

Collections Grade 8 Guiding Questions
Collection 4

“Marigolds” by Eugenia Collier

Read the short story “Marigolds” by Eugenia Collier. Then, reread the lines indicated with each question below. Answer each question, citing text evidence.

1. Lines 1–12: Which details help you understand the time and place of the story? What do these details suggest about what might be important to the theme?
2. Lines 15–26: Which details may relate to the author’s lesson or message? What do the details suggest about the theme?
3. Lines 27–29: What comparison is in these lines? How does this comparison affect the tone or feeling in the story?
4. Lines 78–88: How do Joey and his friends feel at this point? How might their feelings move the story forward?
5. Lines 104–105: What can you guess about the children and Miss Lottie? Explain the evidence you use to make your inference.
6. Line 141: What is motivating the children to annoy Miss Lottie?
7. Lines 158–174: What is the narrator’s description of, and reaction to, seeing the marigolds?
8. Lines 197–201: Explain what the phrase “the bars of our cage” refers to. How does the comparison add to readers’ understanding of the characters?
9. Lines 237–248: What conflicting feelings is Lizabeth experiencing? Why does she have “a particularly bitter argument” with Joey?
10. Lines 287–293: What comparisons does the author make? What is the impact of these comparisons?
11. Lines 287–300: Which details help explain what motivates Lizabeth to wake Joey? How might Lizabeth’s actions move the story forward?
12. Lines 324–338: What different feelings are causing Lizabeth to return to Miss Lottie’s? Why do these feelings provoke her actions at Miss Lottie’s?
13. Lines 351–361: What do Miss Lottie and her marigolds symbolize to the narrator? What does Lizabeth’s reaction to seeing Miss Lottie reveal about her?
14. Lines 365–386: What is a theme of this story? What details in the text support the theme?
15. Lines 385–386: What does the narrator mean when she says she has “planted marigolds”?