

# **Suppose the Wolf Were an Octopus**

**Grades 3 to 4**

**A Guide to Creative Questioning  
for Elementary-Grade Literature**

**Revised Edition**

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# The TV Kid

by Betsy Byars, 1976

*Lennie is fascinated by television. If he isn't watching it, he is imagining himself appearing on different shows. When Lennie is bitten by a snake, he uses his TV images to ease the pain. This is an interesting adventure of a young boy with a marvelous imagination.*

## Level 1 (Remembering)

- Where did Lennie live?
- Which TV show did Lennie want to appear on?
- What happened to Lennie while he was at the old stone house?
- Who rescued Lennie and took him to the hospital?

## Level 2 (Understanding)

- Explain Lennie's fascination with television.
- Why did Lennie and his mom live at the Fairy Land Motel?
- Why did Lennie hide from the policeman?
- Why did the girls at the motel want to see Lennie's puncture wounds?

## Level 3 (Applying)

- If you could be on any television show, what would it be, and why that one?
- Have you ever been so interested in something that you forgot about doing your schoolwork? If so, what was it?
- If you had been with Lennie when he was bitten by the rattlesnake, what would you have done?
- Are there rules about watching television in your house? If so, what are they?

#### **Level 4 (Analyzing)**

- Why do you think Lennie was addicted to television?
- Why did Lennie invent a commercial for a “Friend”?
- What was it about getting bitten by the snake that made Lennie rethink how he wanted to live his life?
- Compare Lennie’s imagination to yours. Is he more creative than you are? Explain your answer.

#### **Level 5 (Evaluating)**

- Are there advantages to watching television? If so, what are they?
- Are there disadvantages to watching television? If so, what are they?
- Even though Lennie never damaged any of the empty vacation houses, was it wrong for him to sneak into them?
- Was having a vivid imagination good for Lennie, or did it make things harder for him?

#### **Level 6 (Creating)**

- Suppose Lennie were invited to appear on a television game show. What is the game show, and how does Lennie do?
- Think of some ways that Lennie could use his imagination in the future.
- Suppose the policeman hadn’t found Lennie. What would have happened?
- What if Lennie had decided to make up an exciting story about his snake bite to tell the girls at the motel? Create a story for him to tell them.

# Charlotte's Web

by E. B. White, 1952

*A young girl develops a special relationship with a pet pig. The pig, named Wilbur, meets a small spider named Charlotte. When Wilbur's owner considers getting rid of him, Charlotte creates a special message, "Some Pig," in her web. Wilbur is saved and becomes famous.*

## **Level 1 (Remembering)**

- Who are the main characters?
- What words appeared in Charlotte's web?
- Who rescued Charlotte's egg sac?
- What did Wilbur receive at the County Fair?

## **Level 2 (Understanding)**

- Why did Mr. Zuckerman want to get rid of Wilbur?
- Explain how the miracle happened.
- Describe the relationship between Wilbur and Charlotte.
- What happened to Charlotte's children?

## **Level 3 (Applying)**

- If you were Wilbur, how would you have thanked Charlotte for saving your life?
- If you were Charlotte, what message would you have written in your web to try to save Wilbur?
- Did this book make you feel differently about pigs or spiders? If so, explain how.
- Who was your favorite character in the story, and why?

#### **Level 4 (Analyzing)**

- Why do you think Fern took care of Wilbur when he was a baby?
- What made Charlotte want to save Wilbur's life?
- How do you think Charlotte knows what to do to save Wilbur?
- Why do all of Charlotte's babies leave after they hatch except for the smallest ones?

#### **Level 5 (Evaluating)**

- If Charlotte was weaving the webs, shouldn't Mr. Zuckerman have protected her rather than Wilbur? Explain.
- Do you think taking the egg sac was a good way for Wilbur to thank Charlotte? Why or why not?
- Was Templeton a good friend to Wilbur and Charlotte or not? Explain your answer.
- Is Charlotte a better friend to Wilbur than Harry and Tucker were to Chester, the cricket in Times Square? Explain your reasoning.

#### **Level 6 (Creating)**

- Imagine another way Charlotte could have made Wilbur famous.
- Suppose Charlotte didn't die. What might have happened instead?
- If the other barn animals at Mr. Zuckerman's farm had been friendly with Wilbur, how would that change the story?
- Suppose Charlotte couldn't spell well. How would the story be different?