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***The Watsons Go to Birmingham—1963* Study Guide Questions**

# Chapter One: Pages 1-19

1. Who is the narrator of this story? What do we know about him?

2. What is the weather like at the beginning of the story?

3. Who eventually gets Byron free from the Brown Bomber’s mirror? How?

# Chapter Two: Pages 20-31

1. Why does Miss Henry take Kenny to different classrooms?

2. What is wrong with Kenny’s eye?

3. What does Kenny think of the new kid on the school bus?

# Chapter Three: Pages 32-46

1. Why does Kenny give Rufus part of his lunch? What does Rufus do with it?

2. Is L.J. Jones a good playmate? Why or why not?

3. What two things are wrong with Rufus?

# Chapter Four: Pages 47-63

1. Why doesn’t Momma understand cold weather? What does she do as a result of this?

2. When do Momma and Dad buy the kids’ leather gloves? Why?

3. Why do Rufus and Kenny leave the school grounds?

**Chapter Five: Pages 64-74**

1. What does Momma say she will do if Byron plays with matches again?

2. Why does Joetta decide it’s okay for Momma to burn Byron?

3. Does Momma really ever burn Byron? Why?

**Chapter Six: Pages 75-85**

1. What arrangements has Dad made with Mr. Mitchell?

2. According to Byron, what welfare food has the family eaten in the past?

3. Why does Kenny have a hard time understanding Byron?

**Chapter Seven: Pages 86-99**

1. What has Byron done to his hair?

2. Why does Dad take Byron upstairs?

3. Whom do Dad and Momma call on the telephone?

**Chapter Eight: Pages 100-120**

1. What has Dad added to the car?

2. What are some of the things Momma says Byron has done wrong?

3. Kenny never thought his parents would send Byron to Grandma Sands. Why?

**Chapter Nine: Pages 121-137**

1. What has been happening in the South? What does this have to do with Byron?

2. What does Joetta think of Mrs. Davidson’s gift?

3. Why does Momma say Day Three will be tough for Dad?

**Chapter Ten: Pages 138-148**

1. What does Kenny find inside Joey’s shoe? What does that make him think about?

2. What frightens Byron about being in Appalachia?

3. According to Dad, what does the air feel like? What literary device is this an

 example of?

**Chapter Eleven: Pages 149-161**

1. What surprises Kenny when he first sees Birmingham?

2. What does Kenny expect Grandma Sands to look like? Is he right?

3. What has Kenny expected to happen when Byron and Grandma Sands see each other?

 Is he right? Is Kenny disappointed?

**Chapter Twelve: Pages 162-168**

1. Why do Kenny and Byron have trouble sleeping?

2. How did Mr. Robert save Toddy’s life?

3. What does Momma ask Grandma Sands about Mr. Robert?

**Chapter Thirteen: Pages 169-179**

1. What warning does Grandma Sands give about Collier’s Landing?

2. What is the Wool Pooh? What does Byron tell Kenny about the Wool Pooh?

3. According to Kenny, what does the Wool Pooh look like?

4. Whom does Kenny see as the Wool Pooh pulls him? What does that person tell

 Kenny?

5. What does Byron do to Kenny once he gets him back to shore?

**Chapter Fourteen: Pages 180-190**

1. What wakes Kenny as he naps under a tree?

2. What does Kenny see inside the church?

3. What does Joey say happened at the church?

4. What does Kenny decide happened at the church?

**Chapter Fifteen: Pages 191-206**

1. When do Momma and Dad talk about what happened in Alabama?

2. What does Grandma Sands tell Momma and Dad?

3. Why are Momma and Dad worried about Kenny?

4. Where does Kenny go when he disappears? Why does he go there?

5. Why does Byron start spending more time on the couch?

6. How does Byron react when Kenny cries?

7. What does Kenny ask Byron? What is Byron’s answer?

8. Why does Kenny say he is ashamed of himself? What does Byron tell him?

9. What does Byron tell Kenny about magic powers?

10. What does Byron tell Kenny about things being fair?

11. Where does Kenny think there could be magic powers, genies, and angels?

**Epilogue: Pages 207-210**

1. What was the Civil Rights Movement?

2. Before the civil rights movement, what was life like for African Americans in the

 South?

3. What happened in Birmingham on September 15, 1963?

4. According to the author, Christopher Paul Curtis, why was the civil rights movement

 successful?

5. According to the author, who are the true American heroes?

6. Examine the themes below that were explored in the novel. These were also on the

 Anticipation Guide you completed before reading. Has reading this novel changed

 your perspective on any of the following statements? If so, please explain.

1. In a loving family, family members never disagree.
2. Being an adult is easier than being a child.
3. Parents always know how to discipline their children correctly.
4. Children usually understand their parents’ decisions.
5. Older brothers and sisters should protect their younger siblings.
6. It is easy to predict the behavior of a close family member.
7. Serious family problems can be humorous.
8. Innocent people never suffer due to problems in society.
9. People must struggle to get their basic human rights.
10. The world is a fair and just place.