

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

## Student Journal

# Miracle's Boys

by Jacqueline Woodson

### Reading Schedule

Group members: \_\_\_\_\_

<i>Miracle's Boys</i>	Student Journal	Due Date	Discussion Date
Introduction	Pages 2-4		
Chapters 1-3	Pages 5-6		
Chapters 4-7	Pages 7-8		
Chapters 8-12	Pages 9-10		
Chapters 13-18	Pages 11-12		
The Exchange			
Assessment			

THE EXCHANGE

Do we choose  
our path in life?



# Introduction

Read the Introduction on pages 7–9 in *Miracle's Boys*. The Introduction will help you understand key concepts in the book. Knowing them will help you discuss and write about the book.

The Introduction includes information about

- the plot of *Miracle's Boys*
- legal guardians, foster care, and adoption
- Jacqueline Woodson's childhood and her writing career

After you read the Introduction, answer these questions to check your understanding.

1. What are some of the problems that Miracle's sons face after their parents die?

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2. How does Woodson's adolescence affect the themes she writes about?

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3. What is legal guardianship? When is a legal guardian needed?

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# Introduction: Key Concepts

## Word Map

Study the **Word Map** for *authority*. Write a sentence using the word *authority*.

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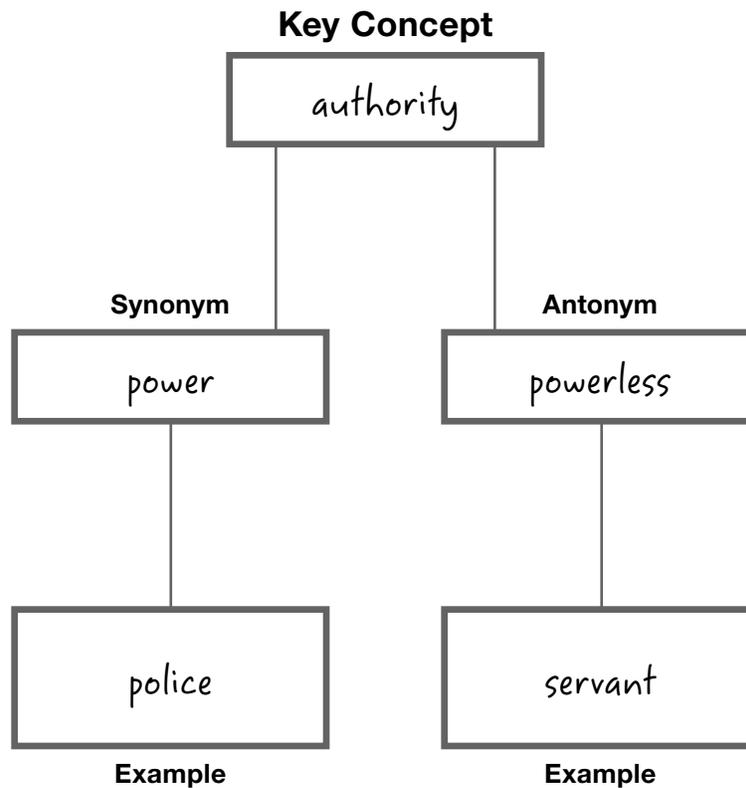


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### Key Concepts

authority  
grief  
guardian  
poverty  
value

## Word Map



On a separate sheet of paper, create a similar **Word Map** for each of the **Key Concepts**. Use a thesaurus to find antonyms and synonyms. Write two sentences for each word—one using the **Key Concept** and one using either the antonym or the synonym.

# Respond to Chapters 1-3

1. **Personal Response** Lafayette's brothers each treat him differently because he is the youngest. Does your family treat you differently as a result of your birth order? How?

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2. **Character's Motive** Why do Ty'ree and Lafayette remember their mother constantly, even though it causes them so much pain? Use the word *grief* in your response.

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3. **Author's Purpose** On pages 14-15, why does the author include the story of Charlie and Lafayette praying for stray animals?

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4. **Generate Questions** Write a question about this section for someone else reading this book. Exchange questions with them. Do you agree with their answer?

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## Respond to Chapters 1–3, continued

5. **Parallelism** In Chapters 1–3, we meet Lafayette, Charlie, and Ty'ree. Write what each character does and what his actions show about him in the **Character Description Chart**.

**Character Description Chart**

Character	What the Character Does	What This Shows About the Character
Lafayette		
Charlie		
Ty'ree		

What are the parallels in the boys' behavior since their mother's death?  
Why do they behave this way?

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# Respond to Chapters 4-7

1. **Personal Response** Lafayette has become very close to Ty'ree since his mother's death. Who are you close to in your family? What makes you close?

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2. **Conclusions** How does Charlie's disrespect for authority make Ty'ree's life more difficult? Use the words *authority* and *guardian* in your response.

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3. **Comparisons** How are Charlie's and Lafayette's reactions to their mother's deaths different?

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4. **Generate Questions** Write a question about this section for someone else reading this book. Exchange questions with them. Do you agree with their answer?

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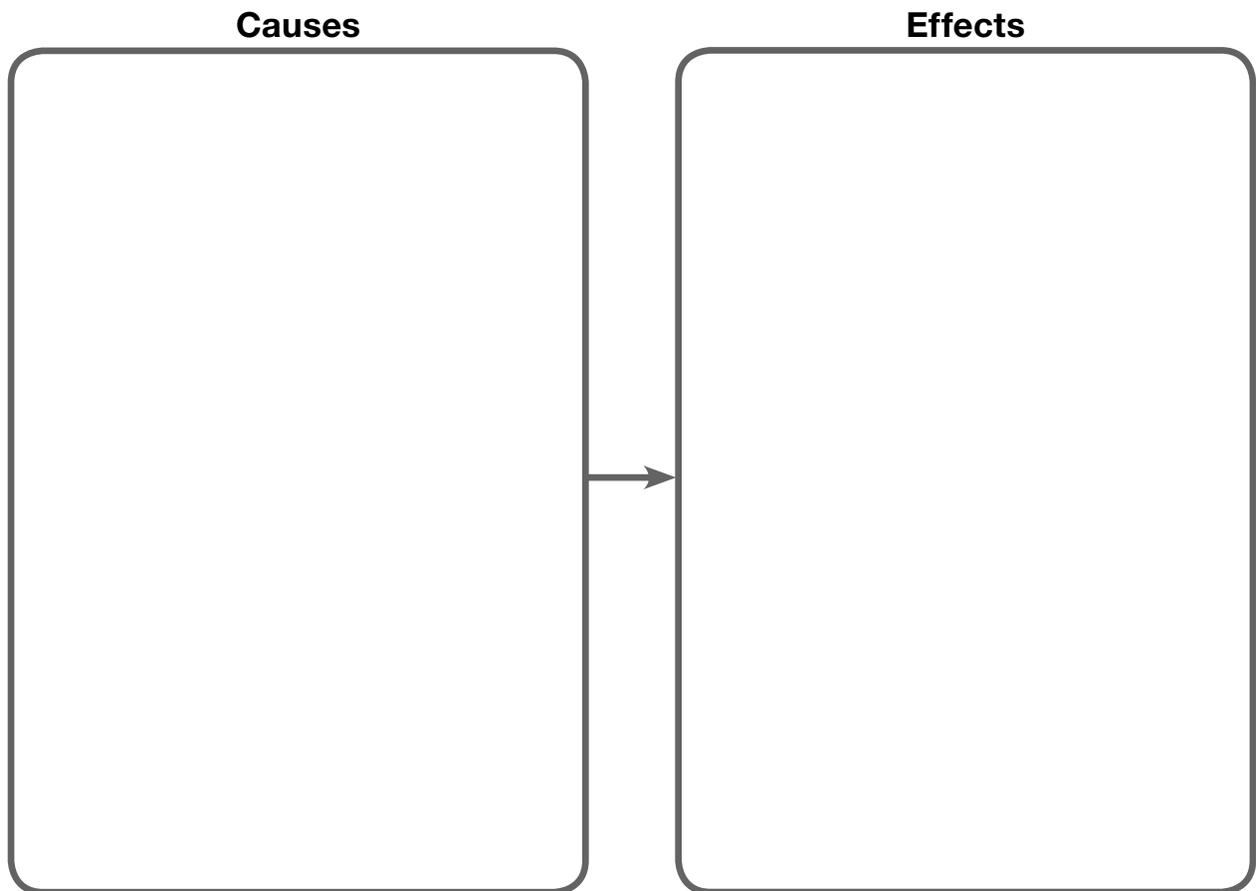
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## Respond to Chapters 4–7, continued

5. **Character's Motive** In Chapters 4–7, you learn more about Charlie. Write what Charlie does in the Causes box. Write what happens as a result in the Effects box.

### Cause and Effect Chart



Why does Charlie always act out negatively? How does his behavior affect how he feels about himself and others?

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# Respond to Chapters 8-12

1. **Personal Response** Ty'ree never tells Lafayette he was there when his father died. Have you ever kept a secret from someone in your family? Why or why not?

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2. **Cause and Effect** How does the family's financial situation contribute to their problems? Use the word *poverty* in your response.

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3. **Paraphrase** On page 94, what does Lafayette mean when he says that Ty'ree looked "like he was waiting for somebody to come and take his hand and show him the way home"?

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4. **Generate Questions** Write a question about this section for someone else reading this book. Exchange questions with them. Do you agree with their answer?

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## Respond to Chapters 8–12, continued

5. **Inference** In Chapters 8–12, we learn about Lafayette's experiences after his mother died. List what happens that leads to Lafayette's recovery from grief.

### Sequence Chart

<b>First:</b>
↓
<b>Next:</b>
↓
<b>Last:</b>

What do you think would have happened to Lafayette if he had never seen Dr. Vernon?

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# Respond to Chapters 13–18

1. **Personal Response** Charlie says that their family's life is one big work of art. What moment in your life could be captured in a painting or a movie?

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2. **Character's Point of View** How has Charlie's opinion about his family changed by the end of the story? How has it changed about his friends? Use the word *value* in your response.

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3. **Analogy** On page 143, how does the author use the analogy between Lafayette's secret about his mother's death and a monkey on Lafayette's back to describe his feelings?

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## What If?

4. **Connect** Look at your notes on **Student Journal, page 2**. Think about what might happen if you had to make a difficult decision about your life, but not everything was in your control. Compare this to *Miracle's Boys*. Do the boys choose their path in life?

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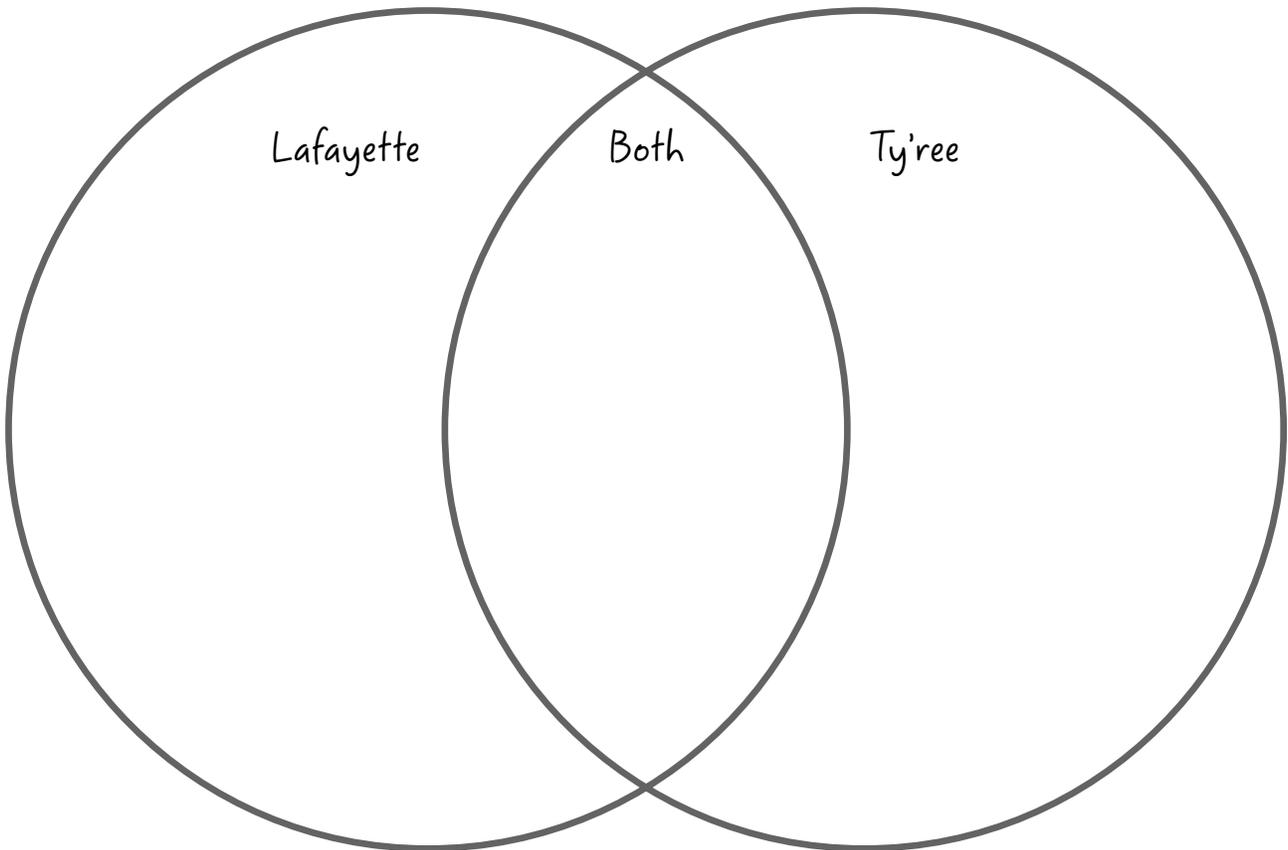
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**Respond to Chapters 13–18,** continued

5. **Character's Motive** Ty'ree and Lafayette have to pick up Charlie at the police station. Write how Lafayette and Ty'ree feel about Charlie's behavior. Use the **Venn Diagram** to answer the question.

**Venn Diagram**



Why does Lafayette want to protect Charlie? Why does Ty'ree get angry with his brothers?

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