# The Road to Paris

by Nikki Grimes

## Table of Contents

About the Author ............................................................................................................. 3  
Prereading Activities ................................................................. 4  
Prologue............................................................................................................................. 6  
Chapters 1–3 (pages 5–19) ................................................................. 9  
Chapters 4–7 (pages 20–32) ................................................................. 12  
Chapters 8–11 (pages 33–48) ............................................................... 16  
Chapters 12–15 (pages 49–68) .............................................................. 19  
Chapters 16–19 (pages 69–88) .............................................................. 22  
Chapters 20–23 (pages 89–103) ....................................................... 24  
Chapters 24–27 (pages 104–121) ...................................................... 26  
Chapters 28–32 (pages 122–136) ...................................................... 28  
Chapters 33–37 (pages 137–153) ...................................................... 30  
Wrap-up ............................................................................................................................ 32  
Library Applications ..................................................................................................... 33  
Suggestions for Further Reading .......................................................... 34  
Correlations to National Standards .................................................. 35

A school may reproduce copies of the pages in this book for use in its classrooms or library. Any other reproduction is strictly prohibited.

Copyright (c) 2011 School Street Media. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be transmitted, stored, or recorded in any form without written permission from the publisher. For permissions questions, contact School Street Media: info@schoolstreetmedia.com
About the Author

Nikki Grimes is a poet, novelist, storyteller, speaker, artist, singer . . . the list could go on and on. Everything she does comes from her heart, especially when writing for children and young adults. Ms. Grimes has won many awards, including the Coretta Scott King Award for *Bronx Masquerade*. A list of her published works can be found on page xx.

Ms. Grimes gives you a look into her life in “Historically Speaking,” from her website:

I was born on October 20, 1950, to Bernice and James Grimes. As befits a poet of African-American descent, I was born in Harlem, home of the Harlem Renaissance. When I was 13, I would give my first public poetry reading at the Countee Cullen Library, one block away from Harlem Hospital, where I came into the world.

My family was troubled before I was added to it, and for the first five years of my life, my parents separated and reunited countless times before their final split. During this time, my older sister, Carol, and I were bounced around from one relative to another, one foster home to another, just like the lead character in Jazmin’s *Notebook*.

At 5-1/2, my sister and I were separated. She was sent to one home, and I was sent to another. (Is it any wonder I write about foster homes in books like *Hopscotch Love*, *Road to Paris*, and *A Dime a Dozen*)? Though many of the foster homes were horrendous, the last home in Ossining, in upstate New York, was a refuge where I enjoyed security and a sense of permanence for the first time in my life. It was a place where I knew I was loved.

My foster parents had two children of their own, two boys who I became very close to, and I still keep in touch with Kendall, the older of the two. It was while living in Ossining that I first began to write.

After penning my first poem, there was no turning back!

At age 10, my mother remarried and invited my sister and me to come back "home." I loved my foster family, but I thought it was important that I get to know my birth-mother, so I accepted her invitation. I moved back to the city. Sadly, my sister didn't stay with us for very long.*

Find out more about Nikki Grimes, her books, awards, poems, writing life, and more at www.nikkigrimes.com.

---

*Sources

Prereading Activities

Book Summary
Paris Richmond has had many places to live in her young life, but no place she could really call “home.” She and her brother, Malcolm, have been with their mother, their grandmother, and in foster homes, but until recently they were always together. Now they’re being placed in different homes, far from one another. Malcolm is placed in a group home; Paris is taken to a new foster home in Ossining, New York. In the year she spends with the Lincolns, Paris learns about friendship, family, and keeping God in her pocket. When her mother reappears and wants to bring Paris and Malcolm back “home,” what will Paris do?

Understanding Genre: Realistic Fiction
1. What is realistic fiction? What do you expect this kind of book to be like?

2. Above is a summary of The Road to Paris. What “real” things do you think this story will be about?

3. Why do people like to read realistic fiction? Why do you like it?

4. List some other books of realistic fiction that you’ve read.
Prereading Activities

Building Background and Making Predictions
An important part of Paris’s story is that she lives in a foster home. Do you know what a foster home is? Let’s find out more.

1. In the dictionary, look up the word foster. Write the definition below:

2. Based on that definition, what do you think a foster home is supposed to be or do?

3. What do you know about foster homes? How did you come to learn about them?

4. Based on what you know about foster homes, what do you think Paris will struggle with in this book?

   I predict: __________________________________________________________

   Based on what evidence?

5. Set a purpose for reading based on your predictions above.

   __________________________________________________________

   __________________________________________________________

   __________________________________________________________
Before You Read
Parts of a Book
This book begins with a section called a prologue. The prefix pro- means “before.” The base word logue comes from the Greek word logos, which means “writings” or “speech.”

1. Based on this information, what do you think a prologue is?

2. What do you think a writer would want to include in a prologue and why?

Introducing Vocabulary
Find the following word and phrase in “Prologue” of The Road to Paris on the page number given in parentheses. Try to figure out the meaning of each one as you read. If you are unsure of the meaning, you may look up the word in a dictionary. Write a definition that best fits the way the word or phrase was used in the story.

profusion (page 1)

sprucing up (page 1)

After You Read
Analyze the Writing: Author’s Purpose
When you read, it’s good to think about the author’s purpose in writing certain things. In this case, the author, Nikki Grimes, decided to start with a prologue. The scene she presents in the prologue actually happens later in the story. Chapter 1, “Running Away,” takes us to a time before the events in the prologue happened.

What Do You Think? Why do you think the author started the book with this prologue instead of starting with Chapter 1?
Analyze the Writing: Point of View

1. Which one of the following points of view has the author chosen to use when writing this book?
   - ☐ first-person point of view
   - ☐ third-person point of view

2. How do you know this?

3. How would the story be different if it were told in the other point of view?

Analyzing the Writing: Setting

1. Write some details about the setting of the story, both place and time.

2. At the end of the prologue, Paris has a problem, or conflict, to deal with. What is it?

Getting to Know the Characters: Paris and family

1. What did you learn about Paris’s role in her family from pages 1 and 2?

2. Who are Jordan and David?

3. What surprising fact did you discover on pages 3 and 4?
Responding to the Story

1. On page 2, you read “In the world of Paris Richmond, normal was rare, and rich.” What do you think this means? What are some of the normal things happening in this scene?

2. What did you learn about Viola, Paris’s birth mother?

3. Why does Paris react as she does to Viola’s request?
Before You Read
Building Background

Chapter 1 begins a year before the events in the prologue. This kind of looking backward in a story is known as a *flashback*.

Where else have you seen flashback used?

Introducing Vocabulary

The following words or phrases can be found on the pages shown in parentheses. Place a check mark in front of the words you already know. For those you don’t know, try to figure out their meaning as you read. If you are still uncertain of their meanings, look them up in a dictionary. Use your own words to write a definition for each.

☐ 1. oblivious (p. 6)

☐ 2. swath (p. 6)

☐ 3. acquiescent (p. 6)

☐ 4. vestibule (p. 8)

☐ 5. good riddance (p. 12)

☐ 6. brownstone (p. 12)

☐ 7. incorrigible (p. 18)
After You Read  
Analyzing the Writing: Cause and Effect

When reading a story, it is important to note the causes and effects of important events. A **cause** leads to an event. It is the reason the event happens. An **effect** is what happens as a result of an action. Understanding how events are related will help you understand the story as a whole.

Complete the Cause-and-Effect Chart below using information from pages 5–19 of *The Road to Paris*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Causes</th>
<th>Effects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Boone beats Paris.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malcolm has enough money to help him and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paris run away.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malcolm and Paris show up unexpectedly at</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>their grandmother’s house.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malcolm and Paris are sent to separate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>foster homes.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Getting to Know the Characters: Malcolm

The author helps us get to know the characters by showing what they do, what they say, and how others react to them. Read this chart and explain what each action tells us about Malcolm.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Malcolm’s Actions and Others’ Reactions</th>
<th>What I Learned About Malcolm</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Malcolm yells at Mrs. Boone for beating Paris.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malcolm steals money from Mrs. Boone’s purse.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malcolm uses a “grown-up” voice when helping Paris.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malcolm teased Clark by keeping the platter of chicken away from him.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malcolm struggles to get away from the caseworker who has come to take him away.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Responding to the Story

1. The first sentence of Chapter 1 reads: “The trouble with running away is you know what you’re leaving behind, but not what’s waiting up ahead.” Explain what that means to Paris and Malcolm.

2. What does Paris know about her father? How do you think Paris feels about him?

3. Describe Paris. How old is she? What does she look like? Then list five words that you think describe her best.
Before You Read
Making Predictions

On page 19, Paris is leaving her grandmother’s to head to a new foster home. Describe how Paris feels as she rides the train. Then, based on those feelings, predict how Paris will be when she meets her new foster family.

Paris’s feelings:  

I predict:  

Introducing Vocabulary

The following words or phrases can be found on the pages shown in parentheses. Place a check mark in front of the words you already know. For those you don’t know, try to figure out their meaning as you read. If you are still uncertain of their meanings, look them up in a dictionary. Use your own words to write a definition for each.

☐ 1. strewn (p. 23) ____________________________________________

☐ 2. wardrobe (p. 25) ____________________________________________

☐ 3. dejected (p. 26) ____________________________________________

☐ 4. litany (p. 27) ____________________________________________

☐ 5. plummeted (p. 28) ____________________________________________

☐ 6. abyss (p. 28) ____________________________________________

☐ 7. tenaciously (p. 30) ____________________________________________

☐ 8. tentatively (p. 32) ____________________________________________
After You Read
Checking Predictions
1. Read your prediction above. Was it correct? Explain.

Analyzing the Writing: Setting
The setting of a story can be as important as a character. Answer the questions below about the setting as described in the chapters you’ve read so far.

1. Before leaving on the train, Paris had only lived in one city. What city was that? Describe the kind of setting she was used to seeing.

2. How does the setting change as she travels on the train?

3. Describe the new town, Ossining, as Paris sees it for the first time.

4. Describe the Lincolns’ home by listing some of the words and phrases found on pages 23–28.

Geography Connection

Using a Map
Paris takes a train from New York City to Ossining, NY. She travels north for about 40 miles, keeping track of each city along the way.

Using a map, find your hometown or city. Going north on the map, make a list of all the towns and cities you would go through or past if you traveled 40 miles. Circle the ones you have visited. Underline the ones you’d like to visit sometime.
Getting to Know the Characters: First Impressions

As Paris meets each member of the Lincoln family, she has a first impression of each one. However, she isn’t going to trust anyone—at least for now. As you met each new character, how would you describe him or her? Was your impression of the person positive or negative? Complete the chart below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Positive or Negative?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Lincoln</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earletta</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Lincoln</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jet</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Responding to the Story

1. “If she concentrated really hard, she could hear her brother’s voice. Except now, that voice sounded a lot like her own.” (p. 21) What does this tell you about Paris now that she’s on her own without Malcolm?

2. In spite of the comforting people and surroundings, Paris is still on her guard. Why?

3. Why is Paris uncomfortable in her new room?
4. What does the Hudson River represent to Paris?

5. How does Paris's encounter with Jet begin to change her?
Before You Read
Making Predictions
How do you think things will turn out for Paris with the Lincoln family?

Introducing Vocabulary
The following words or phrases can be found on the pages shown in parentheses. Place a check mark in front of the words you already know. For those you don’t know, try to figure out their meaning as you read. If you are still uncertain of their meanings, look them up in a dictionary. Use your own words to write a definition for each.

☐ 1. alcove (p. 33)

☐ 2. deft (p. 33)

☐ 3. constrict (p. 35)

☐ 4. bolt (p. 37)

☐ 5. steeling (p. 37)

☐ 6. rummaged (p. 44)

After You Read
Checking Predictions
Now that Paris has been with the Lincolns for a little while, how are things going? How does that match your prediction above?
Analyzing the Writing: Similes and Metaphors

A simile uses the words like or as to compare two things that are not usually alike. A metaphor compares two things that are mostly unalike but similar in an important way (without using the words like or as.). In the chart below, read the words from the book and mark them as a simile or metaphor. Then explain what the author means by using these comparisons.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>page</th>
<th>Simile or Metaphor?</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>“drown in a sea of darkness”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33–34</td>
<td>“pulled down the shades of her eyes”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>“Paris gulped, longing for that scrap of light the way the hungry long for scraps of bread.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>“Paris, whose legs suddenly felt heavy as concrete slabs,...”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>“Giggles erupted like bubbles...”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Getting to Know the Characters: Paris

1. In the chapter “Breathless,” Paris is terrified of the dark. What do we learn about her past that helps us understand her better?

2. How does her faith help her when she’s fearful? What does David share with her that she would never forget?

3. Why do you think Paris so quickly decides that Ashley is her new best friend? What does that tell you about Paris?

4. How does Paris feel about her birth mother? What does she mean in thinking “at least she could count on them [numbers] to stay the same, no matter what”?
Relating to the Story: Fear
Part of what makes realistic fiction real is that the reader can relate to how a character feels. Paris is afraid of lots of things. Complete the chart below to show what Paris is afraid of and what you are sometimes afraid of.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paris is afraid of . . .</th>
<th>Sometimes I am afraid of . . .</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Responding to the Story
1. How are the people in the Lincoln family treating Paris? Who is she beginning to trust?


2. On page 42, one of the boys makes fun of Paris. What does he say? Do kids really behave this way? If you have ever been teased by a classmate, how did it make you feel?


Chapters 12–15
“99 Bottles of Beer”
“Fun and Games”
“Thanksgiving”
“Address Unknown”
pages 49–68

Before You Read
Introducing Vocabulary

The following words or phrases can be found on the pages shown in parentheses. Place a check mark in front of the words you already know. For those you don’t know, try to figure out their meaning as you read. If you are still uncertain of their meanings, look them up in a dictionary. Use your own words to write a definition for each.

☐ 1. binges (p. 52)

☐ 2. conferring (p. 57)

☐ 3. colleague (p. 57)

☐ 4. free association (p. 59)

☐ 5. taunting (p. 65)

After You Read
Drawing Conclusions

Not everything is spelled out in a story. Sometimes you have to draw your own conclusions about things. Read the questions below and answer each. Then explain how you came up with your answer.

1. Earletta remains unfriendly to Paris. a.) Why do you think she is like this? b.) What does she say or do in Chapter 12 that supports your conclusion?

   a.) Conclusion:______________________________________________________________

   _________________________________________________________

   b.) Evidence:_______________________________________________________________

   _________________________________________________________
2. Paris becomes physically ill after watching Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln drink beer during dinner. a.) Why does Paris have this reaction? b.) What do you learn in Chapter 12 that supports your conclusion?
   a.) Conclusion: ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   b.) Evidence: ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

3. On page 57, Paris overhears Dr. Stern talking to a colleague. a.) Why does she change because of what she hears? b.) What does she do that supports your conclusion?
   a.) Conclusion: ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   b.) Evidence: ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

Analyzing the Writing: Conflict

A major part of any story is conflict, the struggles and problems a character or characters have. Some conflicts are external: they happen outside of the person, either with other people, with their surroundings, or with a group. Some conflicts are internal: these happen inside a person, where thoughts and feelings are.

Read each quote from the book below. Explain the conflict, including who the conflict involves. Then write the word external or internal to label the conflict.

1. “They are not sick, and they are not strays!” she said, between tight lips. (p. 63)
   Conflict: ________________________________________________________________
   External or internal? ________________________________________________________

2. Not once did he or his mother let her forget that she was an outsider, that she didn’t belong, that this new home of hers was borrowed. (p. 64)
   Conflict: ________________________________________________________________
   External or internal? ________________________________________________________

3. Back at the house, Paris stuffed her feelings with fresh-baked pumpkin pie and ice cream, having seconds, and even thirds. . . . It was enough to give her a bellyache. (p. 65)
   Conflict: ________________________________________________________________
   External or internal? ________________________________________________________
Responding to the Reading

1. Chapter 15 is a letter Paris writes to Malcolm. Why do you think she writes to him, even though she has nowhere to send the letter?

2. If Malcolm did receive this letter, how do you think he would feel about Paris’s new situation?

3. How would you describe Paris’s mood in the letter?

4. Why do you think Paris decides not to think about her mom or grandmother?
Chapters 16–19
“Marching to Zion”
“Jingle Bells”
“Fort Friendly”
“What Hearts?”
pages 69–88

Before You Read
Introducing Vocabulary

The following words or phrases can be found on the pages shown in parentheses. Place a check mark in front of the words you already know. For those you don't know, try to figure out their meaning as you read. If you are still uncertain of their meanings, look them up in a dictionary. Use your own words to write a definition for each.

☐ 1. deadpan (p. 70) ____________________________________________

☐ 2. sanctuary (p. 70) ____________________________________________

☐ 3. hoisted (p. 81) ____________________________________________

☐ 4. transfixed (p. 81) ____________________________________________

☐ 5. akimbo (p. 83) ____________________________________________

After You Read
Analyzing the Writing: Setting

The setting of a story is the time and place in which the story happens. Authors use vivid descriptions of the setting to help bring a story to life. Sometimes they also use the descriptions to create mood or show emotions that characters in the story are feeling.

1. At the point in the story, what season is it? How do you know that?

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

2. Since Paris has moved in with the Lincolns, the setting (place) has consisted of primarily two main places. Please name them.

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

3. A new setting is introduced in Chapter 16. What is it? How does this setting affect Paris?

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________
**Compare and Contrast**
Read the list of pairs below. Choose whether the pair are alike or different. If they are alike, then compare them by describing how they are alike. If they are different, then contrast them by describing how they are different.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alike or Different?</th>
<th>Compare or Contrast Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paris’s mood at church before the music started</td>
<td>Paris’s mood at the church after the music started</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paris’s Christmas present for Ashley</td>
<td>Ashley’s Christmas present for Paris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malcolm as a brother to Paris</td>
<td>David as a brother to Paris</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Making Connections**
1. On pages 73–74, Paris is quiet as her classmates talk about Christmas. “For Paris, the best thing about Christmas was being with her brother. And this Christmas, she didn’t even know where he was.” Then, on page 86, Paris feels left out on Valentine’s Day. Have you ever missed someone during a holiday? Describe how you felt.

2. You are discovering something special about Paris: she loves music. How do you feel about music? What kind do you like to listen to? Do you play an instrument or sing or go to concerts? Describe your relationship with music.
Before You Read

Summarizing

Remember that what you’re reading is still part of the flashback that began after the “Prologue.” Write a short summary of how things have changed since Paris first arrived at the Lincoln’s home.

Introducing Vocabulary

The following words or phrases can be found on the pages shown in parentheses. Place a check mark in front of the words you already know. For those you don’t know, try to figure out their meaning as you read. If you are still uncertain of their meanings, look them up in a dictionary. Use your own words to write a definition for each.

☐ 1. careening (p. 89)

☐ 2. colossal (p. 101)

After You Read

Getting to Know the Characters: Ashley

1. On page 96, Paris tells Viola that Ashley is “not like anybody. . . . she doesn’t care what anybody thinks, she’s not afraid of anything—she’s different.” Why does Paris admire these traits?

2. On page 99, Paris decides to tell Ashley the truth about her visit to her birth mother’s apartment. How does Ashley respond?
### Responding to the Story

Paris experiences many changes of emotion in these chapters. Complete the chart to show what emotions she felt and why they changed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>First Paris felt . . .</th>
<th>Then she felt . . .</th>
<th>Reason for the change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Fast Track” pp. 89–92</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“The Visit” pp. 93–97</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Choir Practice” pp. 101–103</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. On page 100, Paris thinks that “most of the daddies she knew were ghosts.” Explain why she feels that way.

__________________________________________________________________________________

2. Paris reaches a **turning point** in the chapter, “Choir Practice.” Write the sentence from that chapter that best explains what that turning point is.

__________________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________
Before You Read
Making Predictions

Paris is back in touch with her mother, Viola, but hasn’t seen Malcolm since they were separated. What do you think will happen as the story continues?

After You Read
Analyzing the Writing: Figurative Language

Whenever you describe something by comparing it with something else or by going beyond the literal, or real, meaning of words, you are using figurative language. You have already learned about two kinds: simile and metaphor. Two other kinds are hyperbole (pronounced hi•per•bo•lee) and idioms.

A hyperbole is an exaggeration used to make a point or strengthen a description. For example: The book weighed a ton. The book doesn’t really weigh a ton, but the writer wants you to know that it weighed a lot.

An idiom is a word or phrase that means something different from its literal meaning. It is a saying that is commonly used. Here are some common idioms as examples:

- “play it by ear” means to play an instrument without using sheet music
- “lose one’s shirt” means to lose everything
- “kick the bucket” means to die
- a “lemon” is something that doesn’t work correctly

Read each of the following sentences or phrases from the book. Write H on the blank if it’s a hyperbole; write I on the line if it’s an idiom; write S if it’s a simile.

_____ 1. “With bottom lips dragging the floor, Paris and David grumbled and headed out the door.” (p. 105)
_____ 2. “To keep himself from going stir-crazy, he counted every black car...” (p. 106)
_____ 3. “Paris flew into his arms.” (p. 108)
_____ 4. “Paris wore a smile bright as a Fourth of July sparkler...” (p. 109)
5. “...when Viola was AWOL, back in the city.” (p. 109)
6. “...until she saw something in her brother’s face break open.” (p. 109)
7. “‘You’re up to something.’” (p. 111)
8. “...their faces gleaming like star-shine.” (p. 115)
9. “...The flip side of the Crucifixion.” (p. 116)
10. “...if that happened, Paris knew she would absolutely die!” (p. 116)

Analyzing the Writing: Theme
A **theme** is a message or lesson about life that an author communicates through characters and events in a story.

1. One theme of *The Road to Paris* has to do with something Paris learned from David, which she then shares with Malcolm. Describe this theme, or message, in one sentence.

   ________________________________________________________________

2. How does this theme show up in the chapter, “Easter Sunday”?

   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

Responding to the Story
1. Why do you think Paris chose the picture she did in the chapter, “The Photograph”?

   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

2. On page 121, Paris reaches another **turning point**. What is it?

   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

3. How has Paris changed at the end of page 121?

   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
Chapters 28–32
“A Time to Weed”
“The Great Escape”
“Family Portrait”
“May 24”
“The Introduction”
pages 122–136

After You Read
Analyzing the Writing: Conflict
A good way to look at conflict is by using the following common kinds of conflicts.

- **man versus man**: one person against another person or people
- **man versus nature**: a person in conflict with the forces of nature, such as weather, environment, or other natural events
- **man versus society**: a person at odds with the beliefs or values of a culture, community, nation, or organization
- **man versus self**: the internal conflict of a person who is struggling with his or her beliefs, character, values, or thoughts

Indicate which kind of conflict is being described below:

1. Mrs. Lincoln is upset when Paris brings a snake into the house. ______________
2. Paris wants to belong to both families, Viola’s and the Lincoln’s. _______________
3. Paris is shocked when she hears Ashley’s dad call her a name. _______________
4. Mrs. Corbett pretends not to know Paris.                                     _______________
5. Paris says she’ll never have another white friend.                       _______________
6. Ashley doesn’t talk to Paris at school.                                          _______________

Responding to the Story
1. Paris gets in trouble with Mrs. Lincoln on page 124. How does Paris react this time? How do you think she would have reacted if this had happened the first week she arrived?

2. Why do you think the author included the chapter about the bird escape?
3. Look up the word *ambivalent* in the dictionary. Explain how Paris is ambivalent (pp. 129–130).

4. Describe Paris’s birthday with the Lincolns.

**Making Connections**

1. How did you feel when you read Ashley’s father’s remark on page 133?

2. Have you ever been called a name by someone? How did you feel?

3. Explain how words can cause as much or more pain than a physical injury.

4. Mrs. Lincoln gives Paris some good advice. How can you use this advice for yourself?

   “Take each person as they come,” said Mrs. Lincoln. “Judge them by their actions. Then decide whether to hold them close or push them away. That’s what you do.”
Before You Read

Making Predictions

Paris doesn’t want to make friends with white girls anymore. Do you think she will stick to that or not? Is Paris being racist, too? Explain your answer.

Responding to the Story

1. Paris takes Jordan to the park and meets a new white girl there. When the new girl, Sierra, tells Paris her name, Paris thinks, *Who asked you?* Who does that remind you of in this story? What does that tell you about her?

2. How does Paris use Mrs. Lincoln’s advice when she meets Sierra and her parents at the parent-teacher buffet?

3. Chapter 35 brings you back to the scene foreshadowed in the prologue. Now that you know what’s happened during the past year, explain why Paris reacts the way she does to Viola’s news.

4. What new news does Viola tell Paris that we didn’t learn in the prologue?
5. What is the major conflict now?

6. On page 152, Paris comes to this thought about staying with the Lincolns: “Somehow, she’d always be an outsider.” Do you agree? Why or why not?


8. Paris believes she’ll be fine as long as she “keeps God in her pocket.” How do you think she will do?
Wrap-up

Making Connections

1. Describe a time in your life when you misjudged someone. What was your first impression of the person? What did you learn about the person that changed your mind?


3. What do you think is the best way to end racism in the world?

Thinking About the Genre: Realistic Fiction

1. In what ways is The Road to Paris realistic?

2. How do you know that the author, Nikki Grimes, really understands what it’s like to be in Paris?
Library Applications

The Use of a River as a Symbol

Rivers have been used as symbols in literature for thousands of years. Choose one of the following topics to research. Then create a presentation to share what you learned with your class.

- “The Negro Speaks of Rivers,” a poem by Langston Hughes
- The River Styx in Greek mythology
- The Jordan River in religious stories, hymns, and history.
- The Mississippi River in Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*
- The Nile River in Egyptian mythology

Explain how Ms. Grimes uses the Hudson River as a symbol in *The Road to Paris*.

Celebrating Diversity

Prejudice has a long and painful history. The word means to “pre-judge.” That means you’re judged *before* anyone knows you. Being judged for the color of your skin, the nation you’re from, the religion you practice, your weight, your athleticism, etc. are all forms of prejudice.

Have students share types of prejudice they are aware of. Then discuss with them ways they can fight discrimination by promoting tolerance and respect for differences among people. Have students use ideas from this discussion to create posters for a library display about celebrating diversity.
Suggestions for Further Reading

Fiction books

Other middle-grade and YA books by Nikki Grimes:


*Dark Sons*, Jump at the Sun/Hyperion, 2005.


Nonfiction books

About promoting social tolerance and activism:


## Correlations to National Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Area</th>
<th>Standard Number</th>
<th>Standard Objective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fine Arts: Music</td>
<td>NA-M.5-8.9</td>
<td>Understanding Music in Relation to History and Culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Languages Arts: English</td>
<td>NL–ENG.K–12.1</td>
<td>Reading for Perspective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Languages Arts: English</td>
<td>NL–ENG.K–12.2</td>
<td>Reading for Understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Languages Arts: English</td>
<td>NL–ENG.K–12.3</td>
<td>Evaluation Strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Languages Arts: English</td>
<td>NL–ENG.K–12.4</td>
<td>Communication Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Languages Arts: English</td>
<td>NL–ENG.K–12.5</td>
<td>Communication Strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Languages Arts: English</td>
<td>NL–ENG.K–12.6</td>
<td>Applying Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Languages Arts: English</td>
<td>NL–ENG.K–12.8</td>
<td>Developing Research Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Languages Arts: English</td>
<td>NL–ENG.K–12.9</td>
<td>Multicultural Understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Languages Arts: English</td>
<td>NL–ENG.K–12.11</td>
<td>Participating in Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Languages Arts: English</td>
<td>NL–ENG.K–12.12</td>
<td>Applying Language Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies: Geography</td>
<td>NSS–G.K-12.6</td>
<td>Uses of Geography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies: World History*</td>
<td>NSS–WH.5-12.2</td>
<td>Era 2: Early Civilizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies: U.S. History*</td>
<td>NSS–USH.5-12.5</td>
<td>Era 5: Civil War and Reconstruction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Library Applications activities*