

The Bean Trees by Barbara Kingsolver

Outline for Study

Pre-Reading

1. Unpack and discuss the following quotes and questions.

“This funny, inspiring book is a marvelous affirmation of risk-taking, commitment, and everyday miracles ... an overwhelming delight, as random and unexpected as real life.”

— PUBLISHERS WEEKLY

“Taylor Greer, who grew up in poor in rural Kentucky with the goals of avoiding pregnancy and getting away. But when Taylor heads west with high hopes and a barely functional car, she meets the human condition head-on. By the time she arrives in Tucson, she has acquired a completely unexpected child and must somehow come to terms with both motherhood and the necessity for putting down roots. Hers is a story about love and friendship, abandonment and belonging, and the discovery of surprising resources in apparently empty places.”¹

Essential Question: What is the struggle between personal morality and the law?

Guiding Questions: What is the role of empathy and/or generosity to survival? What do people need to survive? To thrive? How is action/inquiry research an instrument of change?

2. Introductory Notes and Research Lecture and Handout
3. Read and annotate “Immigration Solution” by Jennifer Rubin. Prepare for class discussion.
4. Find, read, and submit two opposing articles on immigration with a BRIEF summary and correct MLA citation.

During Reading

1. Discuss allusions and historical context.
2. Complete quizzes and Resonance Journals.
3. Complete Study Guides.
4. Discuss themes and literary elements
5. Formulate Inquiry/Action Research Question

Post-Reading

1. Complete Extended Essay Research (2-3 pages)
2. Revisit Essential Questions

¹ <http://www.kingsolver.com/books/the-bean-trees.html>

Key Terms

Active Setting

Voice

Tone

Mood

Social criticism

Analogy

Logos, pathos, ethos

Dialect

Idiom

Colloquialism

Selection of detail

Structure

Terms to Review

Theme

Irony

Metaphor

Allusion

Symbolism

Imagery

Foreshadowing

Name _____

Writing Focus/AP Lit

Ms. Tozzi, Ms. St. John

The Bean Trees

Introductory Notes and Research

As we discuss the historical context of this novel, please take notes below. Remember, when or where we live often shapes our beliefs, morals, relationships, fears and many other aspects of the people we become and the lives we lead. In literature, this is called **active setting**; the setting of a piece of literature has an impact on the characters and conflicts in the story.

Human Rights Struggles in Guatemala:

Conservatism in the 1980s:

Division Between Rich and Poor:

Child Abuse and Native Americans:

Introductory Notes and Research Continued

Additional notes and responses:

Next, carefully examine the issues we have discussed. Which of these issues are relevant in the world today? Please list them here.

Of the issues you have listed, please choose the one that interests you most. You will use this topic to create an **annotated bibliography** and an **extended research essay**.

“Immigration Solution” by Jennifer Rubin from *The Washington Post* July 23

Immigration reform won't happen this year, but ironically the border debacle may make immigration reform more likely in the near to mid-future. Even if the House wanted to, there is little time (a couple weeks now and a few in September) to get any major legislation done. Moreover, with the monkey off their back and the Democrats under fire for the border mess, Republicans will see less urgency to move forward. Still, the outlook for 2015 and beyond is not entirely bleak for those who favor immigration reform.

There are the anti-reform advocates who actually oppose all immigration, legal or otherwise, and are fundamentally opposed to compromise on anything. Although that segment of the blogosphere and radio talk show universe is loud, it's tiny when compared to the combination of the border-security-first and pro-comprehensive reform groups. The key to reform has always been to get the people willing to consider reform if border security is dealt with together with those who want to work on legalization simultaneously with border control (or who aren't interested in strong border protection mechanisms).

That's where President Obama's miscues may have helped things, although not in the direction of the most emphatic immigration reformers. In essence, Obama's invitation (or what was interpreted as an invitation) to minors and the ensuing surge of unaccompanied minors have given the border-security-first group a leg up. It's no longer politically untenable to argue we should first do border security, then evaluate and then address legalization issues. In fact that seems to be the default position. And — here is where it gets interesting — if the House succeeds in turning the president's request into a measure aimed directly at security then we may take a big step toward improving border security. Rather than arguing about doing border security first, the next Congress can look back on border security measures already enacted, assess their effectiveness and then — perhaps — move forward on other parts of immigration reform.

Three other components in the immigration equation have also changed in ways that may promote comprehensive reform. First, legalization and not citizenship is being widely accepted on the Democratic side — at least for now. (Watch Dems move the goalposts if legalization ever gets through the House.) That takes care of some (not all) conservatives who are convinced this is all a plot to build the Democrats' voter rolls. (Maybe they could try competing for those votes instead of hoping against hope that demographic trends will reverse.) Second, the president is more inclined (more, not guaranteed) to stop unilaterally changing the immigration laws. That has only given the GOP an excuse to do nothing but, if repeated, will put any illegal immigration surge squarely on his and fellow Democrats' shoulders. And third, midterms and pesky right-wing primary challenges will be in the rear view mirror. Certainly, the presidential primary election may give some reason to grandstand against reform, but in fact virtually all candidates are on record favoring some form of immigration reform.

What then could emerge out of all this? A border security measure gets passed this year. Next year that's evaluated and perhaps improved to enhance effectiveness or address logistical issues that have come up. In separate legislation the House puts together a measure to work on agricultural guest workers, high-skilled H1-B visas, eVerify, immigration overstay and then (conditioned on learning English, paying a fine and back taxes) legalization for those who've been here for a long time (e.g. 15 years). It's not ideal, but it's conceivable from a political standpoint.

In short, both sides can come together in an effort to fix the mess the president helped create. And that in turn may lay the groundwork for more progress on immigration reform. That's the theory, at any rate. We'll see whether a border security bill can get done this year. If so, there's a sliver of hope more can be accomplished.

<u>Character List</u>	<u>Character Traits</u>	<u>Direct or Indirect Characterization/CD</u>
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Taylor		
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Turtle		
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Lou Ann		
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Mattie		
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Estevan		
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Esperanza		
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Ismene		
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Angel		
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Alice		
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Dwayne Ray		
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Study Guide Questions

Chapter 1:

Should Taylor leave her mother and home without looking back the way she does?

Should she change her name?

What character traits does Taylor Greer demonstrate?

Chapter 2:

Describe the relationship between Lou Ann and Angel.

Chapter 3:

What if Taylor had not found a mechanic to help her? What might she have done?

Chapter 4:

What is the significance of the title of this chapter?

Chapter 5:

Describe Taylor and Lou Ann's first encounter.

Chapter 6:

What is Taylor's philosophy about men?

Chapter 7:

Who is Estevan? What story does he tell at the end of the chapter?

Chapter 8:

What does Dr. Pelinowsky call Turtle's condition?

Chapter 9:

Who is Ismene? Would you have done what Esperanza did?

Chapter 10:

What does Taylor realize about Edna?

Describe Mattie's house. What does the description of Mattie's house say about Mattie?

Chapter 11:

What does Lou Ann receive from Angel? Do you think she will go back to him?

Chapter 12:

How does Taylor react to the news about Turtle?

Chapter 13:

How does Cynthia help Taylor?

Chapter 14:

Where does most of the Cherokee nation exist?

Chapter 15:

How does Turtle reenact her mother's burial?

Chapter 16:

Would you have done what Taylor did? Why or why not?

Chapter 17:

What does "rhizobia" mean? How does Taylor employ (use) the term as a way to represent the relationships between various characters in the novel?

What do you think will happen next?

