

Study Guide Questions

Answer the following questions on sticky notes as you read. Keep the sticky notes in your book to use for future reference in discussion and when writing the final paper.

Chapter 1

1. What year is Amir narrating the story?
2. What does Rahim Khan say to Amir over the phone? What is the significance of that?
3. What foreshadowing is used to let us know that Amir has done something terrible?
4. Who is Hassan?

Chapter 2

5. Where do Amir, Baba, Hassan and Ali live? What type of house?
6. What is the relationship between Amir, Baba, Hassan and Ali?
7. How does Rahim Khan fit in to the story?
8. How and when did Amir's mother die?
9. What happened to Hassan's mother?
10. How are Hassan and Ali different from Amir and Baba? (Ethnicity & religion)
11. How are Hassan and Amir like brothers?

Chapter 3

12. What sort of man is Baba?
13. What did Baba build and why?
14. What do you know about Amir's mother, Sofia Akrami?
15. What is the only sin according to Baba?
16. Why does Amir think that his father hated him a little?
17. What was Amir's escape?
18. What is *chapandaz* and why is it significant to Amir?
19. "A boy who won't stand up for himself becomes a man who can't stand up to anything." Baba says this to Rahim when talking about Amir, who is eaves dropping. What does this say about Baba's feelings towards his son?
20. Describe the relationship between Amir and his father.

Chapter 4

21. How did Ali come to be a part of Baba's life?
22. Why did Baba not ever call Ali his friend, much like why Amir never called Hassan his friend?
23. Why does Amir read to Hassan?
24. Why would Amir stop reading Hassan riddles just because he was better at solving them?
25. Why does Amir tease Hassan about words that he does not know?
26. What is Hassan's favorite story and why?
27. Although he doesn't think of Hassan as his friend, what does Amir carve into the bark of the pomegranate tree to signify their relationship?
28. How does Amir figure out that he is good at telling stories?
29. What did Hassan teach Amir about writing? How is that ironic?

Chapter 5

30. What happened to interrupt Amir and Hassan's conversation about his story?
31. Who is Assef and why does Amir consider him a sociopath?

32. Who does Assef look up to as a great leader? What does this say about the type of person Assef is?
33. What transpires between Assef, his friends, Amir and Hassan? How does Hassan defend Amir?
34. How does Afghanistan change with the fall of King Zahir Shah?
35. What does Baba do for Hassan for his 11th birthday? Why do you think Baba did this for Hassan, after all, he is just a Hazara servant?

Chapter 6

36. Why does Amir like winter so much?
37. What are three things that Amir and Hassan do during winter that are not the same as what kids would do in the U.S?
38. How does Amir describe the relationship between Baba and himself?
39. What is different about the way kites are made for kite fighting compared to just flying them for the fun of it?
40. Where do Amir and Hassan get their kites?
41. Afghans cherish _____, but abhor _____. What does this mean?
42. What is the job of a kite runner? Who is the best kite runner?
43. Why does it unsettle Amir sometimes when he really looks at Hassan?
44. How does Amir expect to show Baba that he is worthy?
45. Why does Iran represent a sanctuary to the Hazara people?

Chapter 7

46. Thoughts? Feelings? Write about Hassan, Amir, and the events of Chapter 7.

Chapters 8 & 9

47. How does the trip to Jalalabad turn out differently than what Amir was hoping?
48. Why is it a curse for Amir that he is going to get away with his lies?
49. How does Baba react when Amir suggests getting new servants?
50. Amir calls Hassan a coward for not fighting back when he hits him with a pomegranate. What is really happening?
51. Why is it ironic that Baba wants Amir to be friends with Assef?
52. When Rahim Khan tells the story of how he was almost married, he tells Amir that "In the end, the world always wins." What does he mean by this and how does that apply to Amir's situation?
53. What did Rahim Khan give Amir and how was it different than everything else he received for his birthday?
54. Why does Hassan admit to stealing the money?
55. What is the significance of Baba forgiving Hassan for stealing the money?
56. How does the weather reflect the tone of the day that Ali and Hassan leave?

Chapter 10

57. It is now March of 1981, how much time has passed and what has changed in Afghanistan?
58. Where are Baba and Amir going and why?
59. What are three things that Baba and Amir take with them besides clothes?
60. Why didn't Baba and Amir tell their servant, Jalaluddin, where they were going?
61. Why does Baba stand up to the Russian soldier?
62. Why does Baba attack Karim (the driver)?
63. Why do the passengers have to wait and why do they have to hide in the basement?
64. What happened to Kamal between the time when Amir last saw him and when they were riding in the tanker? Who do you think is responsible?
65. What are two ways that Baba helps Amir recover from his panic attack?
66. When they get to Pakistan, why is Amir sad for his father?

Chapter 11

67. How is Baba's *idea* of America different than the reality of living there?
68. What happened between Baba and Mr. Nguyen? What does this say about Baba?
69. How could Amir have made the Nguyens understand Baba better? Why didn't he?
70. What are three things that Baba misses from Afghanistan?
71. What does Baba do to earn a living?
72. Why won't Baba accept the food stamps?
73. When Baba gives Amir the car, he says "I wish Hassan had been with us today." What does that do to Amir? Why?

Chapter 12

74. What is *yelda*? What Afghan legends are associated with it?
75. Why can't Amir just ask Soraya out on a date?
76. Amir meets Soraya in the mid-80's. Think of America during the 80's. How is the Afghan culture different from American culture concerning dating during this time?
77. Why does Soraya want to be a teacher?
78. When Amir takes Baba to the county hospital for his cold, he is referred to a specialist. Amir is given the 'run around' by the hospital. How does this portray the way Americans treat immigrants?
79. Why won't Baba see the first pulmonologist, Dr. Schneider?
80. What kind of cancer is Baba eventually diagnosed with? How does he react to this?
81. Why does Baba refuse the chemotherapy?
82. What does Amir ask of his father after he is discharged from the hospital?
83. What does Soraya tell Amir before she will let him complete the *khastegari*?

Chapter 13

84. What is the purpose of *lafz*?
85. When Baba finally becomes bedridden, what does he have Soraya do for him, that they hide from Amir?
86. During Baba's funeral, Amir thinks about the bears that Baba has wrestled all his life? What are these bears symbolic of?
87. Now that Baba is gone, Amir has to find his own way now. Why does that terrify him?
88. What are some things that Amir learns about General Taheri that make Amir think a little less of him?
89. Why could Amir do no wrong in Khala Jamila's (Soraya's mother) eyes?
90. What is the significance of General Taheri making Soraya cut her hair when he brought her back home in Virginia?
91. How did General Taheri support Amir's writing without openly saying it?
92. What happens in the summer of 1988 that changes Amir and Soraya's life?
93. What is happening in Afghanistan in 1989?
94. After not being able to have a child of their own, what is stopping Amir and Soraya from adopting? How is that different from the General's opinion on adoption?
95. How does Amir explain the reason for Soraya and him not to be able to have a child or even adopt one?

Chapter 14 & 15

96. In Chapter One, Amir says that one day last summer, his friend Rahim Khan called from Pakistan. Chapter 14 starts with that phone conversation. What does Rahim Khan want from Amir and why?
97. Looking back at Amir's past, what do you think Rahim Khan means by "there is a way to be good again?"
98. Who is Gholam and what role does he play besides the disgruntled taxi-cab driver?
99. Amir describes his initial meeting Rahim Khan with the cliché of "an elephant in the room." What is he referring to?

100. Both Baba and General Taheri live(d) as though what happened to Afghanistan was something that would eventually go away. How do each men show that common belief?
101. What was living in Afghanistan like while the Northern Alliance controlled Kabul?
102. Why did the people of Afghanistan initially think that the Taliban were heroes?
103. Besides being able to see Amir before he dies, why else did Rahim Khan want Amir to come to him in Pakistan?

Chapter 16

104. Chapter 16 is told from Rahim Khan's perspective. Why does he go in search of Hassan in 1986?
105. While all of this is happening in Afghanistan, what was Amir doing in the United States? How does this relate back to what Rahim Khan said, "The world always wins?"
106. How had Hassan changed from when Rahim Khan saw him last?
107. What happened to Ali?
108. Why do Hassan and Farzana end up going back to Kabul with Rahim Khan?
109. Why won't Hassan and Farzana live in the house with Rahim Khan once they return to Kabul?
110. How do Hassan and Farzana help Rahim Khan with the house?
111. What happened to Hassan's first born?
112. Who came to the house in Kabul in the summer of 1990?
113. What kind of man has Hassan become? How is that different than Amir?
114. What did Hassan name his baby boy? Why?
115. How was Sanaubar different with the new baby than she was with Hassan? Why do you think there is a difference? What has changed?
116. Even in the middle of a war, how did Hassan and Rahim Khan try to make Sohrab's childhood normal?
117. When the rest of Afghanistan celebrated the Taliban coming, why did Hassan worry?
118. Why do you think the Taliban banned kite fighting?

Chapters 17 & 18

119. After telling Amir about Ali and Hassan, what does Rahim Khan give Amir?
120. Even after everything that happened to Hassan, he smiles as a man who thought the world had been good to him in the Polaroid. What does this say about how Hassan dealt with what happened to him compared to Amir?
121. How does Hassan's letter show that he hasn't changed and has forgiven Amir?
122. Hassan taught Sohrab how to read and write. What else did he teach him?
123. What happened to Hassan and Farzana?
124. How did the Taliban get away with what they did? Why didn't anyone stand up to the Taliban?
125. What does Rahim Khan want Amir to do for Sohrab? Where is Sohrab?
126. Rahim Khan is giving Amir a chance to save Hassan's only son. How does Amir react?
127. Does Rahim Khan really believe that Amir is the type of man who can't stand up to anything, like Baba believed?
128. Why does Rahim Kahn tell Amir that Ali had been married before Sanaubar?
129. What is the lie that Amir learns?
130. What were some of the signs that Amir missed over the years that made sense now that he knew who Hassan's real father was?
131. How had Baba been a thief?
132. Amir realizes two things after leaving Rahim Khan. What are they?
133. How has Rahim Khan given Amir a "way to be good again?" What does Amir need to do?

Chapter 19

134. Why does Amir lie to Farid, his driver, about the lemon making him feel better when it doesn't?

135. What are the 5 things that Rahim Khan and Amir do to prepare for Amir to travel to Kabul?
136. Why does Farid say that Amir has always been a tourist in Afghanistan, even though he grew up there?
137. Why does Farid think that Amir is back in Afghanistan initially? How is he wrong?
138. After finding out the real reason that Amir is going back to Kabul, how does Farid make up for his rudeness?
139. Amir has a dream the night they are at Wahid's house. What does that dream symbolize?
140. While sitting outside of the house, Amir overhears Wahid and his wife arguing. What are they arguing about and what does that mean to Amir?
141. How did Amir pay Wahid and his family back for their hospitality?

Chapter 20

142. When was the last time Amir was on the road from Jalalbad to Kabul? What was he doing?
143. Farid tells Amir that Kabul is not the way he remembers it. What is different?
144. What has happened to all of the trees?
145. Why is Amir sad to return to Kabul? What is the analogy he uses?
146. Who are the "Beard Patrol?"
147. Why did Amir want to stay and talk to the beggar? What did he used to do?
148. How does Amir convince the director of the orphanage to talk to them about Sohrab?
149. Why isn't Sohrab at the orphanage? Where is he?

Chapter 21

150. What are the two men on the street corner doing? Why?
151. Who lives in the Wazir Akbar Khan district now?
152. Amir insists on visiting his childhood home. What is the symbolism of the house as it stands now compared to what it used to be like?
153. What is ironic about the fact that the pomegranate tree still stands but doesn't bear fruit?
154. What do Amir and Farid witness at Ghazi stadium?

Chapter 22

155. How is the Talib with the John Lennon glasses different from the others in physical appearance?
156. What happened in Mazar in August of 1998?
157. Who is Sohrab's captor?
158. Why did Assef join the Taliban? Where did he have his epiphany?
159. What is Assef's price for Sohrab?
160. Why does Amir laugh when he is being beaten by Assef?
161. How does Sohrab save Amir?
162. What is ironic about the fact that Assef no longer has a left eye, thanks to Sohrab? (Think way back to chapter five)

Chapter 23

163. What are some of the injuries Amir sustained from his fight with Assef?
164. What is ironic about the scar Amir will have on his face?
165. What did Rahim Khan's letter reveal about what he (Rahim) knew? What did it tell about Baba?
166. Why is Farid so worried about getting Amir out of Peshawar?
167. What does Farid say to Amir that makes him start crying? Why would Amir cry over that?
168. What has happened to Thomas and Betty Caldwell, the people that Amir was supposed to leave Sohrab with?
169. What are Amir's plans at the end of the chapter?

Chapter 24

- 170. What did Islamabad remind Amir of?
- 171. How much did Amir pay Farid for his help? Why do you think he gave him so much?
- 172. Where had Sohrab gone while Amir was sleeping? Why did he go there?
- 173. Why is Sohrab sometimes glad his family is gone?
- 174. What are Amir's plans for Sohrab now?
- 175. Why is Sohrab scared about going to America to live with Amir?
- 176. What is Amir finally able to do when he calls Soraya?
- 177. What happens the first time Amir and Sohrab go to the U.S. embassy to get Sohrab to the United States?

Chapter 25

- 178. When Amir realizes that Sohrab might die, what does he ask of God?
- 179. Briefly describe what Amir remembers about finding Sohrab. Describe his emotions.
- 180. What does Dr. Nawaz tell Amir about Sohrab's condition? How does Amir react?
- 181. How long is Sohrab in the ICU? How does Amir spend the days after he is put into his own room? How does Sohrab initially respond? Why do you think he reacts this way?
- 182. What does Sohrab tell Amir he wants? How does Amir respond? What memory does this conversation trigger for Amir?
- 183. Why does Sohrab decide to go to San Francisco?
- 184. How has Soraya prepared for Sohrab's arrival? How does Sohrab respond to her?
- 185. How does General Taheri feel about Sohrab? How does Amir respond to his question about why he has brought Sohrab to the United States? What do you think this conversation reveals about both men?
- 186. How does Sohrab respond to life with Amir and Soraya?
- 187. What happens that gives Amir hope that Sohrab may someday be happy again? How does Amir respond to this sign of hope?