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***Beloved***  
BY TONI MORRISON

  
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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Pre-Reading****Historical Context**

**Objective:** Understanding how historical context affects a novel

**Activity**

*Beloved* is set before and after the American Civil War. Most of the main characters, at some point in the novel, cross the line between the North and the South. Where the African American characters are at specific points in time greatly affects their legal status as well as their emotional and physical well-being.

Working in groups of three or four, research the states allowed or did not allow slavery in 1860 and 1870. On the following maps of the U.S., identify (with highlighters, markers, etc.) which states had slavery and which did not. Make sure to hold on to your maps as you read the book.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Section 1, Chapters 1 – 2****Plot Comprehension****Objective:** Understanding the non-linear plot of *Beloved***Activity**

Much of *Beloved's* plot is told in flashbacks; within the book, Sethe is currently experiencing a haunting, but at the same time, she is remembering the events that led to that haunting. As a result of this narrative process, the reader learns about Sethe's past in bits and pieces. Based on the information you have from Chapters 1 and 2 of the first section, construct a timeline of the events from Sethe's time at Sweet Home to when Paul D comes to visit her at 124.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Section 1, Chapter 6****Cartoon Panel**

**Objectives:** Comprehending character motivation  
Looking at events chronologically

**Activity**

In Chapter 6, the narrator informs the reader that Beloved loves hearing her mother's stories, eating them up like the sweets she craves. Further, the narrator reveals that Sethe was never comfortable sharing her stories with Denver but can tell Beloved. Beloved asks Sethe to tell her about the "diamonds" Sethe was given by Mrs. Garner for her wedding. Sethe enjoys telling Beloved about the preparations for her wedding. From her story telling, the reader learns about a happier time in Sethe's life as well as Beloved's desire for information about her mother's past.

Create a cartoon panel illustrating Sethe's actions to prepare for her wedding to Halle. Make sure to depict all of the events Sethe thinks necessary to tell Beloved. Once you have created your cartoon panels, form pairs and share your panels, discussing what is similar and different between the interpretations, and why.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Section 1, Chapter 9****Time Comprehension****Objective:** Relating to the character and comprehending timelines**Activity**

Sethe notes that she had exactly twenty-eight days, or just less than one month, of happiness at 124. She is able to learn the alphabet from one neighbor, how to stitch from another, but most importantly, she learns how to decide how to spend all her time every day, which is priceless to her. This is the only span of time in which Sethe considers herself to have been happy.

Think back over your life. What one-month time span was the happiest you have experienced? Create an illustration of words and images to represent what made that month memorable and enjoyable.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Section 1, Chapter 18****Quote Analysis**

**Objective:** Understanding how quotes or dialogue function in a story

**Analysis**

After Paul D learns that Sethe has murdered her own child to stop her from being returned to slavery, Paul D confronts her. After hearing her explanation, Paul D becomes scared and says to her “your love is too thick” to which Sethe responds, “Too thick...Love is or it ain’t. Thin love ain’t love at all.”

In groups of three, create and conduct an interview of Paul D and Sethe. One person should play the role of interviewer and the other two Paul D and Sethe. Focus on the reasons why Sethe committed her crime, whether love can be “too thick” as Paul D claims, and why this knowledge turns Paul D away.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Section 2, Chapter 6

### Mapping

**Objective:** Mapping a characters' travels

#### Activity

Section 2, Chapter 6 presents the reader with more of Paul D's back story. The reader is told what happened to him at Sweet Home and what went wrong with his escape plan. Paul D's failed escape is what starts him on his journey around the country, first being sent to the prison camp in Alfred, Georgia, and then escaping from there to the North.

On the map you created of where slavery was legal and illegal in 1860, mark the places where Paul D has been. Some of the towns are fictional, so just plotting a point in the state is fine. These points should include:

- Kentucky
- Georgia
- Delaware
- Trenton, New Jersey
- Cincinnati, Ohio

Once you have plotted these points, use an online map website to determine the distance between the many places Paul D has been.