***Their Eyes Were Watching God***

(Zora Neale Hurston, 1937)

Chapters 6-7 Reading Questions

CHAPTER SIX

1. Who are the *“mule-talkers”*? Why do they tease Matt Bonner about his mule?
2. Why does Joe make Janie wear a head-rag while she works in the store? How does Janie feel about it?
3. Joe buys Matt’s mule after hearing Janie talk about it. He later explains that he bought the mule to give it some rest instead of working it. What **comparison** does Janie make about Joe’s actions regarding the mule?
4. After the mule dies, there is a big *“dragging-out”* ceremony for it, but Janie is not allowed to attend. What reason does Joe give for excluding Janie?
5. On page 63, Hurston writes: *“Janie took the easy way away from a fuss. She didn’t change her mind but she agreed with her mouth.”* In your own words, explain what this means. Also, do you think this was the right thing for her to do?
6. In your own words, explain the meaning of this passage: *“The spirit of the marriage left the bedroom and took to living in the parlor. It was there to shake hands whenever company came to visit, but it never went back inside the bedroom again.”* What caused this change between Janie and Joe?
7. At the end of the chapter, Janie speaks her mind about a conversation the men are having on the store’s porch. What is the subject of the men’s conversation? What does Janie tell them about women?

CHAPTER SEVEN

1. A dynamic character is one who changes. How has Janie changed?
2. Explain what is meant by: *“She sat and watched the shadow of herself going about tending the store and prostrating itself before Jody, while all the time she herself sat under a shady tree with the wind blowing through her hair and her clothes.”*
3. What physical signs/changes make it clear that Joe is getting older?
4. What mistake does Janie make in the store that causes Joe to insult her physical appearance?
5. Janie responds with: *“Talkin’ bout me lookin’ old! When you pull down your britches, you look lak de change uh life.”* Why might this be a particularly offensive insult to Joe?
6. How does Joe respond to this embarrassing insult from his wife?