

Search for Safety by John Langan

INSTRUCTIONS: Answer each question using the ACE format for short answer questions. Be sure to label the components of ACE [A=, C=, E=]. There will be a test on this novel when school starts.

UNIT ONE: CHAPTERS 1, 2, AND 3

1. How does Ben's mom explain her decision to marry Larry, who she's known for only a few months?
2. What are Larry's house rules? How does Ben react to them? What does Larry do in response?
3. What does Aunt Fay tell Ben which surprises and disappoints him?
4. How did Aunt Fay once rescue Ben and his mother?
5. What happens to Ben on the way home from Cat's Sandwich Shop? How does Larry react to what happens?

UNIT TWO: CHAPTERS 4, 5, AND 6

6. Why is Mr. Graham reluctant to hire Ben to work for him at his store? Who does Ben remind Mr. Graham of, and why?
7. In Chapter 4, how do Dez Hodden and his brother Cooper stick up for Ben?
8. What happens to Ben and his mother on the Monday after the Labor Day party? Afterward, what does Mom refuse to let him do? What reasons does she give for refusing?
9. What positive things happen to Ben on his first day of school at Bluford High?
10. What bad news does Mom tell Ben about Larry's job? How does Ben react to this news?

UNIT THREE: CHAPTERS 7, 8, 9, AND 10

11. What does Larry do one Friday night to get money? What does he spend the money on? How does this affect Ben and his mom?
12. What does Mr. Graham invite Ben to do after work on Saturday? How is this a change for Ben?
13. On Monday morning, Ben decides to do something that he's never done before. What does he do? Who sees him doing it? What is Ben's reaction to being seen by these people?
14. What happens at the store on the day that Ben works an extra hour? How does Ben react to what happens?
15. What two things prompt Aunt Fay to return from North Carolina? What does she do when she again sees Ben?

SEARCH FOR SAFETY: PROJECTS

Instructions: Choose one of the projects below to complete for the novel.

1. SCRIPTED CONVERSATION. As with Ben, sometimes young people have problems at home that they find difficult to discuss with others. Write a script for a conversation in which a young person must tell a trusted adult about a difficult situation at home. The following is the format for writing a script:

Kevin: Aunt Evelyn, there's something I need to talk to you about.

Aunt Evelyn: What is it, Kevin?

Try to make the conversation as realistic as possible. How might the young person explain what is bothering him or her? What are some ways that the adult might respond? Try to express, through the characters' words, the emotions they are feeling. Begin your script with a narrator who explains who the characters are, what they are doing, and where they are when the conversation takes place. Your script might then be performed in class, with one student as the narrator, another as the adult, and a third as the young person.

2. SCENE ILLUSTRATION/ POSTCARD ACTIVITY. Think of your favorite scene from the book. Write a paragraph explaining why this is your favorite scene. In addition, draw a picture of how you imagine the scene would look. Try to include as much detail as possible about all the characters involved and the surrounding scenery. On the back of the illustration, pretend you are a character in *Search for Safety*, write a postcard to another character from the book. In the postcard, you should ask that character a question about his or her actions or behavior.

3. CHARACTER DIAGRAM. On a separate sheet of paper, draw five boxes. Label each box with the name of one of the main characters in the book: Ben, Aunt Fay, Geneva, Larry, Mr. Graham. In each box, do the following:

- a. Write *two facts* that you've learned about that person. Example: He is tall. She is sixteen.
- b. Write two descriptive words that seem right for that person. Example: Smart and friendly.
- c. Identify *one or two key quotes* from the story that help illustrate each person's personality.

If you'd like, you may also draw a picture of each of the characters.

4. EPILOGUE. An epilogue is a final short chapter of a story that discusses what happens after the main action of the story is finished. Write an epilogue for *Search for Safety*, discussing what you would like to see happen to the main characters after the story ends. For instance, you might consider one or more of the following questions: What will happen when Ben and Cindy meet again? Will Larry and Donald be convicted and sentenced to long jail terms? Will Ben and his mom move back in with Aunt Fay? Will Ben continue to work at Graham's grocery?

5. GUIDED ESSAY ASSIGNMENT – See attached.

GUIDED ESSAY ASSIGNMENT

Given below are the introductory and concluding paragraphs for an essay, along with the topic sentence for the three supporting paragraphs. The final sentence of the introductory paragraph (underlined below) is the *thesis*, or central point, of the essay.

Three Caring Adults

Introductory Paragraph

In *Search for Safety*, Ben McKee is upset when his mother tells him of her plans to marry Larry Taylor, a man she has been seeing for only a few months. Ben's misgivings soon turn to despair as Larry proves to be a violently abusive husband and stepfather. Yet, throughout Ben's ordeal, there are adults in his life who are ready to assist him if he will trust them enough to ask for their help. Three caring adults in Ben's life are Aunt Fay, Mr. Graham, and Mr. Mitchell.

Supporting Paragraph 1

Topic Sentence: Ben's Aunt Fay demonstrates that she cares for Ben in many ways.
(Add supporting details.)

Supporting Paragraph 2

Topic sentence: Another adult who demonstrates that he cares for Ben is his employer, Mr. Graham. (Add supporting details.)

Supporting Paragraph 3

Topic sentence: A third adult who demonstrates that he cares about Ben is his English teacher, Mr. Mitchell. (Add supporting details.)

Concluding Paragraph

In *Search for Safety*, Ben McKee is faced with the "stepdad from Hell," Larry Taylor. At first Ben is unsure what to do when confronted by Larry's brutality. But when facing Larry alone proves fruitless, Ben, with the encouragement of three caring adults, asks for and receives help—enough to ensure that Larry will not bother anyone again for a long time.

Assignment: Write the three supporting paragraphs needed to complete the essay.

How to Proceed:

1. Ask yourself questions about how Aunt Fay shows that she cares for Ben, and write down detailed answers. What is the first time that Aunt Fay comes to Ben's rescue? What else does Aunt Fay do for Ben which demonstrates her caring nature? How does her caring nature affect the outcome of the novel? Then ask yourself similar questions about Mr. Graham and Mr. Mitchell, and write out detailed answers.
2. Now write a rough draft of each paragraph. Start each paragraph with one of the topic sentences given above. Remember, you want to have clear examples from the story of how each adult character shows that he or she cares about Ben.
3. Set the paragraphs aside for a while so you can take a fresh look at them later. See if you have provided enough supporting details to back up your point about each of the three characters. See if you can add more details, or even better details. Now write the entire essay, making sure that your support is as convincing as possible.
4. Finally, it's very important to *read your paper aloud*. Chances are that you will find grammar or punctuation mistakes at every spot where your paper does not read smoothly and clearly. Make the corrections needed so that all of your sentences read smoothly. If necessary, write a final draft before handing in your paper.