

The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks, Chapter Two: Clover

Comprehension Questions (please try to answer in complete sentences):

1. Where was Henrietta Lacks born?
2. What was the population of Roanoke in 1920, when Henrietta was born?

This link has that information in the Historical Populations section:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timeline_of_Roanoke,_Virginia

3. Describe some of the differences between Roanoke and Clover that are mentioned in the chapter.
4. Why did Henrietta end up being raised by her grandfather, Tommy Lacks?
5. Chapter two states that Henrietta's grandfather, Tommy Lacks, "...lived in what everyone called the home-house." What kinds of things do you think the Lacks family would use the home house for? When you answer, you can use anything mentioned in this chapter, and also things you might think of on your own.
6. How was Day related to Henrietta?
7. Describe the relationship between Crazy Joe and Henrietta.
8. How old was Henrietta when she had her first child with Day?
9. What was different about Henrietta's second child, Elsie?
10. Henrietta's daughter Elsie is described in two different ways. Using medical language, Elsie was described as *epileptic, mentally retarded, neuro-syphilitic*. The chapter also says that the people who lived in Lacks Town called her *simple*. What are the differences between the two descriptions? Please compare and contrast the language. What do you think about when you read each of those two descriptions?
11. In the 1920's, Clover might be described as halfway between two worlds: one is the world before gas-powered machines (cars, busses, tractors, etc.) and other is the world after gas-powered machines. What evidence in the text do you find for that statement?
12. How did Pearl Harbor change life in Turner Station?
13. Contrast the working conditions of the black workers and the white workers at the Sparrows Point Steel Mill.