

Bridge:

- Write a list of the challenges the character(s) has/have faced so far.
- Write about a time when you or someone you know faced a dangerous/frightening situation.
- Write about a time when you or someone you know was helped by strangers.

General Questions

- What part of any character's journey was most striking to you and why?
- How were the refugees helped? Who helped them and why did they help?
- How were they hindered? Who hindered them, what did they do, and why did they do this?
- Why did some people ignore the refugees? Why do you think they did this? How did it impact the refugees?

Character Connections

- What are some similarities and differences between Isabel's feelings toward Castro and Josef's feelings toward Hitler?
- Pick two characters.
 - How are their families responses to stress similar to (or different from) each other?
 - Which family would you feel most comfortable with during a stressful situation and why?
 - How are their journeys similar to (or different from) each other?
 - What is one significant similarity or difference between the character's struggles so far? Why do you think they are different in this way or why do they share this similarity?
- Think of all three characters.
 - Whose situation seems most challenging to you? Why?

Whip Around

- What is one word you would use to describe the character's(') journey(s) so far?
- What is one hope you have for one of the characters and why?
- Select one character- what do you think is going to happen to their family next?

Isabel

- If you were Isabel, what three things would you take on your trip and why?
- Would you say Isabel's family is closely connected or not? Explain with examples from the text.
- On page 120, Isabel dives in to save Sr. Castillo. Would you have done the same?
- Think about what happens to Lita on p154/155 and how this affects the characters. What do you think Isabel is thinking now? What do you think Lito is thinking/feeling?

Mahmoud

- What do you think would have happened to Mahmoud's family if they had never met the soldiers?
- Describe Mahmoud's dad's attitude in ch.18. Does this help or hinder their escape?
- Are the smugglers helping or harming the refugees? Support your answer.
- Who helps Mahmoud's family on their journey so far? Would you act the same way or differently? Explain.
- If you were a member of Mahmoud's family, what would you be feeling right now? (ch 21 or ch39)
- On page 123, the family is told they must pay rent to stay in the abandoned shopping mall. The man guarding the entrance says, "we are tired of you Syrians freeloading." What does this mean and why does he say this?
- On page 124, why does the man chuckle, "Right, tomorrow.) What does this tell you? How would you respond to this comment?
- What are Mahmoud's character traits and how does he mature/change up to this point?

Josef

- Why did the captain lie to Josef about racing to Cuba? (page 95)
- How and why did Josef's attitude about the ship change? (Ch 16)
- On page 112, Josef's father leaves his cabin for the first time in eleven days to attend a funeral. Why does he do this? Why is the funeral important to his father?
- A change comes over Papa on page 14 when he protests the Nazi flag. Why does this happen? What does this tell you about Papa?
- On p114, the captain addresses the Nazi workmen by saying, "Take that flag and leave here, Mr. Schiendick or I will relieve you of duty and have you confined to quarters." Why do you think they listen to him?
- Do you think the Jewish people are safe on board the St. Louis? Why or why not? (Use the text to support your thinking.)
- How and why has the morale of the passengers changed in chapter 25?
- Why is Josef's cabin searched? (p150-151)
 - Why does Papa act so differently when Schiendick and his group ransack the cabin than he did when they unfurled the flag during the funeral procession?
 - What does this tell you about Papa's experience at the concentration camp?