

everyday use commonlit answers

everyday use commonlit answers provide essential insights and explanations for the short story "Everyday Use" by Alice Walker, commonly studied in literature classes. This article aims to offer a comprehensive guide to understanding the story's themes, characters, and symbolism, thereby assisting students in effectively navigating their CommonLit assignments. By exploring detailed answers and analysis, readers can gain a deeper appreciation for the cultural and historical context embedded in the narrative. Additionally, this resource emphasizes the importance of heritage, identity, and family dynamics as portrayed in the text. The following sections will cover plot summary, character breakdowns, thematic discussions, and frequently asked questions related to everyday use commonlit answers.

- Plot Summary of Everyday Use
- Main Characters and Their Roles
- Themes and Symbolism in Everyday Use
- CommonLit Questions and Answers
- Study Tips for Understanding Everyday Use

Plot Summary of Everyday Use

The story "Everyday Use" by Alice Walker centers on a rural African American family and explores the complexities of heritage and identity through the interactions between a mother and her two daughters. The narrative unfolds when Dee, the older daughter, returns home after being away at college, bringing with her a new sense of cultural pride and awareness. Her visit sparks tension as she contests the meaning and value of family heirlooms, specifically handmade quilts that symbolize the family's history. The mother and Dee's younger sister, Maggie, have differing views on the significance of these items, leading to a deeper exploration of what heritage truly means. The plot highlights the conflict between superficial appreciation and genuine understanding of one's roots.

Main Characters and Their Roles

Understanding the characters is crucial for interpreting everyday use commonlit answers effectively. Each character represents different perspectives on cultural heritage and identity.

Mama (The Narrator)

Mama is the story's narrator and a hardworking, practical woman who values her heritage in a tangible and functional way. She embodies a grounded connection to her past, emphasizing everyday use of cultural artifacts rather than preserving them as mere symbols.

Dee (Wangero)

Dee is Mama's eldest daughter who has embraced a more modern and academic appreciation of African culture. She changes her name to Wangero Leewanika Kemanjo to reflect her cultural pride but is portrayed as somewhat superficial in her understanding of heritage.

Maggie

Maggie, the younger daughter, is shy and physically scarred from a house fire but deeply connected to her family's traditions. Unlike Dee, Maggie respects the heritage in a humble, lived-in manner and is the rightful heir to the family quilts.

Themes and Symbolism in Everyday Use

The story is rich with themes and symbols that reflect cultural identity, heritage, and the complexities of family relationships. These elements are frequently addressed in everyday use commonlit answers to aid comprehension.

Heritage and Identity

A central theme is the contrasting views on heritage between Dee and her family. Dee's approach is more aesthetic and external, whereas Mama and Maggie see heritage as an integral part of daily life and personal history.

The Quilts

The quilts in the story symbolize the family's legacy, made from scraps of clothing worn by ancestors. They represent the tangible connection to the past. Mama's decision to give the quilts to Maggie instead of Dee underscores the story's message about authentic versus superficial appreciation.

Materialism vs. Tradition

Dee's desire to display family items as art contrasts with Mama and Maggie's

utilitarian approach. This conflict highlights the tension between materialism and genuine tradition, a key point in everyday use commonlit answers.

CommonLit Questions and Answers

CommonLit assignments often include questions requiring detailed textual analysis and interpretation. Below are some typical questions accompanied by comprehensive answers to support students' understanding.

1. What is the significance of Dee changing her name?

Dee's name change to Wangero Leewanika Kemanjo signifies her attempt to reconnect with her African heritage. However, this act is portrayed as somewhat performative, lacking a deeper understanding of her family's actual history and values.

2. How does Mama's description of herself influence the story?

Mama's straightforward, no-nonsense narration establishes a grounded perspective that contrasts with Dee's more flamboyant attitude. Her self-description as a large, big-boned woman reflects her strength and practicality.

3. Why does Mama give the quilts to Maggie instead of Dee?

Mama gives the quilts to Maggie because Maggie will use them for practical purposes and truly appreciates their sentimental value. Dee, on the other hand, wants to preserve them as decorative artifacts, which Mama sees as missing the point of heritage.

4. What role does the setting play in the story?

The rural Southern setting emphasizes the family's connection to tradition and their way of life. It also contrasts with Dee's urban, modern world, highlighting the cultural and generational divide.

Study Tips for Understanding Everyday Use

To master everyday use commonlit answers and excel in related assignments, consider the following study strategies.

- **Close Reading:** Pay attention to the narrator's voice and the dialogue to understand character motivations and themes.
- **Contextual Research:** Explore the historical and cultural background of the 1970s African American experience to deepen comprehension.
- **Symbol Analysis:** Identify and interpret key symbols such as the quilts and the house to uncover layers of meaning.
- **Compare Perspectives:** Analyze the contrasting views of heritage between Mama, Dee, and Maggie to grasp the story's central conflict.
- **Practice Answering Questions:** Use CommonLit questions as practice to develop critical thinking and textual evidence support skills.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the main theme of 'Everyday Use' by Alice Walker?

The main theme of 'Everyday Use' is the importance of heritage and the different ways it can be perceived and valued.

Who are the primary characters in 'Everyday Use' and how do they differ?

The primary characters are Mama, Maggie, and Dee. Mama is practical and grounded; Maggie is shy and reserved; Dee is confident and values heritage in a more superficial way.

Why does Dee want the quilts in 'Everyday Use'?

Dee wants the quilts because she sees them as valuable cultural artifacts representing her heritage.

How does Mama's perspective on heritage differ from Dee's in 'Everyday Use'?

Mama sees heritage as something lived and practical, while Dee views it as something to be displayed and admired.

What is the significance of the title 'Everyday

Use' ?

The title signifies the practical, everyday appreciation of heritage, as opposed to seeing it as merely decorative or symbolic.

How does Alice Walker portray the conflict between tradition and modernity in 'Everyday Use'?

Walker contrasts Dee's modern, outward appreciation of heritage with Mama and Maggie's traditional, lived experience of their culture.

Why does Mama give the quilts to Maggie instead of Dee?

Mama gives the quilts to Maggie because Maggie will use them for their intended purpose, honoring the family's heritage through everyday use.

What role does education play in 'Everyday Use'?

Education is portrayed as a source of pride for Dee but also as a factor that distances her from her family's traditional values.

How does the setting of 'Everyday Use' contribute to the story?

The rural Southern setting emphasizes the connection to heritage and tradition that is central to the story's conflict.

What lesson does 'Everyday Use' teach about cultural identity?

The story teaches that cultural identity is not just about outward appearance or possessions but about understanding and living one's heritage authentically.

Additional Resources

1. *Everyday Use by Alice Walker - Study Guide and Answers*

This book provides a comprehensive analysis of Alice Walker's "Everyday Use," focusing on key themes, character development, and symbolism. It includes detailed answers to common study questions, helping readers better understand the cultural and familial conflicts presented in the story. Perfect for students and educators looking for insightful commentary and discussion points.

2. *CommonLit Literature Guide: Everyday Use*

Designed to complement the CommonLit curriculum, this guide offers summaries, discussion questions, and answer keys specifically for "Everyday Use." It helps readers engage critically with the text, exploring issues of heritage, identity, and family dynamics. The guide is user-friendly and suitable for classroom use or individual study.

3. *Understanding Everyday Use: A CommonLit Companion*

This companion book delves into the narrative structure and thematic elements of "Everyday Use," providing clear explanations and answers to commonly asked questions. It emphasizes the cultural significance of the story and aids readers in connecting with the characters' perspectives. An excellent resource for deepening comprehension and analysis.

4. *Everyday Use: Themes and Answers for CommonLit Readers*

Focusing on the major themes of heritage, tradition, and identity, this book offers detailed answers to CommonLit questions about "Everyday Use." It breaks down complex ideas into accessible insights, making it easier for readers to grasp the author's message. Ideal for students preparing for essays or exams related to the story.

5. *Everyday Use by Alice Walker: Critical Thinking Questions and Answers*

This title provides a collection of critical thinking questions along with thorough answers that encourage readers to think beyond the surface of the story. It explores character motivations and conflicts within the family, offering nuanced interpretations. This book supports readers in developing analytical skills through guided inquiry.

6. *CommonLit Answers: Exploring Everyday Use*

A resource tailored for those using CommonLit's platform, this book offers clear, concise answers to the reading comprehension and analysis questions related to "Everyday Use." It also includes tips for writing responses and understanding literary devices used by Alice Walker. Helpful for both classroom and self-study environments.

7. *Everyday Use: Literature Analysis and CommonLit Response Guide*

This guide pairs literary analysis with practical answers to CommonLit prompts, helping readers engage with the story on multiple levels. It covers character studies, symbolism, and the socio-cultural context of the narrative. A valuable tool for students aiming to improve their literary interpretation skills.

8. *Answer Key and Discussion Guide for Everyday Use (CommonLit Edition)*

Providing a complete answer key for CommonLit's "Everyday Use" questions, this guide facilitates review and discussion. It encourages thoughtful dialogue about the story's themes and characters, making it useful for teachers and study groups. The explanations are clear and support deeper understanding.

9. *Everyday Use by Alice Walker: A Student's Guide with CommonLit Answers*

This student-focused guide simplifies the complex themes and literary elements of "Everyday Use," offering straightforward answers aligned with

CommonLit's curriculum. It helps learners identify key points and prepare for assessments with confidence. The guide enhances comprehension through concise summaries and explanations.

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