

HIGH SCHOOL/COLLEGE PREP ENGLISH IIIA
A Parrot in the Oven
Comprehension Questions

Chapter 1

Literary term

- Simile : An expression in which you compare two things using the words “like” or “as” For example “as red as Blood”
 1. What is a perico?
 2. What is Manny's goal and how does he go about achieving it?
 3. Who are the family members?
 4. Find a simile that describes Manny's relationship with work.
 5. What is the meaning of Manny's observation on page 6:
"Years of not knowing what besides work was expected from a Mexican convinced me that I wouldn't pass from this earth without putting in a lot of days."
 6. How do Manny and Nardo compare in relation to their work ethic?
 7. How did Manny get the money to buy his glove?

Chapter 2

1. How do Manny's parents discipline him? What do you think of their methods?
2. Why is the father angry with the Garcia brothers?
3. Do you sympathize with him?
4. Do you have any neighbors who ruin things for other people on your block?
5. Describe Manny's house and neighborhood.
6. What was Manny's dad's opinion of Welfare?
7. Explain Mr. Hernandez' comparison of people to money. Where did he see his family when it came to money?
8. What effect might this attitude have on Manny? How much do parental attitudes toward life affect the personalities of children?
9. How does Manny handle the Garcia brothers?

Chapter 3

Literary terms:

- hyperbole: exaggerated description
- irony: contradictory situation

1. Why did Manny's mom send him to get his school records?

2. Where is there an example of a hyperbole?
3. How did Manny's parent's view school?
4. Do people want charity?
5. Do students of predominantly European American schools get a better education?
6. What is Manny's attitude toward his mother's dreams for him?
7. What does the teacher think of Manny's chances for a good future?
8. How does Manny relate to his father?
9. What do you think of the father taking the money from Manny?

Chapter 4

1. What did Manny's dad do with the money? Where did he go?
2. What does the father say about Manny?
3. How does Manny show himself to be responsible when his father is hysterically looking for bullets?
4. When the father hurts Manny by saying he only cares about Pedi, does Manny leave? Give up?
What does his persistence despite this hurt say about him?
5. Why did the police take the rifle? What happened to Manny's father?
6. What two actions at the end of the chapter demonstrate Manny's caring, responsible nature?

Chapter 5

1. Manny finds, saves and reads a science magazine. What do these actions indicate about him?
2. Which boy encourages the other to keep working a little longer before taking a break?
3. Is this consistent with what we already know about him?
4. How does Manny interact with his brother when talking about his grandmother?
5. What is Manny's vision for his grandmother's life after death?

Chapter 6

1. Why couldn't Magda get promoted at work?
2. What action on page 93 shows Manny again to be a dependable family member?
3. What quote on page 108 shows how sensitive and introspective Manny is?

Chapter 7

Literary Term:

- epiphany: sudden realization, insight

1. Describe the Berets.
2. What is Manny's job? How is this predictable? How is he treated by girls?
3. At the end of the boxing match Manny has an epiphany that "the whole fight shouldn't have been given so much meaning..." What does this mean?
4. What did the Berets decide to do to Lencho? Why?

Chapter 8

1. How is Magda treated at the hospital?
2. How else does Manny show himself to be a caring, responsible family member in this chapter?

Chapter 9

1. How does Manny again come through for the family, this time for Nardo?
2. Read this quote: "That's when my skin blazing, I stomped out the door, knowing that their teasing wasn't going to let up." What does it say about Manny?
3. Magda had warned Manny not to go to the party and even Manny knew it would be a big mistake. Why do you think he went anyway? What happened to him at the party?

Chapter 10

1. What is his goal?
2. How have his goals changed since the beginning of the novel?
3. What did Manny have to do to become a member of the Callaway projects gang?

Chapter 11

Literary terms:

- symbol: something that stands for something else
 - coming of age: maturing, growing up
1. Read the first complete paragraph, top of page 198. How has the glove become a symbol of Manny's coming of age? Has he lost some of his innocence? Is he still a "parrot in the oven"?
 2. Reread the quote about Eddie liking to hit white boys to watch them turn red, and to the fact that he himself is European American. (206) What do you think about people preferring another race to their own?
 3. What realization does Manny have about Eddie's identity on page 210?
 4. At the bottom of page 210 Manny has an epiphany. What is it?
 5. What epiphany does Manny have at the end of the novel?