



# CRITICAL-THINKING QUESTIONS AND ESSAY ASSIGNMENT

### CRITICAL-THINKING QUESTIONS:

1. On page 11, Janie says she's good at not thinking about people and at hiding her feelings deep inside. What does this tell you about Janie's life?

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2. Based on Janie's interactions with Frederick, Mr. McBride, and Violet in Chapters 3 and 4, how would you describe Janie and the way she thinks?

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3. What words does the author use to help readers understand Janie's anxiety about how much time she's losing while the train is stuck in the snow up in the Cascade Mountains? Why is this effective?

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4. When Janie first meets Violet, she thinks of Violet as "trouble." What happens in Chapter 9 that shows that this doesn't really reflect how Janie feels about Violet? What does this say about Janie?

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5. How are the passengers on the train feeling when they're stuck in Wellington, and why?

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

I Survived The Wellington  
Avalanche, 1910

## CRITICAL-THINKING QUESTIONS AND ESSAY ASSIGNMENT *(CONTINUED)*

6. Some people on the train have more options than others in terms of getting to safety. Who are they, and why do they have more options?

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7. Why does Janie run away from Frederick after trying to answer his question, "Are you a...thief?"

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8. What gives Janie the courage to come forward and explain herself to Frederick, Mr. McBride, and Miss Wade?

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9. Why does the author include a newspaper article between Chapters 16 and 17?

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10. How is Janie's life different at the end of the book compared to the beginning of the book?

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**ESSAY ASSIGNMENT:** Answer the organizer questions on the next page to help you write a three-paragraph essay detailing how Janie's feelings about herself change from the beginning of the book to the end.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

I Survived The Wellington  
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# CRITICAL-THINKING QUESTIONS AND ESSAY ASSIGNMENT *(CONTINUED)*

### THREE-PARAGRAPH ESSAY ORGANIZER FOR *I SURVIVED THE WELLINGTON AVALANCHE, 1910*

Answer the questions below to brainstorm ideas for your first paragraph, which will be your introduction:

How would you describe Janie at the beginning of the book? How does she feel about herself?

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For your second paragraph, list two examples of things that Janie does and/or that happen to her that are evidence of the real Janie:

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Next, answer the questions below to help you write a concluding paragraph.

How does Janie see herself at the end of the book? How do you know this?

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Now, write your essay on the back of this page or on a computer using your answers above.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### I Survived The Wellington Avalanche, 1910

## ANSWERS

### CRITICAL-THINKING QUESTIONS:

1. Janie has had a hard life, and part of the way she survives is to not let herself feel things.
2. Since Janie is a kid in the world on her own, she tries to figure out how some people, like Frederick and Mr. McBride, can help her. She also thinks about how other people, like Violet, might get in her way.
3. The author uses a clock ticking inside Janie's mind—tick, tick, tick. This is effective because it creates for the reader the sense that seconds are ticking by, and every second that goes by brings Janie closer to getting caught.
4. When Violet goes missing, Janie remembers that Violet said she wanted to make a snowman, and Janie dashes out into the snow to find her. This shows that Janie is a good, caring person, despite everything she's been through.
5. The conditions are not good. People are feeling trapped and anxious because they can't get to where they're going and they're also nervous about getting hit with an avalanche at any moment. Also, supplies are running low, and the train is starting to smell bad.
6. The adults who are traveling alone or with another adult can decide whether to leave the train and walk through the blizzard to Scenic. But the people who are older, or traveling with older people or children, don't have the option of trying to walk to Scenic because it would be too dangerous for the older people or the children.
7. Janie tries to explain how she got involved with Malvo, but then feels like Frederick is disgusted with her and worries that he sees her as the "dirty criminal" he described earlier. Ashamed, and feeling like a real criminal, Janie flees before Frederick can tell his father or Miss Wade.
8. Janie realizes nothing about her situation is her fault. She doesn't want to be a criminal and sees that the Janie working for Malvo is not the real Janie. The real Janie is the girl on the train whom people trust and care about.
9. It's an article, written by Miss Wade, about the Wellington avalanche. It provides details about exactly what happened and who survived, as well as plans the Great Northern Railway is making for the future, to try to prevent anything like this from ever happening again.
10. At the beginning of the book, Janie is an orphan working forced to work for a criminal. At the end of the book, though she's been through traumatic events, she's got a new family and a bright future.

**ESSAY ASSIGNMENT:** Answers will vary but may include some variation of the ideas that after Janie rescues Violet from the snow, befriends Frederick, realizes that people care about her, realizes that her situation is not her fault, and tries to tell Frederick the truth about who she is, she begins to see herself as a good person.