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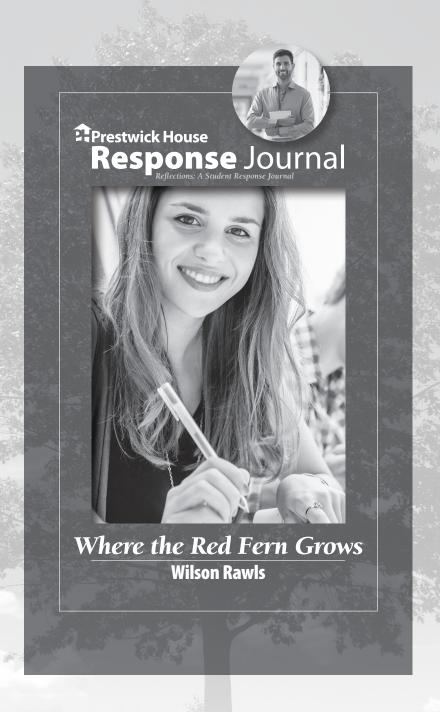
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Response Journal

To The Student

Although we may read a novel, play, or work of non-fiction for enjoyment, each time we read one, we are building and practicing important basic reading skills. In our ever-more complex society, in which reading has become more and more crucial for success, this, in itself, is an important reason to spend time reading for enjoyment.

Some readers, however, are able to go beyond basic reading techniques and are able to practice higher thinking skills by reflecting on what they have read and how what they read affects them. It is this act of reflection—that is, stopping to think about what you are reading—that this journal is attempting to encourage.

To aid you, we have included writing prompts for each section; however, if you find something that you wish to respond to in the book more compelling than our prompts, you should write about that. We hope you enjoy reading this book and that the act of responding to what you have read increases this enjoyment.

After you read the indicated sections, choose the questions to which you will respond. Keep in mind that there are no right or wrong answers to these prompts, and there is no one direction in which you must go.

Where the Red Fern Grows

Chapter One

- 1. From what you may infer about the narrator's character, do you think he'd be someone you'd want as a friend?
- 2. Knowing the dog faces many dangers in traveling alone, the man still releases the dog after only one night. Would you have done the same? Why?
- 3. Buddie reminds the man of two little red hounds he owned as a boy, yet the last two paragraphs in this chapter suggest the story will be about the gold and silver cups. Speculate on the connection between the cups and the red hounds.

Chapter Two

- 4. Billy presses his parents for two hound dogs. He pesters them until they decide to get him some traps. Can you think of an instance in life, a book, or a movie where someone gets rewarded for begging and pestering his or her parents?
- 5. Although his sisters are upset about Samie getting hurt, Billy's parents don't punish him for catching the cat in his traps. Can you think of a time in your life when your parents refused to discipline your brother or sister when you felt they deserved a punishment?

Chapter Four

- 12. Why do you suppose Billy couldn't tell his father about the dogs even after they are purchased and waiting to be picked up?
- 13. Consider Billy's parents' reaction when they discover he is missing. Will they try to find him? How would your parents react if you went away without their permission? Write a page of dialogue between Billy's mom and dad in which they discuss Billy's absence.
- 14. Suppose a boy like Billy comes to your school. He is dressed in overalls and is barefoot. How do you suppose he'd be treated by the other students and the teachers? How would you feel if he tried to make friends with you?

Chapter Five

- 15. Billy and the stationmaster put his pups into a sack with holes cut out for their heads. Billy thinks, "Now, maybe the people won't stare at me when they see what I've got. After all, not every boy owns two good hounds." Why is this passage funny? What do we understand about the townspeople that Billy doesn't?
- 16. "Those kids are pretty tough, son" he said, "but they're really not bad. They'll grow up some day." Do you agree or disagree with the marshall's attitude toward the gang?

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Chapter Nine

- 27. Little Ann is loyal to Old Dan and stays with him to guard the tree. At first, Billy misunderstands and thinks she has slept in the doghouse, but later he apologizes to Little Ann. Relate Little Ann's response to Billy's apology.
- 28. As it is presented, do you believe the raccoon has a fair fighting chance against the hunting dogs? What would you say to someone who takes the view opposing yours?
- 29. Billy's mother is having trouble adjusting to his hunting. At one point she comments, "Sometimes I wonder if all mothers have to go through this." Can you think of a television show, book, or movie in which the mother has trouble accepting the fact that her little boy or girl is growing up? Has this ever happened to you or someone you know?
- 30. Billy believes the Lord answered his prayer and blew down the tree, but his father thinks it was just the wind. If they asked for your opinion, what would you say?

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Chapter Fourteen

- 45. Billy's whole family enjoys Billy's success with the hounds. Write about a time in your experience, or in the experience of someone you know, when an accomplishment provided entertainment and pride for the family.
- 46. Since we know from the first chapter that Billy has a gold and a silver cup, how do you suppose the author keeps the reader interested when the outcome is already known?
- 47. Billy accepts the return of the ax by saying, "Yes, we will need one. Besides, it's a good one and there's no use in throwing it away." Can you think of any similar circumstances, in which a person did or did not do the same? Can you think of any object you treasured that caused a problem? If it had been returned to you, how do you suppose you might have felt?