PROMPTS
for Discussion and Writing

Title:	Willa of Dark Hollow
Author:	Robert Beatty
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Inquiry Topics:	Culture Clash National Parks Sustainability
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Websites:	robertbeattybooks.com disneybooks.com

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COMMON CORE COMPATIBLE

***Willa of Dark Hollow* and its educational materials are well-suited for Common Core and similar state standards.**

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Educational materials for *Willa of Dark Hollow*
- Prompts for Discussion and Writing
- Activities, Assignments, and Quizzes
- Vocabulary

Go to robertbeattybooks.com/education for links to the PDF files, teacher testimonials, and other resources.

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After Reading the Book

1. **There is much discussion in the book about the value of trees**. Do you think trees are valuable? In what way are they valuable? In your opinion, when is it OK to destroy a tree? When is it justified, if ever, to destroy an entire forest? What type of considerations should be made when thinking about the value of trees?

2. **The wolves of the Great Smoky Mountains play a role in the story.** One of the wolves is Willa's close friend. Back in the old times, when white settlers first came to America, they systematically killed all the wolves in the Eastern United States, and then the Western United States. Do you think that was a good thing to do? Why or why not?

3. **What makes us feel connected to someone or something?** How connected does Willa feel to the Faeran? How connected do they feel to her? What makes Willa feel connected to Adelaide? What makes Hialeah feel connected to Willa? What makes Willa feel connected to Charka? Is Willa's connection to the forest the same kind of connection she feels towards her family? What can make us feel disconnected from someone or something? What can change our sense of connection to someone or something? Are we automatically connected to our relatives? Can we feel the same kind of connection to something non-human as we do to a person?

4. **When there is a big problem in the world, do you think one person can make a difference?** Or do you think it's kind of hopeless and foolish to think that one person can change the world for the better? Please provide examples of why you think so.

5. **What is the role of government in the protection of natural resources?** Should the government protect animals from being killed to the point of extinction? Should the government prevent people and companies from polluting the air?

6. **Do the water of a river and the air in the sky belong to everyone?** If you own land, do you think you should be allowed to do anything you want on that land, such as cut all its trees and kill all its animals? Is that your right as a land owner? If you own a piece of land, should you be able to pollute the air from that land? Or does the land owner have some connection and responsibility to the people who live around him?

7. **How do we balance what will benefit us now with what will benefit us in the future?** How should the homesteaders get the wood they need for fuel and building while protecting the forest? Should Jim McClaren stop logging when he has so many children to take care of? When should we suffer hardship in the present to make the future better? When do our current needs outweigh future possible damages? Are there issues where we need to change our behavior right now to ensure a better future?

8. **Where do our choices come from?** Why does Willa describe many of her choices as feeling like she had no choice? Have Willa's choices been programed by her grandmother, or do they come from somewhere else? From her personality traits? From how her friends behave? From her goals for the future? From the way she feels? From the way she thinks? What do you think about the choice Willa makes at the end of the book?

9. **Are we responsible for the consequences of our choices?** Why does Willa feel responsible even for consequences she can't predict? Why does Willa feel responsible in situations where she feels she had no choice? Do the decisions I make mean anything? Will the decisions I make have an effect on me and the world?

10. **Are we responsible for trying to fix what's broken in the world?** Why do Willa and Adelaide feel this way? Do the other characters in the novel feel this way? How do we decide what's broken? Are we only responsible for the things we break ourselves? How should we figure out how to fix what's broken?

11. **How do we live comfortably with nature?** Why does Willa say she can't leave the forest to go talk to other humans about the park? How are Hialeah's and Nathaniel's connections with nature different from Willa's? How is Adelaide's connection with nature different from Willa's, and why?

12. **What changes us?** Why does Willa feel the way she changes are mainly a result of her choices? What else might contribute to the way Willa changes? What causes other characters in the novel to change?

13. **When there is a big problem in the world, do you think one person can make a difference?** Or do you think it's kind of hopeless and foolish to think that one person can change the world for the better? In the face of forces much larger than yourself, is there anything you can do? Please provide examples of why you think so.

14. **If everyone is doing something, does that make it OK?** Is it OK sometimes to stand up and do something, or say something, different from everyone else?

15. **What happens next?** What do you think will happen to Adelaide at the end of the novel? What choices will she make? Why do you think she will make these choices?

16. **Does this book have a happy ending or a sad ending?** Is Willa dead? Is she going to come back? Is there any evidence in the book that gives you a clue about that?

Quotes to Think and Write about

There are many quotable moments in *Willa of Dark Hollow* that invite reflection and writing. Choose a quote below, or one of your favorite lines from the book, to think about and explore through writing:

"Had the choices Willa made been her own, or had they come from the seeds that had been planted long before? She wondered at what point a young Faeran was supposed to stop living out the choices of her parents and grandparents and start making her own. Was there a certain age? When she was twelve? Thirteen? Or did the choices just begin to flow into each other, like one river blending into another?" (34-35)

"Could she have chosen *not* to throw the spear and save the wolf that day? Could she have decided *not* to go back and release the human children from the padaran's prisons? Had all those been *her* choices? Or were all the branches of the tree of her life already growing by the time she had the roots she needed to stand aloft?" (35-36)

"They were all choices she had made, one after the other, but as she walked now through the evening wood and stepped into the yard in front of the house, it felt as if, strange as it all was, there was no other path she could have followed except the path of her own heart." (37)

"Hialeah was having to find her own path, just like she was, alone in the world in many ways, finding her own god to heal her soul." (53)

"'And you know better than most that for a rational man there's a long distance between desire and action.'" (63)

"If he were a deer or wolf, she would not hesitate to help him. But he was *human*. And not just any human, but a logger, a murderer of trees and a killer of bears—the kind of man she most despised. How could she help such a man as this?" (84)

"'This human is not my friend, but I am bound by a promise.'" (102)

"'The Cherokee have seen that in those areas where there are no wolves, the deer become too numerous and eat all the plants, and without the plants, the deer starve in great numbers, and without the deer, the Cherokee suffer. The plants, the birds, the deer, the wolves, the Cherokee . . . they're all connected, each one keeping the world from breaking. Do you understand?'" (106)

"'We are the voices of the trees, Willa, and the words of the wolves. We are the force that carries the birds in the sky and the magic that turns the sunlight into life. We are the parts that are missing, the invisible, the *in-between*. When we live and when we die, we are the soul of the forest, in whatever form it must take.'" (106-107)

"The moment she touched the tree, she felt its power. Its alliance. It was as if in that moment, this small, seemingly insignificant little tree living in the shade of a rocky gulch was reminding her of one thing: who she truly was." (127)

“She couldn’t help but wonder, was all of this the result of the decisions she had made? Was all of this the world she had created?” (135)

“It was as if it was saying: *This is you. This is yours. This is your problem to solve.* But the truth was, she didn’t know what to do. She didn’t know how to save the entirety of the world from itself. All she could do was try to save the ones she loved, like her father, and she was running out of time.” (139)

“The magic of this place was tied to the lake, and the lake was tied to the mist and the rain, and the mist was tied to the forest, and the forest to the trees.” (145)

“Once again, she found herself thinking that she could not save the world, but she could help one good and loyal friend.” (146)

“For her—like her mother and grandmother before her—touching the tree was like putting her hand on the slow, gentle river of time.” (154)

“She pulled in deep, full breaths as she tried to comprehend all that she had seen. Why had the Great Mountain and the Little Tree shown her all these things? What was the world trying to tell her?” (156)

“The whole of the world was broken and she could not fix it. Not with love. Not with friendship or peace or understanding. And those were the only things she had to give.” (156)

"'Do my decisions make any difference to my life or anyone else's? You've shown me all this, but where can I go? What can I do to help the breaking world?'" (157)

"Willa came to the conclusion that maybe—for the Faeran and the Cherokee, for the Northerners and the Southerners, for the old-time mountain families and the newcomers, even for the animals—the age of clans was over. They were all living in the same world now. The era of *separation* had passed. It seemed as if the only way *any* of them were going to survive was *together*." (164)

"She knew she shouldn't, but her mind seemed to be making its own decision without her." (166)

"Willa kept wanting to ask what it was like to be the daughter of a tree-killer. But something held her back. What if Adelaide started asking *her* those kind of questions? *How does it feel to be the niece of the murderous tyrant of the Faeran people? How does it feel to be the cause of your own people's destruction?"* (176)

"As they walked through the forest, Adelaide looked over at her. Willa realized how much faith her friend had put in her, to come up into the mountains with her, to follow her without question, and to keep following her even as the sun began to set." (186)

"She couldn't afford to delay by making friends or following the whims of her heart. But something deep inside her was telling her that she'd have a better chance of succeeding with Adelaide than without her." (194)

“Willa knew she didn’t have the physical power or weapons to protect the forest by herself. She was not a warrior. But from the very beginning, she had wanted to defeat this evil. She had wanted to protect the trees. Maybe this was exactly what the forest needed to do to protect itself. Maybe she hadn’t just accidentally released the unsettled spirits of the undead world—she had *enabled* them, given them power.” (208)

“She tried to make it a choice, a *decision*. But the truth was, she knew she wasn’t going to abandon Adelaide. She wasn’t going to let her go to the logging site alone. In the end, she could only follow the path of her heart.” (209)

“It felt as if everything she’d been through over the last year—the forest dying, the animals fleeing—was coming down to this one moment. If she just pulled back and let the ghosts of Dark Hollow do what they came to do, the loggers would be stopped. Her entire world would be saved! Or she could try to help the humans in some way. But why in the name of all that was good would she save loggers? They were the destroyers, the killers of trees! She already knew the answer.” (213)

“Her grandmother had taught her about it in many ways, and Willa had experienced it herself for many years, but she realized now more than ever that the individual trees of the forest did not stand alone. They touched one another, supported and sent nourishment to one another, warned one another of coming danger, and helped raise one another’s young. Among the trees of a forest, there was no I, only we.” (223)

"They were *all* connected. Like the wolves and the deer. The families that lived in the mountains, the farmers in Cades Cove, the Cherokee, the Faeran, the animals, the trees, even the loggers with their machines—they were all part of the same world now. And their branches were intertwining whether she wanted them to or not." (232)

"Willa began to wonder about the interconnections, not just between the people, animals, and trees living in these mountains at this moment, but between the past, present, and future. Maybe the only way out of all this was *time*, to somehow use time to her advantage." (233)

"'It's easy to lose hope and think that a problem can never be solved, but I've got an idea. I should have seen it before. Everything is constantly growing and changing and dying. Things haven't always been the way they are now. And they won't always be this way in the future. People learn and change. And the world changes around them. You and I can't win this battle *now*. But maybe we can win it in the future, before it's too late." (236)

"'This is the wave of time, to remind us that we are not alone, that time has always been flowing and always will be. We are part of an ancient people who have been living for many years, and their decisions have been part of what has brought us to where we are today. And *our* decisions will be part of what shapes our descendants into what they become. There is no I, only we. Across all time.'" (239)

“Left and right, dark and light, Faeran and human, green skin and white . . . Everything should have been different about their hands. But the more Willa looked, the more she marveled at what she was seeing. Other than the color, their hands were identical in size and shape, down to the wrinkles on their fingers.” (240)

“‘It all makes sense,’ Willa said. ‘You wanted to fit in. You blended for so long that you forgot that you were even doing it. It just became who you were. In your mind, you became a human.’” (247)

“‘What seems terribly wrong now might have been her only choice at the time. Do you see? We try to choose the best path, but our choice might only make sense in the time and place we’re in. She might have thought that by separating us—one of us among the Faeran and the other among the humans—we had a better chance to survive and become what she wanted us to become.’” (248)

“But the soil wasn’t just dirt. The layers of earth beneath her feet had built up over time. They were the disintegrated remains of the lives and deaths, the choices and fates, of thousands of living creatures that had come before. And in that soil were all the necessary nutrients for growth.” (255)

“‘I can see it now. For the first time in my life, it feels as if all the world’s streams are coming together and the river is flowing strong. I can sense its power and strength. The trees, the animals, the rivers, my father, the Faeran people . . . they’re all connected. Do you see it? Do you feel it, Adelaide?’” (255)

"'I don't mean *no* one can," Willa said. "I mean no *one* can.'" (299)

"Curled up together in the tree, they looked out at the mountain and felt the weight of what they knew to be true: the world was a far bigger and far more powerful place than the both of them, and there were many things beyond their control, beyond the control of even their fathers. But feeling the warmth of her sister beside her, Willa sensed that there were some things that *were* in their control, some things that they could try to change for the better." (303)

"As strange and wicked a place Dark Hollow had been with its deadly spirits, it had taught her one thing: that the roots under the ground—the roots of the past—were as important and strong as the trunk, and the branches, and the green leaves reaching toward the sun. The past was the soil, the foundation, the nutrients. And inside it, whether it was good or evil, there lived a tremendous power." (323)

"She used to ask herself if her choices made any difference in the world. Should she take this path or that one? Should she save the bear cub or turn away? She had come this far to realize one truth: we each become the choices that we make. If we blend into the appearance of a human for long enough, we become almost human, like Adelaide. If we fight to protect something long enough, we become its guardian, like her father. The choices we make in our lives aren't just the paths we take, they are the shape we are turning ourselves into." (350)

Questions as You Read

After you read each of these sections of the book, consider these questions:

Chapters 1-4

1. What sound in the forest upsets Willa?
2. How old is Willa?
3. Why does Willa run toward the sound of falling trees?
4. What might the men with guns at the logging site be frightened of?
5. What is tanbark?
6. Why doesn't the bear attack Willa?
7. How does Willa help the little bear? Why does she help him?
8. Who helps Willa? Who might this character be?
9. Why do the loggers attack the bear?
10. What does the mother bear want Willa to do?

Chapters 5-6

1. How does Willa escape the hunters?
2. Why does Willa think she can help the bear cub?
3. Why does Willa feel like she has no choice but to go back towards the logging camp after the bear cub?
4. Why does Charka run back towards the logging site?
5. Why does Willa name the bear cub Charka?
6. What's different about the hollow Willa finds? Why do you think this place is different in this way?
7. What kinds of bones does Willa find in the hollow? Why is it odd that these bones are there? Why might they be there?
8. Why might Charka have gone to the hollow?
9. What might the snake-like creatures Willa and Charka see be?
10. Why does Willa take Charka home with her?

Chapters 7-8

1. What is Dark Hollow?
2. What do you think about Willa's thoughts on choices on pages 34-35? What about the paragraph at the top of page 37?
3. On page 36, whom does Willa talk to in Faeran? Why do you think she does this?
4. Why didn't Willa expect to find a home among humans?
5. Why is Hialeah annoyed with Willa?
6. Why is Nathaniel angry at Willa?
7. Why does Hialeah not understand why Willa went to watch the loggers? Why does Willa go to the logging camp?
8. What happened to Hialeah's mother?
9. How does Nathaniel feel about the loggers? Why?
10. Why did Willa not tell Hialeah where she was going?

Chapters 9-10

1. Why does Hialeah say she's all right when Willa can tell that she isn't?
2. What happened to Willa's Faeran sister?
3. Why might the Faeran have stopped having babies?
4. Where does Hialeah go every morning? Why?
5. What is Decoration Day?
6. What do you think of Willa's concerns about Hialeah at the top of page 53?
7. Why does Willa watch Hialeah?
8. Who sneaks up on Nathaniel's house?
9. Why does Nathaniel tell Willa and Hialeah not to help him?
10. Why does Nathaniel want Hialeah to hide? Why does he want Willa to hide?

Chapters 11-12

1. What special abilities does Willa have?
2. What does a foreman do?
3. Why is the foreman of the logging crew at Nathaniel's house?
4. Why is the sheriff at Nathaniel's house?
5. Who is Luther, and what does he accuse Nathaniel of?
6. What does the sheriff think of Luther? What does the foreman think of him?
7. Why do the loggers and the sheriff think Nathaniel might have killed someone?
8. What does Hialeah accuse Willa of?
9. Why does Hialeah tell Willa she needs to grow up?
10. What plan do Hialeah and Willa make to try to help Nathaniel? What do you think of their plan?

Chapters 13-14

1. What does Willa do to investigate the murders?
2. What do you think the “beasts” are that attack the loggers?
3. Do you think the mysterious girl has anything to do with the beasts? If so, what?
4. What have the beasts done to the loggers? How?
5. Why does Willa hesitate to help the foreman?
6. Why does she decide to help him?
7. Why is the foreman surprised to see Willa?
8. What deal does Willa make with the foreman?
9. Do you think the foreman will keep his end of the deal? Why or why not?
10. Why does the foreman agree to the deal?

Chapters 15-17

1. Why does part of Willa not care that Jim (the foreman) is in pain?
2. Why does she help him anyway?
3. Why does Jim obey Willa?
4. How does Willa help Jim's injury?
5. On page 92, Willa worries that she will forget her sister, Alliw. Do you think this will happen? Why or why not?
6. Why does Willa call Jim a murderer on page 95? What do you think of his response?
7. Who do you think is following Willa and Jim through the woods? Why do you think this?
8. Why do the wolves ignore Willa at first?
9. Why do the wolves agree to leave Willa and Jim alone?
10. Why does Willa say on page 103 that it's more important that she knows the wolves than that the wolves know her?

Chapters 18-20

1. According to Willa's grandmother, why did the white settlers want to kill the wolves? Why do you think they wanted to kill them?
2. Why did the Cherokee not want to kill all the wolves?
3. According to Willa's grandmother on pages 106-107, what kinds of things are most important to the Faeran? Why?
4. Why doesn't Willa respond when Jim thanks her?
5. Why does Jim admire Mr. Sutton?
6. What do you think of Jim's argument on pages 110-112 about the benefits of logging? Why doesn't Willa understand Jim's argument?
7. Why does Jim say on page 114 that he expects Willa to help her father?
8. Do you think the mysterious beasts killed the men Nathaniel is accused of killing? Why do you think this?
9. Do you think Luther killed the men Nathaniel is accused of killing? Why or why not?
10. What happened to the Faeran? Why are they hiding in a cave?

Chapters 21-22

1. Why do the Faeran hate Willa?
2. Why does Gillen protect Willa?
3. Why won't the Faeran leave the cave?
4. Why don't the other Faeran know how to cure the disease that they have?
5. Why don't the younger Faeran attack Willa?
6. Why do you think that the Faeran have a tree disease?
7. Why do the Faeran have weapons?
8. Why do Sacram and Marcas trust Willa and eat the oak leaves?
9. What are jaetters? Why has Gillen re-formed the jaetters?
10. On page 135, Willa wonders how much her actions have contributed to the Faeran's situation. What do you think?

Chapters 23-25

1. Why does Willa feel safest among the trees?
2. On pages 138 and 139, Willa commits to trying to stop the logging, but she wonders how. What do you think? What could Willa do?
3. On page 139, Willa thinks the mysterious grey beasts might come from Dark Hollow. Why might she think this? What do you think?
4. In chapter 24, Willa wonders whether some of her experiences were just dreams. What do you think?
5. Why does Willa leave Charka at the lake of the white bear?
6. Why is the white bear happy to take Charka?
7. Where do you think the other bears have gone, and why?
8. Why does Willa think Dark Hollow is sleeping?
9. On page 150, Willa thinks about who or what might have killed the men Nathaniel is accused of killing. What do you think of her theories at this point? Is there evidence in the text for them?
10. What does Willa realize about Dark Hollow at the end of chapter 25?

Chapters 26-27

1. How does Willa know that Dark Hollow is the lair?
2. How do Willa's feelings towards Dark Hollow change in chapter 26? What in the chapter makes you think this?
3. On pages 154-156, Willa has a vision. What do you think her vision means? What in the text makes you think this?
4. On page 157, Willa wonders whether it matters what she does. What do you think? Why do you think this?
5. What does *There is no I, only we*. Mean? What do you think it means? What does it mean to Willa?
6. Who does Willa look for in Cades Cove? Why?
7. How does Willa feel about the people of Cades Cove? What in the text makes you think this?
8. Why did the community in Cades Cove get so small and then get large again?
9. On page 164, why does Willa think that "the age of separation has passed"? What might this mean?
10. Why does Willa want to find and talk to the mysterious girl, even when she thinks the girl might be connected to the mysterious grey beasts?

Chapters 28-30

1. At the beginning of chapter 28, why might Willa and Adelaide behave like they are fighting?
2. Do you believe Adelaide when she says, on pages 168-169, that she has nothing to do with the mysterious grey beasts? Why or why not?
3. Why do you think Adelaide has been searching for Willa?
4. Who is Adelaide's father?
5. On page 173, Willa asks Adelaide, "Why were you out there, watching us? …[A]fter everything that happened to your father, why did you stay hidden?" Why do you think Adelaide does this?
6. Why does Adelaide agree to help Willa save Nathaniel?
7. On page 176, Willa thinks that there is something about Adelaide that gives her hope. Why might this be?
8. Where do you think the cloud of attacking butterflies comes from? Why do you think this?
9. Why might the beasts avoid Willa and Adelaide and attack the loggers instead?
10. On page 184, Adelaide says the beasts are "on a mission." What might that mission be? What in the text makes you think this?

Chapters 31-35

1. Why might Adelaide trust Willa so much?
2. On page 187, we find out that Willa has never taken anyone else to her special glen. Why do you think she takes Adelaide there, and not Hialeah or Nathaniel?
3. On page 189, Willa says if the logging continues, the fireflies will leave. Why might this be so?
4. Why might Adelaide stay out with Willa even though she knows her punishment is likely going to be being locked in the shed overnight?
5. On page 198, why might Adelaide say the shed is “where she belongs”?
6. On page 200, Willa “scowls” at Adelaide’s mother’s theory that the beasts are rabid animals and that Adelaide’s father “will take care of it.” Then, she is sure that Adelaide would agree with her. How can she be so sure of Adelaide, when she has known her for such a short time?
7. On page 202, Willa and Adelaide start to think the attacking creatures might be ghosts. What do you think? What in the text makes you think this?
8. On page 205, Willa thinks the grey beasts are the ghosts of murdered trees. What evidence is there in the story so far that this might be the case? Is there evidence in the story that these beasts might be something else?
9. On page 207, Willa decides the loggers are responsible for the beasts. What do you think, and why?
10. On pages 208-209, Willa debates letting the beasts get rid of the loggers. What do you think she should do? Why?

Chapters 36-40

1. On page 211, Willa and Adelaide start to see the ghosts of different kinds of animals, including animals that haven't lived in the Smoky Mountains for a long time. Why might the ghosts of these animals be involved in the attacks?
2. On page 213, Willa again debates whether to help the loggers or let the ghosts attack, but then the text says "She already knew the answer." How does she already know the answer? Do you agree with her answer? Why or why not?
3. Why does Willa recognize some of the wolf ghosts?
4. Why don't the ghost wolves listen to Willa when the real wolves do?
5. When Willa can't protect any of the loggers from the wolf ghosts, why does she still keep trying to protect Adelaide's father?
6. What does Willa do with the trees to try to protect Adelaide's father from the attacking ghosts? Why do you think she tried this strategy when she couldn't talk to the ghosts?
7. What happens to the trees Willa uses to protect Adelaide's father?
8. On page 221, it says Willa "had become the world." What do you think this means? Why do you think this?
9. Why is Willa so upset after she saves Adelaide's father, since it is what she wanted to do?
10. How does Willa destroy the ghosts of Dark Hollow?

Chapters 41-43

1. Why is Adelaide's father upset and surprised that she's with Willa?
2. On page 228, why does Willa not want to see Adelaide reuniting with her father or the loggers helping each other?
3. At the top of page 229, we are told that "something has changed" when Willa put her energy into the trees to save Adelaide's father. What do you think this something might be, and why do you think this?
4. Why might Adelaide want to be with Willa instead of her father?
5. On pages 232 and 233, Willa starts to think about time, and wonder whether time could be useful in saving the forest. What do you think?
6. On page 235, Adelaide tells Willa that she's not one of the plants, she's "one of us." What is Adelaide worried about?
7. On page 236, what does Willa mean when she tells Adelaide that they can use the future to their advantage?
8. Why might Willa feel like she has been in Dark Hollow before?
9. On page 242, Adelaide says that her father is not really a bad man. Do you agree or disagree? Why?
10. Were you surprised at who Adelaide turns out to be? Why or why not?

Chapters 44-47

1. How does Willa think that Adelaide might have ended up in Cades Cove? What do you think?
2. Why might the grandmother have given Alliw away?
3. Why might Willa feel it is her job to “fix a broken world”? Do you think this is Willa’s responsibility? Why or why not?
4. Why does Willa enjoy teaching her sister how to be a woodwitch?
5. In chapters 44 and 45, why does Willa feel her power growing?
6. On pages 254 and 255, Willa has a realization about roots. What is her realization? Why is it important to the story?
7. On page 258, why does Willa say that she and Adelaide are using “the past” to rebuild Dark Hollow?
8. Why do Willa and Adelaide choose to rebuild Dark Hollow?
9. On page 263, why does Willa say to the Great Mountain, “There is no I, only we.”?
10. How does Willa convince the Faeran to return to the new lair, especially when they blame her for destroying the old one?

Chapters 48-51

1. How does Willa know that someone is looking for them in the woods?
2. How does Hialeah react to Alliw? Why might this be her reaction?
3. Why are the police authorities helping the loggers? Why are so many people against Nathaniel?
4. Why does Luther hate Nathaniel?
5. Who are the people who support Nathaniel? Why do they support him?
6. How do Willa, Adelaide, and Hialeah trick Luther into telling the truth? Did the truth about the death of the men surprise you? Why or why not?
7. Why is the sheriff suspicious of Luther's story?
8. Why does the sheriff arrest Luther?
9. What has Hialeah been doing to help Nathaniel while Willa has been with Adelaide?
10. What might it mean on page 293 that Hialeah "was no longer the dust. She was the wind."?

Chapters 52-54

1. Why do Hialeah and Adelaide become close friends so quickly?
2. What is Nathaniel's reaction on meeting Adelaide? Why do you think he reacts this way?
3. Why does the logging company want to "take Nathaniel down"?
4. Who supports Nathaniel in his idea for a national park? Why do they support him against the lumber company, which provides well-paying jobs?
5. Why does Willa say that she "can't walk on the land that is flat or live in the places where there are no trees"?
6. On page 301, why might Willa ask the Great Mountain, "is this your doing"?
7. Why do Willa and Adelaide decide to talk to Adelaide's father even though they know he won't agree with them?
8. What does Willa mean that "all the streams of her life were coming together"?
9. Why does Adelaide's father break his promise to Willa? Did you predict that he would?
10. Why does Adelaide decide to leave home?

Chapters 55-57

1. Why would muddy rivers eliminate the fish and the otters?
2. On page 313, why does Willa think the steel tracks are “the coming of death”?
3. On page 315, Willa wonders “what was McClaren going to do when his daughter confronted him about his betrayal.” What do you think he will do?
4. What does Nathaniel threaten the loggers with?
5. On page 319, why aren’t the loggers’ gunmen worried about “legalities”?
6. Why don’t the Cherokee take up weapons against the armed loggers?
7. Why do the mountain families show up to help protect Nathaniel’s land?
8. On page 323, what does it mean that Willa “would show these men the world they were creating”?
9. On page 324, why does Willa decide what she’s going to do “even though she knew she shouldn’t do it”?
10. What natural disaster occurs in chapter 57? Who is responsible for it, and why do you think this?

Chapters 58-62

1. What happens to everyone during the mudslide?
2. Does Willa feel responsible for what happens to Nathaniel and Adelaide? Should she? Why or why not?
3. What protects Nathaniel and Adelaide in the mudslide? Why?
4. Who does Willa ask Adelaide to call upon to help them move Nathaniel to the lake of the white bear?
5. Why do they want to take Nathaniel to the lake of the white bear?
6. Why is Willa confident that the young Faeran will survive?
7. Why is Charka part of Willa's plan to help Nathaniel?
8. Why does the white bear reject Willa's request?
9. How does Willa save Nathaniel?
10. What happens to Willa as a result? What do you think about the ending to the story?