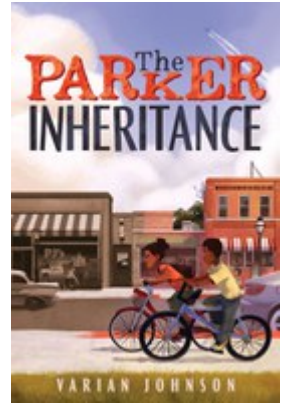


Discussion Questions for "The Parker Inheritance"

The following questions can be used to facilitate group discussions on the 2020 Kids All Iowa Reads selection, *The Parker Inheritance* by Varian Johnson.



1. Candice's grandmother says, "Just because you don't see the path, doesn't mean it's not there." (p. 7) but Candice isn't sure she knows what that means. What do you think she means?
2. Why do you think Brandon doesn't want to tell Candice about what kind of books he reads? Have you ever been afraid to tell someone about something you liked? Why?
3. *Once you've read the letter Candice's grandmother receives* (pg. 29) you have all the clues you'll need to solve the puzzle! Take some time to write down some notes about the important clues you think are in the letter. You can keep this as you read through the book and see what you got right and what you got wrong. You can also come back to the letter as you learn more. Do you think you'll be able to solve the puzzle before Candice and Brandon?
4. *Revisit the letter once you've finished the book*: what clues surprised you the most? What clue did you think was the trickiest or the hardest to figure out? Did you figure anything out before Candice and Brandon?
5. How do you think Brandon feels when he's bullied by Milo? How do you think Candice feels when she sees it happen?
6. When Candice thinks about why she lets her father call her by a name she doesn't like she thinks maybe the reason she lets him is because "It was just easier that way." (p. 79) What does this mean? How is it easier and for who is easier for?
7. When they have the secret match arranged, Adam is "worried we're gonna win." (p. 120) Why do you think that's what's he worried about? Why isn't Big Dub worried about that?
8. Chip thinks that he's different than other white people and, in some ways, he is. But when he talks with his father he realizes that maybe he doesn't know as much as he thinks. Can you think of a time you had to reconsider something you thought was true? What did you learn? Did you change your behavior? How could Chip change his behavior in the future?
9. At first Candice can't wait to leave Lambert, but when she gets the chance to go she's not sure she wants to. What has changed? Is it just trying to find the Parker fortune or is it something else?
10. Adam Douglas says: "Here's the truth about people: We make a lot of assumptions about each other." (p. 226) What does he mean? Do you agree? Can you think of an example of when that's happened in this book?
11. Siobhan tries to talk to her father about the difference between justice and revenge. (p. 260) What do you think the difference is?
12. Siobhan says Reggie "hates the world" (p. 279) and could make real change but he tells her it isn't that simple. Who do you think is right? Why?
13. What do you think happens to Mr. Parker at the end of the book? Write a short scene about where you think he is at the end of the book. Does he find out Candice and Brandon solved his puzzles and claimed his inheritance?
14. Why do you think Mr. Parker insisted that to earn the inheritance the person who solved it must share what they discovered with the world?

15. At the end of the book, Candice thinks “If the news won’t tell the right stories, I will. One day.” What do you think she means? What kind of job do you think Candice might have when she grows up?
16. If you were going to bury or conceal a physical treasure in your town, where would you hide it?
17. Candice and Brandon uncovered a lot of information about what their town was like in 1957. Sixty years from now, in 2080, what do you think will surprise kids about the way our community was in 2020?
18. Siobhan and her family have to leave Lambert very suddenly when their lives are in danger. What other stories, real or fictional, does this remind you of?
19. How did you feel about the book switching timelines? Did it make you want to keep reading? Which timeline did you think was the most interesting? Would either have been as interesting or as fun to read without the other?

Extension Activities

- Lambert celebrates Juneteenth. [Learn more about Juneteenth](#) or read the book *Juneteenth for Mazie* by Floyd Cooper.
- Candice likes listening to her dad’s playlist. It features “late seventies and early eighties music” like Earth, Wind, and Fire, Michael Jackson, Chaka Khan, and Teena Maria. (p. 215) See if your library has music by these artists for you to give a listen to. Ask your librarian to help you find some of their music to listen to. Does it make you happy too? What’s some of YOUR happy music?
- What would someone think about you if all they had were your school yearbooks? If your library has old yearbooks from your community available, ask the librarian if you can look through them. See what you discover about your town in 1957 or even the year you were born.