***The Chrysalids* Reading Questions**

**Chapter Five—Discovery Flight (pages 42-52)**

**Glossary**

1. solonaceae: a type of family of plants
2. abasement: the lowering in dignity or esteem; degrading of oneself or another

**Questions**

1. What discovery was made by Alan Erwin? Explain what happened.
2. How was the discovery to affect the Wenders?
3. Why didn’t the Wenders have Sophie’s extra toe cut off when she was a baby?
4. Why does Mrs. Wender refer to David’s father as, “That awful father!”? (page 47)
5. What does the Wender family decide to do and why? What does David want to do?
6. For what reason did Mr. and Mrs. Wender decline to take David with them?
7. What does David do as his last act to help Sophie?
8. “I couldn’t help it, Sophie. I couldn’t help it.” What do David’s words tell us?

**Chapter Six—A Geography Lesson From Uncle Axel (Pages 53-65)**

**Glossary**

1. “abetting a concealment”: here, encouraging one in the practice of hiding a deviation
2. succulents: having fleshy and juicy tissues
3. saprophytes: a plant living on dead or decaying organic matter

**Questions**

1. What reaction did David get from Rosalind and the others when he explained his feelings about Sophie’s deviation?
2. Why did they find it difficult to accept his point of view?
3. Describe the two dreams David has in this chapter.
4. Why does he dream again of the “great city by the sea” after all these years?
5. How does the inspector relieve David’s guilty conscience? Is this consistent with the inspector’s position? Is it consistent with his character?
6. Why does David ask Axel what the world outside was like?
7. Why is Axel reluctant to talk about it?
8. Why did Uncle Axel not want David to run away to the Fringes?
9. Why, according to Uncle Axel, did Marther’s report of the lands to the south get Marther into trouble?
10. What was the result of Marther’s report?
11. According to Axel, what are some of the deviations that exist in the lands to the south?
12. Axel denies the existence of any cities to the south because, “We’d have heard of it by this time if there were”. In what way is this answer contradictory?

**Chapter Seven—A Baby and a “False Image” (Pages 66-74)**

**Questions**

1. Who is Petra?
2. Why was Petra’s birth not announced immediately?
3. What did Aunt Harriet pray for?
4. Examine Joseph Strorm’s “sermon”. (Pages 72-73) Look at all the negative words and expressions. To whom are these applied?
5. Does Mrs. Strorm indicate that she might be capable of compassion?
6. How many mutant babies has David’s mother actually had, detected and undetected? What is ironic about this?
7. What happens to Aunt Harriet?

**Chapter Eight—A Rusted Mirror—Axel Has Doubts (Pages75-82)**

**Glossary**

1. poker-work texts: known as pyrography; the art or process of marking wood or leather with hot instruments; hence, here, the various moral sayings or texts that David has seen on the walls of his house. In Chapter 2, David describes them.
2. fruition: state of bearing fruit; hence, realization, as of one’s hopes or plans
3. funking: shrinking back through fear; panic

**Questions**

1. Account for David’s increasing fear.
2. Why does David pray to God every night, and what does he ask God to do? How might David’s prayer be considered ironic by us?
3. What comforting news does Axel give to David?
4. For what reasons does Axel doubt the accepted view of “Tribulation”?
5. What does Axel mean when he refers to “Tribulation” as “a rust mirror”?
6. Why, according to Axel, were the accepted patterns of the Old People not necessarily the best?
7. What alternative does Axel offer to an imitation of the Old People?
8. How is Axel’s theory in opposition to the society in which he lives?
9. Why would these thoughts be considered “dangerous”?
10. In what two ways did “the group” gain confidence?
11. What in Uncle Axel’s opinion makes a man a man?
12. Approximately how old is David at the end of this chapter? Provide proof.
13. What interesting development arouses our interest at the conclusion of this chapter?

**Chapter Nine—Old Jacob’s Views and a Problem (Page 83-90)**

**Glossary**

1. echelon: an arrangement of troops, etc. with its units each somewhat to the left or the right of the one in the rear, like a series of steps
2. stoking: to arrange (as grain) in mounds
3. scapegoat: a person or thing bearing the blame for others

**Questions**

1. What indications are there in this chapter that David is almost a grown man?
2. Who is the “new member” in the “group”?
3. How do the others find out?
4. How is she different from the other members?
5. What danger to David and Rosalind did the incident with Petra present?
6. Why was Petra in greater danger than the other members of the group?
7. Why did the group postpone telling Petra of her “special talent”?
8. What did David mean when he said that “[the] stupidest norm was happier,” than he was? Why did he feel this way?
9. What is different now in David’s repetitive dream?
10. Why does the author introduce Old Jacob’s views at this point in the story?
11. Briefly summarize Jacob’s views.
12. What warning does Axel give David?
13. What event does David discover will happen? Why is this event so dangerous for David and the telepaths?

**Chapter Ten—Love, Marriage, Murder, Suicide (Pages 91-103)**

**Glossary**

1. abnegation: denial and rejection
2. dilemma: a choice between equally unsatisfactory alternatives

**Questions**

1. Why is the Chrysalid group upset at Anne’s decision to marry? Is Anne’s choice a bad one? Explain. What arguments does the group use against her decision? Is their argument a form of discrimination? Explain.
2. What simile does Michael use to describe marriage to a norm?
3. What is the fear that Uncle Axel and David have?
4. What is Uncle Axel’s suggestion?
5. What happens to Alan Ervin? Who does Anne suspect?
6. What are the obstacles to David’s and Rosalind’s possible marriage?
7. What becomes of Anne?
8. How does Rachel save the group from discovery after Alan’s death?
9. What feeling is the Chrysalid group left with after Anne’s death? (page 102-103)
10. What does Michael realize about the members of the group which could be important to their safety later in the novel?