

Contemporary Literature Novel:

They Cage the Animals at Night

By Jennings Michael Burch's

Chapter Questions

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Chapter One Questions

Setting:

Major Characters:

Minor Characters:

In your mind, how do you visualize the orphanage?
(5+ sentences)

Define "lifer"

 "part timer"

 "they cage the animals at night"

 Cowlick p.4

 Groggy p.5

 Garbled p.5

 Chicklets p.6

Why do you believe the clicker the nun uses is symbolic?
(what does it symbolize?)

In five or more sentences, give an example in your life when you were "ruled by a clicker", felt lost/alone, or when your family gave up on you.

Chapter One, part two

1. As you visualize the orphanage, how would you describe the mean nun?
(5+ sentences)
2. Why do you think the nun was allowed and able to abuse the children?
3. Within chapter one, there is bullying. Name the bully: _____
Have you ever been bullied OR were YOU the bully? Give a specific example of what happened and how you felt (5+ sentences)
4. Jennings dad died in the Korean War. Locate the year(s)
the Korean War took place: _____
5. Possessions were taken away from the children at night.
Jennings latched onto a dog. Do you believe this was important to his well being, safety and self esteem? Why or why not?
6. Did you have an important possession when you were in
Elementary school? What was it? How was it important to You? Do you still possess it? BE SPECIFIC---5+ sentences, please.

Chapter Two Questions

1. Give the meaning of the following vocabulary words:
Taunted p. 33
Pasty p. 36
Scurrying p. 29
Quivered p. 37
2. Why doesn't Jennings "step on lines"?
3. Jennings defended Mark. Tell why you believe he did this:

Give an example of a time in your life when you chose to
Defend or protect someone. (5+ sentences)

4. The children did not get close to one another to become friends.
What was the reasoning behind this philosophy?

Have you ever "lost your best friend"? What occurred?
How did you feel?

5. The three main characters in this chapter are:

Jennings

Stacy

Butch

Use adjectives (describing word) to describe these characters. Who do
you feel the most sorry for? Why?

Who is the strongest? Why?

Chapter Three Questions

1. Fill in the vocabulary definitions for the following words:

Lulled p. 39

Mollycoddle p.46

Foyer p.41

Cowered p.41

Sternly p.46

2. Describe the environment at the Carpenter's house:

What emotions did you feel when you reading on how Mrs. Carpenter treated Jennings?

3. How do you think Jennings endured the treatment from Mrs. Carpenter?

How would you have reacted?

Give a specific example of a time or situation you had to persevere: (5+ sentences)

4. Mrs. Carpenter made a statement about "where will the Profits go". In three or more sentences, explain what you believe she meant by this statement.
5. Jennings shielded himself under the Carpenter's table. How were the table legs like a cage? How did he feel?

In a five sentence paragraph, share a time when you were frightened or scared from something or someone.

6. The main characters in this chapter are below. Using adjectives, describe the characters.

Jennings

Mrs. Carpenter

Mr. Carpenter

Which character do you like the least? _____ Tell why:

7. Why wasn't Jennings allowed to take Doggie with him to the Carpenter's?

8. On the internet, find information about Humphary Bogart:

Why was the television important to Mrs. Carpenter?

Chapter Four and Five

1. Did the abuse from the Carpenters' change Jennings? Yes No
Why or why not?
2. Jennings had two people depart from his life. Who were they?
_____ and _____ How was he impacted by their
departure?
3. Which character do you like the most in this chapter? Tell why.
4. Jennings implies that his mother was "sick." What do you believe is wrong
with her?
5. Give a brief explanation of the family "dynamics":
6. Define: welt p. 52
Marquee
7. Jennings gets abused, abandoned, loses friendships or is very alone.
In a five sentence paragraph, write about a moment or event that occurred
where you felt one of these emotions.
8. Why do you believe Sister Clair allowed Jennings to keep Doggie, but to
"let him out every once in awhile"?

Chapter Six & Seven

1. Where is Jennings taken?
2. Why do you think the “lifers” had the opportunity to attend school, but the “part timers” did not?
3. Jennings tells Sister Barbara that he spilled the cocoa on the table. What punishment was given to him? Was this fair? Why or why not?

Tell about a time or event when you were punished for something unfair or unjust: (5+ sentences please)

4. Were you surprised Jennings runs away?
What persuaded him to do this?
Who befriended him? _____ How did Jennings feel about this?
5. Jennings mother returns once again to take Jennings home. What does he discover when he goes back home?
6. Were the brothers resentful to see Jerome? Why or why not?
7. Jerome was given a party. Was this fair or unfair? How would you have felt if you were Jennings or one of the brothers?
8. George was determined to help the family. How was he going to manage to complete this endeavor?

Chapter Eight

1. What holiday was not celebrated in Jennings family? _____
Tell why:
2. Define: "rag picker"
taunt p.118
3. Jennings was ridiculed in front of his entire class.
Describe how you think Jennings felt. BE SPECIFIC, PLEASE.
(5+ sentences)

How would you have reacted?

Give a specific example where you were ridiculed or made fun of by someone:

4. When Jennings went to Sister Gerard's class, he told her his name was Michael. Why do you think he changed his name?

Have you ever felt alone, lost or wished to run away? What occurred?

5. How did Sal identify with Jennings? What did they have in common?

Chapter Nine

1. Define the following vocabulary words:

Pier p.143

Jeering p. 156

2. What was Jennings' reaction to the Frasier household?
3. Describe the relationship between Donald and Mr. Frasier:

What do you think Mr. and Mrs. Frasier's relationship is like?

4. Why is Jennings drawn to Sal?
5. The students donated clothes to Jennings then called him a "rag picker"?
What do you believe that means? Why did the students do the bullying/name calling?
6. Two people befriended Jennings in this chapter. Tell who they were and how their friendship benefited Jennings.
7. The statement "holding grudges is easier than forgiving" means:

Have you ever held a grudge?

How did you feel?

Why was it easier to hold a grudge than forgive?

Chapter Ten

1. The family dynamics are an integral part in this chapter. In six sentences, describe how you visualize them. (Example: fighting, happy, etc) BE SPECIFIC.
2. Larry commented that it “ain’t no good liking anybody”. What does this refer to?
3. In a paragraph, reflect how it would be to stay overnight in a zoo. How did Jennings survive?

How would you survive?

4. Jennings stated that it had been a long time when he had cried. Why are his emotions staying intact?

How would you cope?

Give an example of a time in your life when you cried or had to keep your emotions inside.

Chapter 11 & 12

1. Define the following words:
bellowed p.178
convalescent p.184
2. Tell why you believe George doesn't like Sal:
3. What was your reaction when you read that Jennings father was alive?
Did this surprise you? Why or why not?

What was Jennings' reaction?

Why do you think the family did not tell Jennings the truth?

4. When mom went out to repair the antenna on the roof, what occurred?

What did you expect to happen?

5. Jennings is taken to a new orphanage in Brooklyn. Why was he fortunate to have Doggie?
6. Jennings meets Mark who tells him: "It's what you feel inside about someone that makes you brothers, not the last name".
This statement means:
7. Jennings now becomes a "lifer", why is that?

How do you think Jennings felt about that label?

Chapter 13

1. Define ventriloquist p.225
2. When Walter arrives to take Jennings home, what does he encounter? Be specific.
3. Larry is following the footsteps of George's poor choices. What is he choosing to do?

Why do you think he is doing this?
4. In this chapter, Jennings is trying to perceive his place in his family. Describe what his siblings are doing and what Jennings believes his "role" is:
5. Have you ever had to take responsibilities within your family that you wished you didn't have to? Were you asked to fulfill that role or did you feel you had to?
6. Jerome arrives back home. He offers numerous advice to Jennings. Give two examples:
7. Clarence also offers Jennings a piece of wisdom. Tell what his opinion was:
8. Jennings has an unexpected surprise in this chapter by once again meeting an old, dear friend. Who is it? _____ Did you expect this to happen? Why or why not?

How did the two feel?

Once again, fate intervenes and the two are separated.
How did Jennings deal with this?

9. Jerome and Jennings' mother have to return to the hospital. Jennings has to be returned to an orphanage. What would he do without Doggie, his constant companion?

10. Where is Sal during this time?

11. Predict what you think will happen to Jerome:

To Jennings mother:

To Jennings:

Chapter Fourteen

1. Why do you think George and Jennings were separated to two different foster families?

How would you have dealt with this unfair separation?

2. Jennings is beaten up by Ronnie. Why does it seem that orphanages are “territorial” to determine who is the toughest?

How would you react in this type of situation?

3. Ronnie is labeled as a “juvenile delinquent”. Does he deserve this label? Why or why not?

Jennings is called a “bully”. Is this an unfair statement? Why or why not?

Have you ever had a label placed upon yourself? State when, where and why. Did you persevere? Do you still possess the label?

4. Jennings offers a piece of advice to Kevin. What did he tell him to do?

Why do you think Jennings offered this to him?

5. Jennings is ridiculed in front of all of the children by Mrs. Abbot. What emotions was Jennings feeling?

What emotions were you feeling when you were this reading this part?

Chapter Fifteen & Epilogue

1. Explain why Officer Bob told Jennings important things about “running away”?
2. Jennings did not tell Officer Bob about his time spent at the zoo. Why do you believe he omitted this?
3. How did Jennings’ life change when he stayed at the Daily’s?
4. Jennings was offered an opportunity to visit the zoo as an official visitor with the Daily’s. Why didn’t he take them up on their offer?
5. Jennings returns to the zoo as a runaway. How many nights did he stay there? _____ What possessed him to stand in the lion house doorway all night?

Who discovers him? _____

List four emotions you think Jennings felt at that time:

6. What was your reaction to the conclusion of the book?

Did you expect it to end this way? Why or why not?

7. How old was Jerome when he died? _____
What occupation did George pursue? _____ Were you surprised he was a member of AA?