format provided, but it may help with organizing your thoughts in a logical manner.
- d) As you brainstorm and begin drafting, further consider any additional information that can help support your responses. (i.e., a quote from the Constitution or Declaration of Independence, or a passage from *CROW*.) Remember, your response must reflect the time period (late 1890s), so it cannot reference anything from the 20<sup>th</sup> or 21<sup>st</sup> centuries (i.e., Dr. Martin Luther King or the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s & 60s).
- e) Write your formal response, which will be shared with the rest of the class by the Timekeeper.

**Due Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Sample Response Outline

**I) Introduction:** We the people of Wilmington, North Carolina proclaim:

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**II) Response to point #1 - 3:**

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**III) Response to point #4 - 5:**

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**IV) Response to point #6 - 7:**

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**V) Conclusion:**

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## Remembering Jackson Thomas

**Directions:** Imagine that you are Moses Thomas and you have the responsibility of honoring your father's memory. Use information from the novel *CROW* and your knowledge of Jackson Thomas to honor the many facets of his life: husband, father, alderman, community leader, newspaper reporter, etc. You must honor his life and legacy by either writing an obituary or presenting an eulogy, as well as choosing one other method of memorialization (music, tombstone, or object.)

### I. CREATE AN OBITUARY OR EULOGY

#### Obituary (written assignment)

An obituary is a summary of a person's life, usually written for a newspaper, after a person dies. Use the sample obituaries provided by your teacher as a model. Your obituary should be 250 – 500 words and must include the following components:

- Biographical information, such as the subject's full name, their birthday and day they died, age, home town, etc.
- Cause of death
- The names of their family members
- Profession and life experiences, including at least THREE important events from the person's life
- Quotes from family and community members about the deceased.
- What the person will be remembered for

#### Eulogy (verbal assignment)

A eulogy is a speech honoring a person's life, typically presented at the funeral or wake. It contains similar information to that included in a written obituary (see above). If you choose to present a eulogy, your presentation should:

- Include accurate information about the life and work of Jackson Thomas
- Be creative, inspirational, and comforting
- Be presented in a clear, articulate and engaging voice

### II. IN ADDITION, CHOOSE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING...

#### Funeral Music

Since Jackson Thomas was one generation removed from slavery and his wife was fond of singing hymns, imagine his family chose a slave hymnal to sing by the graveside. Use the following links to research songs with roots in slavery. Choose one and write a paragraph explaining why you believe this song would be appropriate to sing at Jackson's funeral (i.e., why it connects to the life, character, and beliefs of Jackson Thomas.)

- <http://voices.yahoo.com/twelve-slave-songs-civil-war-5595764.html?cat=37>
- <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/slavery/experience/education/feature.html>

#### Tombstone

Design and sketch a tombstone to memorialize Jackson Thomas. Include items or symbols representing his life and what you think he should be remembered for. Write a short paragraph describing your design choices.

#### Object

In the novel, Moses notes that he found his father's gravesite covered with objects to honor him. Choose an item that you believe Moses might leave on his father's grave. Draw a sketch of that item and write a short paragraph explaining why you chose that item.

**Due Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

### Sample Obituary (254 words)

'Bill' Smith, 63

Former Anchorage resident William Floyd “Bill” Smith, 63, died Dec. 16, 2000, at his home in Aurora, Ore. A service was held Friday at Fisher Funeral Home in Williamsport, Ind. Burial took place at West Lebanon Cemetery.

Mr. Smith was born Jan. 25, 1937, in Chehalis, Wash., to Louis F. and Lydia M. (Merrill) Smith. He graduated from Olympia High School in 1955. He married Pauline LaTouche on July 15, 1967, in Williamsport.

He came to Fort Richardson in the 1950s while serving in the U.S. Army as a communications technician. After his discharge, he was employed by Chevron USA as an engineer technologist for 28 years, retiring in 1987. He coached Little League softball for 10 years in Anchorage. He had lived in Anchorage for 40 years when he moved to Aurora in 1995. In retirement, he enjoyed woodworking and especially wood art.

Mr. Smith was a member of Chevron Retirees Association and the American Association of Retired Persons.

His family wrote: “Bill’s generosity and kind heart were an inspiration to his family. He lived his life with integrity and bravery.”

He is survived by his daughter and son-in-law, Michelle and Roger Connor of Williamsport; son and daughter-in-law, Michael and Amy Smith of Yukon, Okla.; grandchildren, Brandi and Craig Davis of Williamsport, Ind.; brother, Leroy Smith of Auburn, Wash., and sister, Wilma MacLeroy of Seattle.

Mr. Smith was preceded in death by his wife, Pauline; an infant child; and his brother, Ronald. Chase Funeral Home was in charge of arrangements. (Source: <http://www.adn.com/sample-obituary/#storylink=cpy>)

### Sample Eulogy

Losing a loved one is one of the most difficult things we can go through, so much more if it is a parent. No words can express what I am feeling right now and I’m sure only time can help me accept the fact.

My father was one of those hard working fathers that always got his way. His words were the law in our house. I used to fear him but I never thought he was already teaching me one of the most valuable lessons in life, standing up for what you believe in. Don’t let anybody tell you otherwise. As I grew older, I slowly understood why he treated us like that. And I also discovered that he was a very compassionate and kind person. I learned that the most important thing that he had was us, his family. Though he may never have said it out loud I know that he was really proud of what we have become. We are who we are now because we had a father like him. As most of you may know my father never showed his feelings. You would only see that look that told you that you did something great, and seeing him like that made you feel like you owned the world.

I remember when we were little our father found time to build us the most beautiful tree house. He spent almost a month to finish it. And I remember he always brought something for us when he came home from work. He was very strict as a father but that’s only because he cared for us. To his friends he was a very kind person and was always ready to help. He always had a solution to every problem and had his ways of making things simple. He never asked anybody for help but he was a very generous man, and he never wanted to be acknowledged for anything he did. When he helped he simply helped.

He showed strength until the end and still had some enlightening words for us. I promise that I will continue what my father has started. I know I’ll be filling huge shoes but with your help I think I can do it. Let’s just remember everything that my father shared with us. And let’s be happy that he has finally gone home to our creator.

(Source: <http://www.eulogyspeech.net/sample-eulogy/Father-Eulogy-Sample.shtml#.UYUluqLvuzY>)

## CROW, the Movie



Imagine that you have been hired by Universal Pictures to turn *CROW* into a movie. Think about what famous actors might play each character in the book, where the movie would be filmed and what action will make the movie a box office hit!

Once you've imagined *CROW* on the big screen, brainstorm and write one or more new scenes for the movie not included in the book. The scene can take place at any point in the story. (For example, you might write a new scene that takes place after the last chapter, or perhaps it's a scene that happens during the election that wasn't in the book.) Your scene should involve at least two of the original characters from *CROW*, but can also introduce new characters if needed. Your final product should:

- Have a beginning, middle and end
- Contain action (something significant should happen)
- Include at least two (or more) of the original characters from *CROW*. If desired, you can introduce new characters.
- Contains a description at the start of the scene describing where the scene is taking place (setting) and which famous actors you envision playing each role.
- Include a new title at the top of the page
- Be at least three pages long and written in the following format:

Title	
<i>Setting: This scene takes place in...The characters present are...</i>	
<b>Character 1:</b>	<i>(Any action/movement a character takes should be described in italics and parentheses.)</i> Hello? Is anyone home?
<b>Character 2:</b>	In here! I'm lying down.
<b>Character 1:</b>	Are you feeling OK? Would you like a drink of water?
<b>Character 2:</b>	Oh, yes please. That would be lovely.

Your movie scene is due on: \_\_\_\_\_

# Reading Guide for *CROW*

## Discussion Questions by Chapter

### Chapter One

1. The reader is introduced to three characters in Chapter One. What is your first impression of:
  - Moses
  - Boo Nanny, Moses's grandmother
  - Jackson (Jackson) Thomas, Moses's father
2. What does it mean to be superstitious? It is evident that Boo Nanny is superstitious. Are you or do you know anyone superstitious? What do you think causes a person to be superstitious? What are some examples of superstitions that you have heard of?
3. Describe the conditions of Moses's school. (p. 3) Why do you think his school is in such disrepair?
4. What do we learn about where Moses's father works in this chapter? (p. 4)
5. Moses notes that his father taught him that "A good grip shows you're the equal of any man." Why do you think his father views this as important? (p. 6)
6. What is your definition of democracy? In your mind, what makes for a strong democracy? Moses's father notes of the printing press, "The press allows us to print the paper daily instead of weekly, and deliver it statewide. Our people will be better citizens and vote more intelligently if they are informed about the issues. That makes for a stronger democracy." (p. 9-10) Do you agree? Why or why not?
7. Jackson tells Moses, "'Moses, don't ever make fun of people less fortunate than you. There's nothing to be gained by it...You aren't necessarily smarter than they are – just luckier...those boys probably have to work to support their families. Try to put yourself in their skin, look at the world from their point of view.'" What is Jackson trying to teach Moses? Why is this an important lesson to learn? In what way might this apply to your own life? (p. 10)
8. Why do you think Boo Nanny refuses to discuss her days in enslavement? What do you imagine Boo Nanny's life was like while enslaved on a turpentine plantation? What does she mean when she says, "Them stories could scare you for true," and "Best not wake up them old sorrows...It's like them haints. Once you stir them out of they bed, they don't go back so easy like"? (p. 19)

### Chapter Two

9. What do you learn regarding class and society in Chapter Two? (i.e., the "rich white side of town" and a "bank that lent money to Negroes"; p. 22)
10. Describe Lewis. What is he like? How would you characterize his friendship with Moses? What is Boo Nanny trying to teach Moses when she says "Honey baby, you you own man. If Lewis say jump, you gone hurl you own self off the cliff, just 'cause he say it"? (p. 24)
11. What does the fact that there are tunnels that run under Wilmington teach us about the city's history? (p. 25)
12. Why does Moses flatten Johnny's tire? (p. 30) Have you ever felt or acted similarly? Explain.
13. How does Moses view his father? (p. 32)
14. Why doesn't Boo Nanny know how to read and write? (p. 32) Does the fact that she is illiterate mean that she is unintelligent? Explain.
15. Why do you think Boo Nanny values common sense? (p. 33)
16. How do Boo Nanny and Moses's father's views of education differ? (p. 34) Who would you side with in this argument and why?

17. Describe Moses's relationship with his grandmother. Is there anyone in your life with whom you have a similar relationship? Explain.
18. What does Moses' father tell the shop owner regarding his politics? ("...I'm a Republican, but we banded together with the Populists to defeat the Democrats in the legislature last year and put in a Fusion governor..." p. 43)
19. How did the Republican Party of 1898 differ from the Republican Party today? (Ensure students understand that the Republican Party in 1898 was the party of Lincoln, and the one preferred by most black voters.)
20. We learn that Moses' father is on the Board of Aldermen. What are the purposes and responsibilities of such a Board? (p. 43)

### **Chapter Three**

21. Who is Millie Christine and what is special about her, beyond her physical condition? (p. 52)
22. What commentary is Boo Nanny making when she says, "One of our own gots two heads and four feet, then white folk can't get enough of them. The two-legged kind, they fine and dandy to do without"? (p. 53) In what way does this highlight the hypocrisy many white people exhibited?
23. Why do you think Moses's mother cries at Millie Christine's performance? (p. 57)
24. Why do the white citizens of Wilmington celebrate a separate Memorial Day on May 10? What does this fact tell us about Wilmington society in 1898?
25. Why does Moses consider his father the smartest person he knows? (p. 59)
26. What facts regarding the Civil War does Jackson share in his speech? (p. 61) What do you already know about the US Colored Troops?
27. What examples does Jackson share regarding how blacks are thriving in Wilmington? (p. 61)
28. Why do you think Jackson makes Moses return the bike with an apology, even though the man exhibits a racist attitude?
29. When Moses expresses fear returning the bike to its owner, his father tries to reassure him by saying, "It's easy for a man to be hateful in a group. It's harder when he's face to face. You'll show him what you're worth. A real man admits his mistakes." What message is he trying to convey regarding hate and responsibility? (p. 72)

### **Chapter Four**

30. Describe Moses's relationship with Tommy. Why does Moses feel guilty about the prank he and Lewis played on him?
31. What is your opinion of Moses's choice regarding whether to turn Tommy in as his swimming companion? What would you have done and why?
32. When Moses complains regarding the law about swimming, his father responds, "You may not agree with the laws, but we can't govern a city if people pick and choose which laws they want to follow." What message is he trying to convey regarding the rule of law? (p. 94)
33. Moses says of his father, "As a leader of the community, he was always thinking about the greater good." What does the phrase "greater good" mean? In what ways is government supposed to protect the greater good? How effective was government at doing this in 1898? How effective is our government today in protecting the greater good? (p. 94)
34. Why does Moses have to take a job picking okra? Why does he get fired from this job? (p. 101-102)

## Chapter Five

35. What differences between Boo Nanny and Jackson are highlighted in this chapter?
36. What does Boo Nanny mean when she says to Moses, “ ‘Now, your daddy could talk a possum out of a tree, but sometimes he can’t see what’s dead straight in front of his nose if it ain’t in a book. Knowing’s first and foremost ‘bout seeing what’s in front of you...’ ” (p. 107)
37. Moses notes of his father, “Daddy believed that the only way to improve our race was through education.” Why do you think Jackson feels this way? In what ways might education improve the lives of African Americans in 1898? Is there anything you would argue is more necessary than education for such improvements in 1898? (p. 108)
38. Why do you think Boo Nanny is afraid of trying to learn to read? (p. 109)
39. According to Jackson, why does Boo Nanny lack self-confidence? (“She grew up as a slave, when it was against the law to teach Negroes to read and write. She spent her formative years in bondage. Your grandmother is an amazing woman, but when you’re bought and sold like a mule, treated like dirt, told you’re inferior, and taken advantage of in ways you can’t begin to imagine, it’s hard to develop any self-confidence.” p. 109)
40. Who is Mrs. Felton and what was the gist of her speech’s message? What did Mrs. Felton mean when she said, “If it takes lynching to protect woman’s dearest possession from the ravening human beasts, then I say lynch a thousand times a week if necessary.” (p. 114)
41. How did Alex Manly respond to Mrs. Felton’s speech? What point was he making when he wrote, “Tell your men that it is no worse for a black man to be intimate with a white woman than for a white man to be intimate with a colored woman”? (p. 115)
42. What do you already know regarding lynching? How does Moses’s father explain lynching to him? Jackson notes, “Sometimes men get together in groups, and a herd mentality develops and they do things they wouldn’t do individually.” What examples can you think of that illustrate the concept of “herd mentality”? (p. 117)
43. According to Jackson, how does viewing people as “others,” or taking away their dignity by calling them names like brute or beast, make it easier to treat them poorly? (p. 117) What examples throughout history, or in current events, can you identify that illustrate this concept?
44. How does Boo Nanny feel about Manly’s message? What is she referring to when she says, “That Mrs. Felton don’t get herself exercised none over the brutality our womens endure at the hand of the white man. This mixing done humiliated us, tore our families apart, and some society lady has the nerve to suggest that their precious womanhood be at risk. That woman be a hypocrite”? (p. 120)
45. Why does the building owner become angry with Alex Manly? He states, “Give them a little power and that’s what you get. Insolence like that deserves a good thrashing.” What is insolence? What is a better description of how Alex Manly spoke? (p. 123)
46. How would you characterize Alex Manly based on what you have learned about him thus far? What has he risked by responding to Mrs. Felton’s speech?
47. What are some of the consequences that have resulted thus far from Alex Manly’s editorial? Predict what additional repercussions may result.

## Chapter Six

48. How does the treatment Moses receives from the hardware clerk differ from that of the white boy and his father? (p. 126-127)
49. Why didn’t Moses win the bike contest? How would you feel if you were in this situation?
50. In what ways are Moses’s father and grandmother alike? In what ways are they different? (“Now, your daddy’s the smartest man I know, but for all his book learning, he couldn’t tell the difference

between a buzzard and a crow. He's a modern man, always looking ahead. Boo Nanny favors the old ways, the stories and cures and superstitions from slave days, passed down from Africa by mouth 'cause folks couldn't write." p. 137)

51. Why does Boo Nanny refuse to talk about slavery? Why do you think she refuses to tell Sadie about who her father is? (p. 137)
52. Under what conditions did Boo Nanny leave the plantation? What do you imagine it took for her to succeed? (p. 138)

### Chapter Seven

53. What does Moses's mother find out about her father? (p. 143)
54. What type of skills do you infer that enslaved people working on a turpentine plantation possessed? (p. 147)
55. What happened to Boo Nanny's first baby, Henry?
56. What does Moses mean when he says, "Sometimes I wanted to be a man, but that night, I wanted to be a boy, so I didn't ask any more questions"? (p. 156)
57. Why was Moses given his name? (p. 156)

### Chapter Eight

58. What does Moses experience when taking a seat on the train? How do you imagine this experience felt? How do you imagine it felt for his father?
59. How do the conditions of the "colored car" compare to that of the cars for whites? (p. 159)
60. Why was it so dangerous for Moses to get separated from his father, particularly while the Democratic rally was taking place?
61. Describe the scene at the Democratic rally. How do you imagine Moses's father feels, given that he understands what these people stand for?
62. What is your impression of Ben Tillman? Describe the tone of his speech. What is his message? What is his goal with the speech? (p. 166-167)
63. Why are Tillman and the rally participants so upset over Fusionism? (p. 167)
64. Who are the Red Shirts? (p. 170)
65. What is the Fusion Party and why are many whites so against it? (p. 171)
66. Moses's father says, "If people are afraid, they'll do anything." What examples throughout history can you identify that exemplify this? (p. 171)
67. Moses asks his father why white people hate them. What is his explanation and do you feel he did a good job answering the question? Why or why not? What would you add to his answer, if anything? ("Ignorance. People hate and fear what they don't understand. The best thing we can do is get to know our white neighbor, work with him, show him what makes us tick – that we're no different from him." p. 171)
68. How does Moses's father explain differences? (p. 172)
69. According to Jackson, why is government important given that differences exist? ("That's why we need good government – to make sure things are equal, to counteract man's tendency to grab the spoils for his own kind and cut out the others." p. 172)
70. What worry does Moses's father have regarding the upcoming election for state and county officials? (p. 173)
71. Boo Nanny says, "Trust white folks if you wants, but might as well put you hand in a pit of vipers." Why do you think she feels this way? (p. 173)
72. Why does Moses say he no longer wants to grow up? Have you ever felt this way? Explain. (p. 173)

## Chapter Nine

73. Jackson tells Moses, "Never judge a man till you've walked a mile in his shoes." In what ways does this message relate to many of the events in the book thus far? (p. 175)
74. When Moses questions why "Crazy Drake" can vote, how does his father defend this right? Do you agree or disagree? (p. 176)
75. Jackson refers to "common interest" in this chapter (which is similar to common good) – what is this concept as it relates to democracy? (p. 176)
76. Why does Jackson believe it is so important to vote? He states, "A vote is the strongest right a citizen has. If we don't exercise that right, we'll never have a voice." Do you agree and why? Do most people feel this way today? Explain. (p. 177)
77. What reasons does Jackson give people for voting, and in particular, voting Republican? (p. 177)
78. Why are many of the African Americans that Moses and Jackson speak with afraid to vote? How does Jackson try to persuade them to overcome their fear? ("The Democrats are trying their best to scare us away from the polls. You don't have to worry. Your right to vote is protected by the Constitution." p. 177)
79. One man responds to Jackson's mention of the Constitution by stating, "The Constitution don't mean nothing when I be laying there, cemetery dead." While this is funny, what truth lies within this statement? (p. 178)
80. Jackson states that "Democracy is hard work." Is this how most people view democracy, as something that is active and that is difficult work? Explain. (p. 178) Do you agree or disagree that democracy is difficult and why?
81. Why do you think the white newspaper reprinted Alex Manly's article? (p. 178)
82. Why do you think the Red Shirts pull the gun through the colored section of town? At this point, Moses thinks back to the men who were afraid to go to the polls and asks, "What would they think now?" How do you think this will impact African American voters? (p. 181)
83. "'I hear white folk is organizing block by block, military style,' Mama said. 'They convinced our people gone torch the town.'" Why do you think this is the case? What are these white people afraid of and why are they reacting in this manner? (p. 181)
84. When asked how she overhears her employers' conversations, Sadie replies, "Jackson, to these folk, I be the same color as that window pane there. 'Cause long as the stew gets on the table and the dishes be cleared, I might as well be invisible." What does this statement tell us regarding the relationship between African American housekeepers and their white employers? (p. 182)
85. Jackson believes that voting is "the most important thing I do as a citizen" – do you agree? In general, why is voting so important? Why do you think it's so important to Jackson in particular? (p. 183)
86. When Jackson talks of how African Americans can make a difference with their vote, Boo Nanny responds, "I may be an unlettered old crow, but I knows the massa's math..." What does she mean? (p. 183)
87. Characterize Alfred Waddell's speech in front of Thalian Hall. In what ways are whites such as Waddell and Ben Tillman using fear to impact the upcoming election?
88. In his speech in front of Thalian Hall, Waddell tells the crowd, "You are Anglo-Saxons! You are armed and prepared, and you will do your duty. Be ready at a moment's notice. If you find the Negro out voting, tell him to leave the polls, and if he refuses, kill him, shoot him down in his tracks. We shall win this election, even if we have to do it with guns." He goes on to say, "We will never surrender to a ragged raffle of Negroes, even if we have to choke the Cape Fear River with



- carcasses..." How would you feel hearing this as an African American? Would you vote? Why or why not? In reality, what would you be risking to vote? (p. 185)
89. Regarding his interaction with Alex Manly, Moses says, "One thing I never wanted to be was a writer. Not after the bicycle context." Recognizing how one unjust experience impacted Moses so deeply, what can this teach us about what we say to and how we treat others? (p. 187)
  90. Why are white people not selling guns or ammunition to African Americans? What is ironic regarding the "fear" the white community is exhibiting? (p. 188)
  91. The Reverend visits Manly and warns him he is in danger, yet refuses to let him hide in his church explaining, "I have to strike a balance between being true to my convictions and keeping my job." (p. 189) In your opinion, did the Reverend do enough to help? What examples can you note that illustrate how others walked this same line throughout history (helping but also protecting themselves?)
  92. Characterize Moses's decision to help Alex Manly escape. Would you have done the same? Why or why not? What was Moses risking, whether he realized it or not, by helping? While it is easy as a reader living in today's time to assume we would have helped, if we were actually living in 1898, why would this decision have been a hard one?
  93. Describe Alex Manly. Considering that this is an educated man who exercised his freedom of speech against injustice, what are the various emotions he likely feels while hiding in the tunnel and why?
  94. Moses asked Boo Nanny why pictures of angels are always white. (p. 192) What answer would you give him?
  95. What sense do you get regarding the climate of the city as Mr. Hanson and Moses drive Alex Manly out of town?
  96. Moses describes the scene: "I was surprised by the number of men who were patrolling the streets with weapons. A stranger might think the city was at war. The men gathered around tar barrels at the corners and littered in parks and medians. They did not look particularly prosperous or organized. Some wore tattered civilian clothes, others fragments of Rough Rider uniforms, Confederate grays, or the new outfit of choice, a red shirt. The White Government Union warriors wore white armbands. Many men were drinking. The aldermen had passed an ordinance outlawing alcohol within five days of the election, but there was no one to enforce it." Given this, what do you predict might happen on Election Day? (p. 193-194)
  97. Moses wonders, "Where was the government now...?" Why isn't anyone stopping the lawlessness that is occurring? Can you relate this to other historical or modern occurrences? (p. 194)
  98. At the road stop, the man mentions a "necktie party" – what is he referring to? What role did lynching play during the 1800s? (p. 195)
  99. Why was Jackson so upset when he found out Moses helped Manly escape? (p. 199-200)
  100. Jackson tells Moses, "There's a lot more ugliness out there than I've led you to believe, and I haven't prepared you for it. I saw this clearly when you told me about Mr. Manly's escape. You didn't realize the danger you were in, and because of that, I could very well have lost you. And I would have had no one to blame but myself. I've been naïve. I've taught you to live in a world I wanted to exist, not one that actually does." What does he mean by this? What is the difference in the world Jackson wants to exist and the one that actually does in 1898? (p. 202)
  101. Jackson and Moses discuss:
 

"I raised you in the belief that what it took to succeed in life was the same thing that it took to be a good man: honesty and hard work, courage and curiosity, loyalty and patriotism. But we're up against something I don't understand and don't know how to adapt to. I've sheltered you from it, and in the process have made you more vulnerable."

“What’s that?”

“The intractability of hate,’ he said.” (p. 202-203)

What is intractability? What does Jackson mean? Why would this be such a difficult conversation to have with your child?

102. How does Moses respond to his father’s deep admission? Why do you think he answers in this way? How does “Can I get a dog?” illustrate Moses’s youth? (p. 203)

## Chapter 10

103. What are the results of the elections? Moses’s father reports that the Democrats won the election fairly, but Boo Nanny disagrees. Why? Which person do you think is correct and why? (p. 206)
104. Who are the Committee of Twenty-Five, according to Mr. Williams? Who are they in actuality?
105. What does Mr. Williams and the Committee expect of Jackson and the other African American officials? (p. 209-210) What is ironic about a committee of white people being concerned about restoring order to the city?”
106. Mr. Williams tells Jackson that he and the Committee are worried about Wilmington’s community and reputation. How does Jackson respond to him? What message is he conveying when he says, “You can’t preach hate and then shirk responsibility for the way hate is manifested.” (p. 210)
107. How does Jackson respond to Mr. Williams’s request that he resign as alderman? (p. 211-213) What does he highlight regarding Wilmington in his response?
108. Jackson says: “My wife was born into slavery, but grew up to know what freedom and opportunity are like. And my wife’s mother, she’s working out in the backyard right now. She lived her first thirty years as a slave, bought and sold like the mules that you trade at market. For the past week, these two women have been cowering inside the house in fear...And my son sitting her beside you, he’s a smart boy. He wants to go to college. He will do great things in the world. We live in Wilmington because it’s a good place to raise a family. There’s opportunity. He has role models with people of color in the police and fire departments, as alderman...That boy, I’m so proud of him, and I want him to be proud of me. How’s he going to do that if I cave in to the ridiculous demands of a mob that has stolen the elections, ignited violence, and then pointed fingers at the most powerless people on the political ladder?...No, Mr. Williams, I will not resign as alderman. I was democratically elected. You go back and tell that self-appointed Committee of Twenty-Five that if the people in my ward want me out, there’s a way for them to express their wishes. It’s called an election, and by my calendar, it’s not scheduled until next spring...Now get off my porch, before I do something that will justify your view of my race.” (p. 212-213) How would you characterize his response overall? What does his response tell you about Jackson?
109. Jackson tells the group assembled at the Cape Fear Club, “It is now thirty-five years since Emancipation. No one appreciates the right to vote more than those who have been denied it for so long. Anything is possible as long as we have the vote. We cannot let them take away that power without a fight.” Why do you think voting is so important to him? Do you agree with him? Why or why not? Do you think most people today feel as strongly regarding the importance of voting? Explain. (p. 219)
110. What is the “White Declaration of Independence?” What does it set forth? How would you feel reading the document if you were an African American living in 1898?
111. Why do you think Jackson feels it is important that the African American community respond very carefully to the “White Declaration of Independence,” particularly with no violence? (p. 220)
112. What are all the various choices the group has in responding to the White Declaration? Imagine you are in the room. What would you advise in terms of how to respond?

113. Jackson says, “I aspire to a world in which my son can become whatever his talents and his vision combine to make him. A world where, if he works hard and treats others with respect, there is no limit to what he can accomplish. As a parent and as a citizen, this is what matters most to me.” How would Jackson feel regarding our society today? Has his vision become reality? Why or why not? (p. 221)

### Chapter Eleven

114. What are two specific ways Jackson defies Jim Crow at the start of this chapter? (p. 227)
115. What happens to *The Record*? What does the torching of *The Record* illustrate regarding what is occurring in Wilmington?
116. Jackson says “You can’t reason across the table from hatred.” What does he mean? Do you agree? Explain. How should hatred be handled when faced with it? What examples of hatred can you think of throughout history and how did people respond? (p. 232)
117. When Jackson learns that firemen aren’t coming, he goes to get them. How do you think he convinced them to continue on to *The Record*? (p. 237)

### Chapter Twelve

118. How does Mrs. Gilchrist’s understanding of what took place at *The Record* differ from what actually happened? What role has misinformation played up to this point in the unfolding events?
119. What occurs at Sprunt’s Cotton Compress? Characterize Mr. Sprunt’s response to the mob. (p. 244-245)
120. Moses thinks of his father’s saying that “Fear turns men’s brains to mush.” What examples from the book thus far illustrate this? What examples throughout history and in modern times illustrate this concept? (p. 244)
121. Summarize the events that took place at Walker’s grocery. Why doesn’t the ambulance pick up the wounded African Americans? (p. 247-250)
122. Why are so many groups (i.e., Rough Riders, Redshirts, and the Wilmington Light Infantry) patrolling the African American neighborhood, when it’s not African Americans brandishing weapons or committing crimes? (p. 251)
123. Why does Tommy kick Moses, who he had come to know as a friend? Why is this so hurtful to Moses, even beyond the obvious physical pain? (p. 254)
124. In what ways is racism often learned/passed down from parents to children? How is Tommy illustrative of this?
125. Why are some African Americans fleeing into the swamp? What are the conditions like there? What does this choice illustrate regarding the environment in Wilmington? (p. 260)
126. How did you feel when reading about the little girl Moses finds?
127. Describe the conditions at the black section of the hospital. (p. 262)

### Chapter Thirteen

128. Why is Moses’s father so upset by the burning of the *Record*? Jackson notes, “Now’s the time our community really needs a paper to make sense of what’s going on. But it’s destroyed, along with all of the back issues. I can’t stand to think about it – the voice of the people silenced, the historical record wiped out.” (p. 266) Why does he consider the newspaper the “voice of the people?” Do you think this is true of newspapers today? Explain.
129. Why is Moses’s father being banished from Wilmington? How is the Committee of Twenty Five getting away with exiling those that threaten them?

130. How does Jackson view the Committee in terms of democracy? (“I see you hold democracy in high regard for members of your own race. If there’s a unanimous vote by a self-selected group that supports your purpose, you’re all for it. But if the citizens express themselves legally through elections and you don’t like the results, then you feel justified in overturning the will of the people.” p. 268)
131. Characterize Jackson’s response to the men who show up to remove him from his home and city.
132. Jackson tells the men, “Let’s be clear. This is not about your protecting me or protecting my community. This is about mob rule, a white minority that has seized control of a city and thrown out the rule of law, along with the democratically elected city government. Mark my words, this will not stand the scrutiny of time.” Do you feel his prophecy came true? Do you think most people know all of the facts regarding what took place in 1898? Why or why not? Why is it important to know what took place during the Wilmington Race Riot, even though it took place back in 1898? (p. 270)
133. What is Sadie’s point when she says, “White folk thinks we so dangerous, yet they lets us take care of their babies. What sense do that make?” (p. 273) What other examples of white hypocrisy can you identify, either from the book or from your own knowledge of the Jim Crow era?
134. “Despite the proclamations of wanting to rid the Port City of ignorant Negroes, it was the educated, successful blacks who were chosen for exile.” Why was this the case? (p. 274)
135. Characterize Jackson’s speech on the train platform.
136. Jackson tells the crowd, “The white supremacists among you decry black crime and black laziness, but it is, in truth, black competence and independence that you fear most. Witness here the men you have chosen to banish...These men are not minstrels, buffoons, or faithful retainers. Those types pose no threat. No, these men are educated, ambitious achievers – preachers, lawyers, men who own businesses and homes. *That* is what scares you.” What does he mean? (p. 276)
137. Jackson’s last words to Moses are interrupted as he dies saying, “Never give up. Always...” What do you think he was going to say? Always what? (p. 278)
138. Why is Jackson considered a hero? What do you think this means to Moses? (p. 279)

#### Fourteen

139. Why do you think it is so important to Moses’s mother that he not quit school? (p. 281)
140. Characterize the way Moses handles himself at the organ shop. What gave him the courage to behave in this way? (p. 284-287)
141. Moses asked, “What’s to become of us?” What do you think will happen to the family? Were you to write the next chapter of the book, what might it include? (p. 282)
142. The book ends with Moses running into Tommy – why do you think neither mentions the last time they saw one another? Why do you think the author chose to end the book with their reconnecting? What might this symbolize?

### Culminating Discussion Questions

#### Characters

- Who is your favorite character and why?
- Which character do you find most inspiring and why?
- If you could ask any of the characters a question, what and who would you ask?
- Of everything Moses dealt with, what do you think was most difficult and why?
- Considering everything you learned regarding Boo Nanny throughout the book, what is most admirable about her?
- What does Moses gain from finding out what happened when Boo Nanny was enslaved?

- Consider the characters of Boo Nanny and Jackson. In what ways are they similar? In what ways are they different? Describe the different life philosophies of Jackson and Boo Nanny. How does Moses benefit from each? Put yourself in Moses's shoes and imagine that for whatever reason, you had to choose between living with/being raised by only one of the two. Who would you choose – Boo Nanny or Jackson – and why?
- In your opinion, what does it mean to be educated? How do Boo Nanny and Jackson's views on education differ? With whom do you more agree and why? Quotes to consider:
  - "Ain't no reason he can't learn by living *and* book learning." (p. 34)
  - "She grew up on a plantation by the ocean and knew an awful lot for someone who couldn't read or write. She taught me things that Daddy, with all his degrees, didn't know..." (p. 106)
  - "'Now, your daddy could talk a possum out of a tree, but sometimes he can't see what's dead straight in front of his nose if it ain't in a book. Knowing's first and foremost 'bout seeing what's in front of you,' she said." (p. 107)
  - "Now, your daddy's the smartest man I know, but for all his book learning, he couldn't tell the difference between a buzzard and a crow. He's a modern man, always looking ahead. Boo Nanny favors the old ways, the stories and cures and superstitions from slave days, passed down from Africa by mouth 'cause folks couldn't write." (p. 137)
- Considering Jackson's personality and character, what do you think would be most important to him regarding what Moses does and how he behaves throughout his life?

### **Racism, Inequality & Hate**

- During slavery, it was against the law to teach slaves to read and write. Doctors and medicine were not available, and storytelling was the only way to preserve history. How did Boo Nanny's experiences as a slave help shape her world view, her interests, and her attitudes about white people? How do her views differ from those of Jackson, who was born a free black?
- In your opinion, what caused the 1898 Wilmington Race Riots? Why did the events escalate to the point that they did?
- What is prejudice? Describe a time when Moses experiences prejudice or witnesses prejudice. Describe a time when Moses, without knowing it, reveals his own prejudices. Do you think you are always aware of the prejudices you might have? Explain.
- What is racism? What are the various ways racism/racial inequality is evident throughout the book? Why did such inequality exist (both in society and in the law) and what did it take for improvements to occur so that we have a better society today? While society today has improved since that of 1898, what improvements are still needed (in society, in law and the justice system, etc.)? Explain.
- In what ways does Jackson defy Jim Crow throughout the book?
- The book takes place in 1898, 35 years after the issuing of the Emancipation Proclamation and 33 years after the end of the Civil War. In what ways are the after effects of slavery still present throughout the book and how did this contribute to the events that unfolded?
- Could something like the 1898 Wilmington Race Riot, which included the overthrowing and exile of African American leaders and white sympathizers, happen today? Explain.
- What is our responsibility (individually and as a society) to ensure events such as the 1898 Wilmington Race Riot do not occur again? What does it take to keep history from repeating itself?
- Quotes to consider:
  - "There's a lot more ugliness out there than I've led you to believe, and I haven't prepared you for it. I saw this clearly when you told me about Mr. Manly's escape. You didn't realize the danger you were in, and because of that, I could very well have lost you. And I would have had no one

to blame but myself. I've been naïve. I've taught you to live in a world I wanted to exist, not one that actually does." What does he mean by this? What is the difference in the world Jackson wants to exist and the one that actually does in 1898? (p. 202)

- "I raised you in the belief that what it took to succeed in life was the same thing that it took to be a good man: honesty and hard work, courage and curiosity, loyalty and patriotism. But we're up against something I don't understand and don't know how to adapt to. I've sheltered you from it, and in the process have made you more vulnerable."
- "What's that?"
- "The intractability of hate," he said." (p. 202-203)
- "I aspire to a world in which my son can become whatever his talents and his vision combine to make him. A world where, if he works hard and treats others with respect, there is no limit to what he can accomplish. As a parent and as a citizen, this is what matters most to me." (p. 221)
- "My wife was born into slavery, but grew up to know what freedom and opportunity are like. And my wife's mother, she's working out in the backyard right now. She lived her first thirty years as a slave, bought and sold like the mules that you trade at market. For the past week, these two women have been cowering inside the house in fear...And my son sitting here beside you, he's a smart boy. He wants to go to college. He will do great things in the world. We live in Wilmington because it's a good place to raise a family. There's opportunity. He has role models with people of color in the police and fire departments, as aldermen...That boy, I'm so proud of him, and I want him to be proud of me. How's he going to do that if I cave in to the ridiculous demands of a mob that has stolen the elections, ignited violence, and then pointed fingers at the most powerless people on the political ladder?...No, Mr. Williams, I will not resign as alderman. I was democratically elected. You go back and tell that self-appointed Committee of Twenty-Five that if the people in my ward want me out, there's a way for them to express their wishes. It's called an election, and by my calendar, it's not scheduled until next spring...Now get off my porch, before I do something that will justify your view of my race." (p. 212-213)

### **Democracy, voting, & rule of law**

- What is the greatest lesson the reader can learn from Jackson in your opinion?
- What is your definition and understanding of democracy? How does Moses's father view democracy? Why do you think he feels democracy is so important?
- Why does Jackson believe voting is so important? Do you agree with his view and why?
- Moses said of his father, "As a leader of the community, he was always thinking about the greater good." In what ways did government fail to protect the greater good in 1898 Wilmington?
- How does Jackson feel regarding the rule of law? While he never directly addresses it, how do you imagine the existence of Jim Crow laws impacted his beliefs?
- Quotes to consider:
  - "You may not agree with the laws, but we can't govern a city if people pick and choose which laws they want to follow. As a leader of the community, he was always thinking about the greater good." (p. 94)
  - "That's why we need good government – to make sure things are equal, to counteract man's tendency to grab the spoils for his own kind and cut out the others." (p. 172)
  - "It is now thirty-five years since Emancipation. No one appreciates the right to vote more than those who have been denied it for so long. Anything is possible as long as we have the vote. We cannot let them take away that power without a fight." (p. 219)

## General

- What did you like about *CROW*? What was your favorite part of the book and why? Which part did you find most exciting? Most upsetting?
- If you were the editor, is there anything you would change about *CROW*? Explain.
- Why do you think the book is titled *CROW*? If you had to select another title, what would you call it and why?
- If you could ask the author a question, what would you want to know?
- Why do you think the author chose to write a book set during the 1898 riot?
- Based on everything you've learned about the events in 1898 Wilmington and your reading of *CROW*, is referring to the events as a "race riot" appropriate? Why or why not? The terms massacre, insurrection, and coup d'état have also been used. Do any of these descriptions fit better? What might you call it alternatively?
- Why is it important to know about the 1898 Wilmington Race Riot?