

Literature Circle Questions

Use the questions and activities that follow to get more out of the experience of reading *The Great Good Thing* by Roderick Townley.

1. Princess Sylvie gets to know three generations of girls and women. Who are the readers she becomes friends with and how are they related?
2. Sylvie and the other characters take many journeys in the story. Why do all the characters leave the storybook in the first place? Where do they go?
3. Sylvie returns to the land of Claire's memories to find out that Pingree has taken over as King. How does she escape from the castle? Who helps her?
4. Princess Sylvie says she feels like she is Claire's older sister. What evidence is there to show that Sylvie takes care of Claire?
5. Sylvie can be bold, brave, and helpful. Yet sometimes she needs help. What evidence is there that Sylvie needs guidance and who does Sylvie grow to depend on to help her?
6. When Sylvie is in the storybook, she feels that life isn't interesting. Describe what life is like for Sylvie and the other characters in Claire's *dreams*? How does life change when they become part of Claire's *memories*?
7. Authors sometimes subject their characters to difficult tasks. What are two tasks Sylvie accomplishes?
8. Fangl tells Sylvie, "You can't solve a problem from inside it...you've got to get outside." What problem does Sylvie solve and how does she take Fangl's advice?
9. Compare the way King Walther rules to the way King Pingree rules.
10. What evidence can you find to prove that the girl with the dark blue eyes is the author of *The Great Good Thing*?
11. Sylvie and the storybook characters escape to Claire's dream world. How might the story have been different if they had escaped to Richard's dream world?
12. When Sylvie arrives in Lily's dream world, she helps Lily re-write the storybook *The Great Good Thing*. How might the ending of the novel have been different if Lily re-wrote the storybook without the help of Sylvie?
13. Sylvie is given many choices to make in the story. She chooses to leave her storybook to look for adventure. She chooses not to marry Pingree. She chooses to go by herself to Lily's dream world. Justify Sylvie's decision to leave the storybook in the first place. By making these choices, does Sylvie destroy or save the story?

14. At the beginning of the story, we find that Sylvie is bored in her storybook life. What motive is there for Sylvie to help Lily re-write the story?

Activities

1. In the story, Sylvie enters the dreams of a number of characters. Think of your own dreams. Make an illustration of a wonderful dream that you would like to be able to enter whenever you want. Be sure to use color and show detail. Write a paragraph describing the dream you created.

2. With a partner, dramatize a scene in which Sylvie confronts Pingree. You could choose a scene from the original storybook or you could choose a scene after Pingree has taken over the throne. Think about how each character feels. Do your best to convey that character's personality.