



ISBN: 9781499807172

THE COLORS OF THE RAIN

By R.L. Toalson

Written in free-verse, this powerful novel is set against the backdrop of the desegregation battles that took place in Houston, Texas, in 1972, as a young boy and his family deal with loss and the revelation of dark family secrets.

Discussion Guide

1. Paulie is raised around family members that believe in equality. He knows bullying is wrong and that skin-color doesn't matter, yet Paulie still bullies Greg. Why do you think this is?
2. Why do you think Greg doesn't fight back or report Paulie's bullying?
3. Why do you think Paulie's dad stands up for his best friend Dave, knowing that many people in their community do not believe in racial equality?
4. Throughout the book, Paulie wrestles with what it means to be a family. How does his definition of family change at the end of the story?
5. Do you think Paulie's family was right to keep so many secrets from Paulie and Charlie?
6. There is a lot of violence, anger and fighting throughout the book but all of the main characters show empathy for other people at different times in the story. How?
 - a. Paulie's father
 - b. Paulie's mother
 - c. Aunt Bee
 - d. Mr. Langley
 - e. Greg
 - f. Charlie
 - g. Paulie

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