

LITERATURE CIRCLE QUESTIONS
LEAVING GEE'S BEND

1. The story takes place in rural Alabama. Describe the setting including the time period. Why is the time period an important element of the story?
2. The story is told by the main character, Ludelphia Bennett. Describe this character using her physical attributes as well as character and personality.
3. Ludelphia's mama insists that she wear the eye patch. Why does Ludelphia dislike the eye patch?
4. Ludelphia lost the sight in her eye when she was a small child. How did it happen?
5. If your eye was injured, what would your family do for you? Why do you think Ludelphia was not taken to the doctor?
6. In this story, the children have chores each day. What chores are Ludelphia responsible for? How do her chores differ from your chores at home?
7. Mama is very ill and there is no medicine for her to take. Why does Ludelphia decide to go to town?
8. Etta Mae returns to Gee's Bend after a year's absence. How had she changed? How did this make Ludelphia feel?
9. Why was everyone in the community so afraid of Etta Mae? Do you think their fear was warranted? Why or why not?
10. The folks in Gee's Bend sprinkled Devil's Lye around the house to ward off evil spirits. What are other superstitions you have heard of? How do you think superstitions come to be believed?
11. Ludelphia had to help deliver her baby sister. How do you think you would have coped with that situation?
12. What did Ludelphia name the baby and why?
13. Until her great adventure, Ludelphia had never been out of Gee's Bend. What were the positives about having lived in one place all her life? The negatives?
14. Why was Ludelphia so fascinated by the yellow dress Etta Mae wore?
15. Mrs. Cobb gave Ludelphia a Coke to drink. Why was it such an exciting experience for her?
16. Mama always said "It takes a heap of licks to strike a nail in the dark." Explain what she meant.
17. How did sewing the quilt help Ludelphia cope with problems? Give an example to explain.
18. Mrs. Cobb had an obvious dislike for Ludelphia and anyone from Gee's Bend. Why?
19. Delilah was very important to Ludelphia. Why? In what ways did Delilah's death affect her?
20. Ludelphia's quilt was made of many pieces of fabric. What pieces were used? Why did she choose those pieces to tell her story?
21. In what ways did Doc and Mrs. Nelson play key roles in Ludelphia's story?
22. What was your favorite part of the story? Why? Your least favorite? Why?
23. What do you think is the most important theme or lesson in this story? Explain.

24. What lessons do you think Ludelphia learned?
25. Would you say Leaving Gee's Bend is an appropriate title for the story? Why or why not?
26. If you could interview the author, Irene Latham, what would you ask her?