

ELIZABETH'S LANDING

a novel by Katy Pye

Discussion Questions

- 1) What are the possible meanings of the title? How does the concept of “landing” relate to the characters in the book, including the ocean-dwelling sea turtle?
- 2) What is the main theme of the story? How is it demonstrated? Consider each: the characters, circumstances/events, the turtles, the setting, nature, and mankind, including the readers.
- 3) Describe Elizabeth. Why does she feel isolated, angry, and displaced? What are her feelings toward her family in the beginning of the story? Do these change? How and why?
- 4) What were your feelings about the characters as you met them? Did you think differently about each by the end? How?
- 5) Why does Elizabeth connect instantly and so deeply with Sunny?
- 6) What is the significance of the camera to the story?
- 7) Why doesn't Elizabeth tell Maria and Tom about what really happened with the boys on the beach? Why did she hide the whole truth from her dad and the sheriff? What was the cost of her silence?
- 8) What is the family “secret” and why, specifically, are Elizabeth's dad and Grandpa so tight-lipped about what happened? What is the cost of their silence on each character and to the Barker and Wilkes families?
- 9) No specific reasons are given for why Pete, Ernie, Buzzcut, and Julia are bullies, so what might you imagine are their motives? Are they the same personality? If not, how are they different?
- 10) What role does nature play in Elizabeth's life and in each of her family members' lives? What aspects do they share and how do they also differ? How are these both expressed and implied? Do these change over the book?
- 11) Why are Elizabeth and Becca immediately drawn to each other? Compare and contrast their personalities and roles in the story. Why do you think the author chose to have Becca leave the story for a while?

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- 12) What similarities are there between Elizabeth's relocation and Becca's reaction to her crippling accident? What do the girls teach each other about being true to one's self and about friendship?
- 13) Describe Port Winston. How is it similar to or different from where you live? Why does city growth and development hold such power in Port Winston? What are the positive and negative impacts and to which characters?
- 14) What are the potential impacts of the proposed Tortuga Sands development? Are there others not mentioned in the story?
- 15) If you were a character in the story, what would you do or say to change the mind of someone with a different point of view? How would you respond differently and through which characters?
- 16) What part does the *Deepwater Horizon*, aka BP oil spill play in the story? How is it reported? How do the oil company representative and the environmental figures characterize what's happened?
- 17) Compare and contrast oil exploration and development to shrimping? Did the story affect how you think about these issues? Did it, or do you expect it to, change your decisions or actions? If so, how? If not, why not?
- 18) How do current threats to sea turtles potentially threaten other wildlife and people? What solutions are needed or already exist?
- 19) What does Elizabeth mean by, "It's a generation thing"? Why is it repeated in the story? Why does the book cross three generations.
- 20) What still sticks with you about *Elizabeth's Landing*? Why?