

A Study Guide for
Olivia's Story: The Conspiracy of
Heroes Behind "Shelley v. Kraemer"

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Introduction

By Jeffrey S. Copeland

American history is dotted with stories of the fight for equality and justice for all. Some of these are well known and can be recited by virtually everyone. Others are recognized by national holidays and observances. Still others, many of which provided the foundation for these important social changes, reside quietly, if not mostly forgotten, on history's long and winding shelves. One such story, one that figuratively and literally changed the color of the American landscape, unfolds within the pages of *Olivia's Story*. It is the story of a remarkable woman, Olivia Merriweather Perkins, who came together with four other social pioneers to help build the foundation for one of the most important legal decisions in the history of this land. Without regard for their own personal safety and well-being, they helped set the stage for a legal battle that rocked America, that became a full-blown war on the front lines of the fight for equality. Their story is an inspiration, a call for justice, to this very day. It is also a story of friendship and loyalty and devotion. It is, finally, a slice of American history that helps us define *who* we are and *why* we are today. It is a story that never should be forgotten.



Chapter 1

Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think neighbors in the Ville called celebrations for new home owners “Emancipation Parties”? To what famous historical document does this name refer?
2. Why was getting a home in the Ville such an important event for an African American family?
3. Olivia refers to the Ville as being an “island” and having “invisible fences.” Why are these appropriate descriptions for her neighborhood?
4. What was “The Rumor” about Ella that went around Sumner High School?
5. What were some of the reasons the deputies questioned Ella about her step-father’s disappearance?
6. Why do you think the single men of the Ville nicknamed Ella and Olivia the “Poison Sisters”?
7. What did Olivia and Ella have in common that made their close friendship so natural?
8. Why do you think Ella refused to talk about her step-father to Olivia, her close friend?



Writing Activities

The neighbors of the Ville held “Emancipation Parties” to welcome newcomers to the neighborhood. In the spirit of fun, all the guests brought silly or impractical gifts for the home. Imagine your class is holding a party to welcome a new teacher to your school. What would be some silly classroom-related gifts you could bring that teacher?

Imagine you are the principal of Sumner High School and parents are coming to you asking about “The Rumor” regarding Ella Dunbar. Since you have talked to Ella and are satisfied with her explanation, write a short memo that you would send to the parents explaining your position. Remember, as you write the memo, be sure you respect the sensitivity of the issue and Ella’s privacy.

Vocabulary

emancipation covenant cretin

Chapter 2

Discussion Questions

1. What made Olivia think that her friends knew in advance that Tubby would make a grand entrance?
2. What do you think was Tubby’s strategy in proposing this way to Olivia? Why didn’t it work?
3. In Reverend Danielson’s speech, what does he talk about to show the people gathered how far they’ve come, the progress they’ve made?
4. What rights are the people gathered still trying to achieve? Of those, which does Reverend Danielson most emphasize?



5. Reverend Danielson mentions a church-sponsored trip to see Jackie Robinson play baseball. What was significant about Jackie Robinson? What “emancipation” was he facing at the time?
6. At this period in history, the Ville was more than a neighborhood. Reverend Danielson welcomes Ella as a member of the Ville “family.” How do the guests at the Emancipation Party behave more like family members than simply neighbors?
7. At the end of Chapter 2, Reverend Danielson invites Olivia to join in helping J.D. Shelly. It is the beginning of the conspiracy. From what you have learned already about Olivia in the first two chapters, what traits does she show that make her likely to take a risk to help someone?
8. Readers are given only some vivid images from Olivia’s reoccurring dream. What are some of the questions these brief images raise? What do you want to know about the incident that may be behind this dream?



Writing Activities

Imagine that you are a friend of Tubby’s, and he has written you about his plans to surprise Olivia at the Emancipation Party. How would you respond? Would you encourage him to go ahead with his plans for a dramatic proposal or would you encourage him to wait? Write your response in letter form.

Imagine that you are a reporter for the Ville’s neighborhood newspaper. Write the story of Ella’s Emancipation Party as it might appear on the front page of this newspaper.

Does “family” have to be parents and children who live in the same household? Write a short essay that explains your definition of family. Use examples from your own experience to show what you mean.

Vocabulary

coup de grace courtly behavior conga line maestro

Chapter 3

Discussion Questions

1. What effects do you think losing Inman has had on Olivia? Think about both the immediate effects and the long term effects.
2. In what ways do Ella and Olivia seem to look out for each other?
3. The members of the congregation were shocked to find out that Reverend Danielson himself was the subject of his sermon. Do you think they had more or less respect for him after learning that he had been so caught up in material goods? Why?
4. Conspiring to purchase the home at 4600 Labadie meant taking a serious risk. Why was each of the conspirators willing to take that risk? What do you think motivated each of the following conspirators: Reverend Danielson, J.T. Bush, Josephine Fitzgerald, J.D. Shelley, Olivia?
5. Which part of the conspirators’ plan is not legal? Do you think they are justified in planning to break this law? Why or why not?



6. Olivia has good writing skills and extra money that could be used to mount a legal defense. Why else do you think she was chosen as a member of this group?
7. Chapter 3 ends with more images from Olivia's reoccurring dream? Do these images answer any of your questions about the dream? Do they raise any new questions?

Writing Activities

Imagine that you are one of Olivia's science students at Sumner High School, and you have just learned that she is at risk of losing her job because she secretly married Inman Perkins. Write a letter to the school board that states your opinion on what action should be taken regarding Mrs. Perkins.

Imagine that you are Olivia's friend and she has come to you for advice on whether or not to join the conspirators. Make two columns on a sheet of paper. Label one side "Pro" and one side "Con." In the "Pro" column list all the reasons you can think of for joining the conspiracy and in the "Con" column list all the reasons for avoiding this conspiracy. Then write a short paragraph explaining what you think Olivia should do and why.

In his "Letter from a Birmingham Jail" Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. addresses what makes a law just or unjust:



An unjust law is a code that a numerical or power majority group compels a minority group to obey but does not make binding on itself. This is difference made legal. By the same token, a just law is a code that a majority compels a minority to follow and that it is willing to follow itself. This is sameness made legal. Let me give another explanation. A law is unjust if it is inflicted on a minority that, as a result of being denied the right to vote, had no part in enacting or devising the law.

According to Dr. King's definition, are the real estate covenants "just"? Write a short essay telling why or why not.

Vocabulary

whirlwind adrenaline reprimand baritone
 fledgling endeavor expendable



Chapter 4

Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think teasing each other is such an important part of Ella and Olivia's relationship?
2. What made the Jewel Box such a special place for Olivia?
3. Why is it ironic that the Jewel Box was chosen by the Daughters of Dixie for their event?
4. Do you think Olivia would have still gone to the Jewel Box had she known it was a meeting of the Daughters of Dixie? Why or why not?

5. At first Olivia seems angry at the elderly man dressed in the jockey outfit. Why does she act this way?
6. Although the daughters of Dixie are obviously unhappy that Olivia is there, no one asks her to leave. Why?
7. Mr. Sullivan was confused by Olivia's answer to his question, yet he acted as though she gave the correct answer. Why do you think he did this?
8. Why do you think looking at Mr. Sullivan's card make Olivia cry? What was so confusing about this whole evening for Olivia?
9. Piecing together the clues from the description of the robbery, what sorts of conclusions can you draw about the robber?
10. Do you agree with Olivia's decision not to contact the police? Why or why not?

Writing Activities

Imagine that you were at the Jewel Box and witnessed the Daughters of Dixie's treatment of Olivia. Write a letter to the Jewel Box's proprietors expressing your opinion about the group and its intentions to continue using the Jewel Box for its gatherings.

Vocabulary

overtly subtly meandering segregation cantilevered



Chapter 5

Discussion Questions

1. Olivia is such a strong person. Why do you think she was so emotionally distraught after the incident with the intruder?
2. Why do you think Jackie Robinson continued to play baseball even though he was treated so poorly by the fans and even received death threats?
3. Olivia and Ella enjoy playing jokes on each other. Which joke do you think was the most clever? Do you think the jokes went too far? Why or why not?
4. Why is their friendship so important to Olivia and Ella?
5. The conspirators are very nervous as they meet to discuss their plans to go around the law and obtain the Labadie house for the Shelley family. Besides possibly going to jail, what other consequences might the conspirators face if they are caught?
6. Why is D-Day an appropriate name for the Friday when all of the paperwork goes to the bank?
7. J.D. says, "With all this secrecy and all these plans, you'd think we were robbing the place." Do you think some would feel what the conspirators are doing is actually a form of robbery? Why or why not?
8. How do you think Jackie Robinson feels about Olivia's teasing him? Is he surprised? Amused? Upset? Explain his reaction.
9. What is the real reason Jackie Robinson cannot stay at the Chase Hotel?

10. After reading about Jackie Robinson's experiences and his reasons for breaking the segregation barrier in professional baseball, do you think he was, as Olivia joked, an "idiot" or a hero? Why?

Writing Activities

Imagine that Jackie Robinson is trying to decide whether or not to be the first player to leave the Negro Leagues to play in professional baseball, and he has asked for your advice. Make a list of the pros and cons of this decision and then write a letter to Jackie Robinson giving him your opinion as to what he should do.

Write a letter to the Chase Hotel explaining why you think it is so wrong that Jackie Robinson is not allowed to stay there with the rest of his teammates.



Vocabulary

perfunctory gallows humor haggled notarize diversion shutterbug diligent

Chapter 6

Discussion Questions

1. How do you think Ella and her friends should have handled the situation at the ballpark?
2. How does the story of Homer Phillips help to explain why neither Olivia nor Ella called the police when she was attacked?
3. Why do you think Olivia did not confront Jimmy when she realized he was the one who had broken into her house?
4. At this point in the story, does Jimmy seem like the kind of person who would rob someone like Olivia? Explain.
5. Should Ella try to get revenge against the men who attacked her and her friends? Should Olivia try to get revenge against Jimmy? Why or why not?

Writing Activities

Imagine that you've been asked to write the inscription for the dedication plaque for Homer G. Phillips Hospital. In 250 words, write what you would want this dedication to say about the man for whom this hospital is named.

Obviously there is a problem when those who live in the Ville do not feel the police will protect them. What steps do you think could be taken to solve this problem? Write up a proposal you would take to the community leaders in the Ville and to the government leaders in St. Louis.

Vocabulary

demeanor visionary

Chapter 7



Discussion Questions

1. Olivia and Ella are close friends, so why do you think Olivia doesn't want to tell Ella about Jimmy?
2. Why do you think Reverend Danielson would like to see both Olivia and Ella get married? Should he be playing "Cupid" and trying to set them up with dates?
3. Why can't Olivia see herself with Tubby even though he obviously loves her?
4. As Olivia sits in the diner, anger is all she feels. What has caused all this anger to bubble up in her now?
5. Again, Olivia has her reoccurring dream. What new images or details are revealed in this dream?

Writing Activities

Olivia has so much going on in her life right now. She is involved in a conspiracy that could get her arrested. She feels unsafe in her own home because of Jimmy. She misses Inman and doesn't know what to do about Tubby. Choose one of her problems and imagine you were sitting with Olivia in the diner, talking with her and offering some advice. Write out the conversation you would have.

Vocabulary

haven suitors mashers pester gyrations

Chapter 8

Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think Olivia was willing to give Jimmy a chance to explain his actions?
2. Jimmy said his father "was passing." What does that mean? Why do you think it was necessary for Jimmy's father to do this?
3. Why was Olivia able to understand the risks Jimmy and his father had taken?
4. Do you think Olivia's treatment and punishment of Jimmy was appropriate? Why or why not?
5. At the end of the chapter, Olivia herself is preparing to break the law just as Jimmy and his father broke the law. How must she feel her actions are different and, therefore, more justified?

Writing Activities

Is it ever morally right to break a law? Here is what Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. wrote on the subject in his "Letter from a Birmingham Jail": "I submit that an individual who breaks a law that conscience tells him is unjust, and who willingly accepts the penalty of imprisonment in order to arouse the conscience of the community over its injustice, is in reality expressing the highest respect for law." Do you think Dr.

King would support what Olivia and her fellow conspirators are doing? Write a short essay explaining why or why not.

Do you think Dr. King would have agreed with what Jimmy did? Write a letter to Jimmy explaining why or why not Dr. King would support the steps Jimmy has taken to help his father.

Vocabulary

blackmail Golden Goose probation contractor chain gang scrutinize

Chapter 9

Discussion Questions

1. Do you think it is right for Olivia to use her friendship with Mr. Stivesant in order to trick him? Why or why not?
2. Do you think Olivia is being fair to Tubby? Why or why not?
3. The author uses a lot of sensory details in the descriptions of the “Poison Sisters” and their various partners at the dance. Give examples of details the writer uses that appeal to each of the senses: sight, sound, touch, taste and smell.
4. Which of the dance partners do you think is the worst of the lot? Why?
5. Is Olivia’s plan to use Jackson and Charles as “decoys” a good one? Why or why not?
6. Why is Charles more unhappy with the Olivia’s plan than Jackson?



Writing Activities

After the church dance, the single men of the Ville are feeling pretty dejected. Write up a list a guidelines or suggestions the men should follow for the next dance that might make them more desirable dance partners. For example, your list might include “Don’t smoke while dancing.”

Vocabulary

earmarked crucial mortified bravado oblivious inundated grimaced
meager

Chapter 10

Discussion Questions

1. Do you think Ella or Jimmy could have been responsible for the fire at Compton’s Plumbing? Why or why not?
2. Why do you think Olivia avoids asking Ella directly about the fire at Compton Plumbing?
3. Why do you think Charles and Jackson arrived in such wild outfits?

4. After hearing what Charles had to say about Jackson, do you think Olivia should warn Ella about Jackson's reputation? Why or why not?
5. Do you think Charles could ever make Olivia forget about Tubby and even Inman? Why or why not?
6. Olivia's dream contains images of "angels" in the burning barn. If not real angels, who, or what, could they be?

Writing Activities

Imagine Olivia asked Ella about the arson at Compton Plumbing. Write the conversation as you imagine it would be. Now write the same conversation between Olivia and Jimmy. What are the differences in the way Olivia would put the question to her best friend and to the young boy?

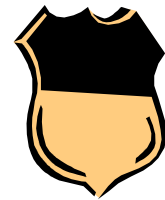
Vocabulary

arson Pandora's Box "cut the rug" fedora fence (criminal) trademark

Chapter 11

Discussion Questions

1. What actions reveal the police officers' lack of respect for the two women?
2. Why does Ella's behavior after the police officers leave surprise Olivia?
3. Ella stops telling the story of her father very abruptly. If she finished the story, how do you think it would end?



Writing Activities

Imagine that you have witnessed the police officers' treatment of Olivia and Ella. Write a letter to the department expressing your views of the officers' behavior.

Vocabulary

brass tacks alibi nonchalantly

Chapter 12

Discussion Questions

1. Why does Ella need time alone?
2. Why do you think it is important at this point for J.T. Bush and Olivia to actually look at the property at 4600 Labadie?
3. How do you think the older man working in his garden would react to the Shelley family moving into his neighborhood? Why? What clues in the story make you think this?
4. Why is the Ville so "magical" for Olivia?

Writing Activities

Imagine that you are J.D. Shelley. Write a letter to your future neighbors on Labadie that lets them know why you are moving to the neighborhood and the kind of neighbor you hope to be.

Vocabulary

buffer preoccupied

Chapter 13

Discussion Questions

1. As the conspirators come closer to carrying out their plan, Olivia deliberately acts in ways that could provoke the waitress in Woolworth's and Sergeant McDougald. Why do you think she does this? How could her actions have hurt the conspiracy?
2. Despite the careful planning by the conspirators, several of the events at the bank were unexpected for Olivia. Whose arrivals caught her totally off-guard?
3. How did Sergeant McDougald actually help the conspirators?
4. Vern Stephens came to the bank at Reverend Danielson's request but the bailplayer had no idea of why he has asked to go there or what the conspirators were trying to do. If he had known, do you think he still would have gone to the bank? Why or why not?
5. Although Olivia has helped to break the law and has deceived a good friend, why does she still have a clear conscience?
6. Why are Olivia, Ella and Jimmy so sure they will see McDougald again? Why might it be a problem that he saw them all together on Olivia's porch?
7. With more details about Olivia's dream, what do you now think the dream is about? What details lead you to this conclusion?



Writing Activities

Imagine that you are Reverend Danielson. Write a short thank-you note to your friend Vern Stephens for coming to the bank as you requested. Remember, it is important that you not let on the real reason that you wanted Mr. Stephenson to show up.

Vocabulary

dog days flustered oppressive pokey (slang)



Chapter 14

Discussion Questions

1. Since Olivia had a clear conscience about what she had done, why do you think she can't sleep well at night?

2. What was wrong about the police questioning of J.D. Shelley? What do you think might have happened had Reverend Danielson not shown up?
3. Since raising money will not be a problem for this group, what more serious problems do you think they will face?
4. Do you think Jimmy had to hit Olivia? Why or why not?
5. Why is it ironic that Sergeant McDougald is being treated in Homer G. Phillips Hospital?
6. Olivia can't think of the words to describe Jimmy after she hears what he has done. How would you describe him?
7. After all Olivia has been through with Reverend Danielson, why do you think she doesn't trust him with the truth of what happened with Jimmy and Sergeant McDougald?
8. How will talking with reporters and having her picture taken with Sergeant McDougald "free" her from him?
9. Why is the nurse unhappy with Olivia, calling her a "donkey"?
10. Do you think Olivia and Jimmy handled the situation with Sergeant McDougald in the right way? Why or why not?

Writing Activities

Imagine you are one of the St. Louis reporters. Write the story of Olivia and Sergeant McDougald as it would appear in the newspaper.



Imagine you are Reverend Danielson. Tell the story of Olivia and Sergeant McDougald as you would tell it to the congregation of your church.

Imagine you are the nurse at Homer G. Phillips Hospital. Tell the story of Olivia and Sergeant McDougald as you would relate it to your family and friends.

Vocabulary

vulnerable shifty

Chapter 15

Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think the newspapers chose not to run the picture of Olivia and Sergeant McDougald together and ran only the picture of McDougald?
2. How did newspapers use fear to suggest the idea that "'separate' was better"?
3. Why do you think even some of the Negro population of St. Louis believed what the Shelleys had done was "terribly wrong"?
4. What do you think made all of the acts of violence particularly frightening for the people of the Ville?
5. Whom do you think left the message on Olivia's pillow, and what is it that they know?



6. Why do you think leaving a note on Olivia’s pillow was a stronger and more frightening message than vandalizing her house?
7. Why do you think the newspapers didn’t run the story about all the vandalism in the Ville?
8. When fires spread outside the Ville neighborhood, why do you think the Wellston area was spared?
9. Do you think Jackson and Jimmy had anything to do with the fires? Why or why not?

Writing Activities

Write the story of the vandalism in the Ville as it might have appeared in the St. Louis City newspapers. Then write the story as it might have appeared in the *Argus*.

Imagine Jimmy and Jackson asked Ella what should be done following the vandalism in the Ville. Write up the conversation they would have. Now imagine Jimmy and Jackson asked Reverend Danielson what should be done. Write up the conversation they would have.

Vocabulary

naïve backlash coincidence notoriety urgency truce

Chapter 16

Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think gossip is such a big part of life in the Ville? How can it both hurt and help people?
2. Do you think Mrs. Simmons offered any sort of apology or compensation to Opal Jean after the jewelry was found? Why or why not?
3. What in both Olivia’s and J.D.’s backgrounds show they are the right people to be facing this battle for equality?
4. What does Olivia say to Tubby that she hopes the party line gossips will spread around the Ville?
5. Why do you think neither Tubby nor Charles could take the place of Inman in Olivia’s life?
6. At this point, whom do you think the angels in Olivia’s dreams were?



Writing Activities

Imagine J.D. and Ethel have decided to talk to their children about what is going on—why the family is not welcome in the Labadie neighborhood. Write the explanation you think they would tell their children.

Vocabulary

lynch rampage sarcastic

Chapter 17

Discussion Questions

1. What do you think are some of the reasons so many people attended this trial?
2. Why might Judge Koerner have been slightly surprised when he looked over at Olivia's side of the courtroom?
3. Why do you think Mr. Seeger began his part of the trial so dramatically?
4. What do you think Mr. Vaughn hoped to accomplish by his opening? Do you think his point is simply to mock Mr. Seeger?
5. Why do you think Mr. Vaughn initially disappoints those on Olivia's side of the courtroom? What do you think they would like him to do?
6. What was the "gauntlet" Mrs. Kraemer threw down? What is the real reason the Kraemers and others do not want the Shelleys on Labadie Avenue?
7. What does Mr. Vaughn mean when he says tells Mrs. Kraemer "in this courtroom you're on *my* street now"?
8. How is Mrs. Fitzgerald's presence on the witness stand very different from Mrs. Kraemer's? What might account for these differences?
9. How does the way the spectators leave the courtroom reveal the heart of the problem that brought about this trial?
10. What does Ella mean when she says, "Until there is one truth for everyone, I don't think we can say what a lie really is"? Do you agree or disagree with her? Why?



Writing Activities

1. Choose one of the witnesses who appeared at the first day of the trial and write two to three additional questions you would ask that witness.
2. Imagine you are a reporter for a St. Louis newspaper. Write a short story describing the first day of this trial. Now imagine you are a reporter for the *Argus*. Write the same story as it might appear in that newspaper.

Vocabulary

Red herring abhor gauntlet perjury evading hypothetical

Chapter 18

Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think Olivia is so nervous about the people of the Ville celebrating after the first day of the trial?
2. Do you think Olivia approved of Jackson's involvement in "The Great Retaliation"? Why or why not?

3. Do you think Olivia would lie if she were called to the witness stand? Why or why not?
4. What does Mr. Bush imply is the reason he is not a member of the real Estate Exchange of the St. Louis Board of Realtors? What does Mr. Seegers' response suggest Mr. Seegers thinks is the reason?
5. Mr. Vaughn did not lie on the stand; however, would you call his testimony "honest"? Why or why not?
6. Mrs. Shelley refused to take the same oath as all the other witnesses. Would you trust her testimony? Why or why not?
7. Why do you think for both the Kraemers and the Shelleys, it's the wives and not the husbands who testify?
8. Compare Mrs. Shelley's appearance on the witness stand to Mrs. Kramer's. How are they similar? How are they different?
9. Why does Mr. Seeger ignore Mrs. Shelley's questions?
10. Why do you think the reaction in the Ville is so different following the second day of the trial?



Writing Activities

Again, imagine you are a reporter for a St. Louis newspaper. Write a short account describing the second day of the proceedings. Now imagine you are a reporter for the *Argus*. Write the same story as it might appear in that newspaper.

Think about Mrs. Shelley's question about children: Who makes them see colors? Write the answer to that question that you would give her.

Vocabulary

emphatically imploringly irrelevant impartial subpoena

Chapter 19

Discussion Questions

1. How is the mood of the Ville after the second day of the court proceedings? Why do you think it is so unlike the first day after the trial?
2. Why do you think people on both sides of the courtroom are afraid?
3. Do you agree with Mr. Seegers that the case really isn't about color? Why or why not?
4. What do you think is the strongest point in Mr. Seeger's closing argument?
5. Why do you think Mr. Vaughn mocked Mr. Seeger's water pouring incident?
6. What do you think is the strongest point in Mr. Vaughn's closing argument?
7. Judge Koerner has a hard decision to make, one that will leave at least half of his courtroom very angry. What piece of advice would you give him as he goes off to make his decision?

Writing Activities

Write what you think Olivia might have said to the waitress at Woolworth's.

Imagine you were seated in the front row during the second day of the court proceedings. Write a letter to a friend, and tell this friend what you believe Judge Koerner's decision will be.

Vocabulary

distract transparent salient rendering



Chapter 20

Discussion Questions

1. How might the Shelley's victory in court both help and hurt the people of the Ville?
2. Do you think it's important for Olivia to know for sure if Ella did or did not kill her father? Why or why not?
3. Why do you think "fear" didn't keep people away from the courtroom on the day of the judge's decision?
4. Upon what primary evidence did Judge Koerner base his decision?
5. Why do you think Mrs. Kraemer's face showed terror and not anger?
6. What do you think the celebration reveals about the people of the Ville?
7. In this chapter you finally have all the pieces to Olivia's dream. What parts did you suspect? What revelations were surprising? What questions do you still have?



Writing Activities

Imagine you are a reporter for the *Argus*. Write up the description of the Ville celebration as it would appear in the newspaper.

Now imagine you are a Sumner High School student. Write a description of the celebration to a friend who lives out of town. Include in your description why the celebration is such an important one.

Vocabulary

ramifications composure torrid humanitarian hub impromptu

Chapter 21

Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think Olivia would never have the dream again?
2. Why do you think Olivia felt so guilty about the experience? Why was she able to let go of the guilt now? What does she better understand now?



3. Do you think Jimmy did the right thing by helping Ella and not telling Olivia? Why or why not?
4. Do you think Ella should have run off the way she did? Why or why not?
5. Mr. Shelley feels a bit cautious about celebrating. Why? What could still happen?
6. Olivia expects this trip to the flower show with Tubby to be different from the Hibiscus Show. Do you think it will be? In what ways?
7. Olivia expects a “new world” as she walks off with Tubby. How do you expect life in the Ville to change for Olivia and her neighbors? Will all the changes be good ones?



Writing Activities

Imagine you are Olivia and able to write a final letter to Ella. Write the letter you think Olivia would send.

Write a short scene showing what you think happened at the Fall Flower Show that Olivia and Tubby attended.

Vocabulary

admonition

remnants

bantering