

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Taste of Salt, Day 1



Key Paragraph, p. 6

“Titid says I can no longer be his bodyguard, since my own body is broken. Until it is fit again, I can no longer be useful in that way. But Titid says that it is not only the body, with its feet and hands and strong back that can be useful. He says the mind and spirit are useful, too” (p. 6).

Writing Prompt

Titid is the affectionate name for Aristide. Djo was one of his bodyguards. Aristide was the first democratically elected President of Haiti, one of the poorest countries in the world. What do you think Titid meant when he told Djo that a person can be *useful* with his mind and spirit, not just his body?

Do you agree or disagree with Aristide and his viewpoint that a person can be useful with his mind and spirit? Write a 1 paragraph argument in which you support or oppose Aristide’s viewpoint. Introduce your claim and acknowledge the opposing viewpoint. Organize your reasons with logic. Support your claim with relevant evidence and credible sources. Provide a concluding statement in which you support the argument you presented.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Taste of Salt, Day 2



Key Paragraph, p. 21

“With the other boys that hang around Titid’s church, small boys and teenagers, too, we fix up the shed. Put walls and that. It is not easy, because Titid is too pigheaded. Lally and me go to a lot of trouble to steal the copper wire from the telephone truck. We peel the wire. We find a street lamp. We run wire into our shed, locate an old socket and pry it loose, beg a bulb...We bring Titid to admire our work...it is a wrong thing to steal...we must take it all down” (p. 21).

Writing Prompt

Titid is trying to teach the boys that regardless of the situation there is always an element of right and wrong and it is important to follow a moral compass. Do you agree with Djo and Lally or with Titid?

Write a one-paragraph argument in which you agree with Titid and his viewpoint or with Djo. Write a clear statement that introduces your claim. Acknowledge the opposing viewpoint and organize your writing logically. Use words and phrases to create cohesion. Provide a strong conclusion that supports your claim.

Consider the boys and their background, Titid and his background, and the economic disparity they are living in as you write.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Taste of Salt, Day 3



Key Paragraph, p. 25

“...we are family. Family is what Titid calls us, and it is true. We run errands for Titid, yes. He gets food for us, sometimes medicine when we are sick. But it goes past that only, we are family and also a team” (p. 25).

Writing Prompt

Djo describes the concept of family as it relates to the boys and Titid. Do you agree or disagree with this relationship and concept.

Write a one-paragraph argument in which you support your claim with logical reasons and evidence. Use information from today’s reading to support your claim. Acknowledge the opposing viewpoint. Use words and phrases to maintain cohesion as you write. Conclude with a statement that supports your claim.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Taste of Salt, Day 4



Key Paragraph, p. 32

“A decent poor man’s life in our Haiti...
A dry house, with a real roof.
Clean water to drink.
A big plate of rice and beans every day.
Free of curable sickness.
And a working job—
Or working in the fields close to home so families can live together” (p. 32).

Writing Prompt

Aristide believes his country can be better off. He has a vision, a plan, and wants to take action. He believes that they deserve a decent life. Do you think the description of a decent poor man’s life is enough to fight for? Pretend you were living in Haiti during this time and were being inspired to risk everything for change. Is a decent poor man’s life enough?

Write 1-2 paragraphs in which you argue for a decent poor man’s life or you argue for more. Introduce your topic and your claim. Acknowledge the opposing viewpoint. Use information from the reading and from outside sources to support your viewpoint. Use words, phrases, and transitions to create cohesion in your argument. Close with a clear statement which supports your viewpoint.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Taste of Salt, Day 5



Key Paragraph, p. 45

"I wanted Titid to chase me, but he doesn't. Titid believes in giving a person his freedom, Jeremie. That day Titid leave me free to be stupid. Both of us knowing there are enemies all around. Whether because he angry at the way I been behaving or because he do have true respect for me, I don't know. Titid always leave it to us boys to make our own decisions" (p. 45).

Writing Prompt

Do you think Titid has respect for Djo or is he just angry with him for how he has been acting?

Write a 1-2 paragraph argument in which you condone or defend Titid's reaction to Djo. Introduce your claim and acknowledge the opposing viewpoint. Use information from the reading or credible sources to support your claim. Use clear transitions and words to create cohesion in your writing. Conclude with a strong statement which supports your argument.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Taste of Salt, Day 6



Key Paragraph, p. 55

“‘Okay, well,’ says gun-man. ‘We are nice people here. We will let you buy on credit. A man bringing your rice just now. You tell the man your name, and he will give credit to you’” (p. 55).

Writing Prompt

How do you think people can work for years and not make any money? Donny continues to return to this system? Djo realizes that all he is going to be able to do is strive to live, not get ahead.

The men are slaves in a corrupt system. The owners arrange to keep the men dependent on them financially and socially. Based on what we have read so far this system is still better what some of the men have left.

Write a one-paragraph argument in which you disagree with the main elements of this system. In your writing state one thing you would do to fix the system in favor of the men.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Taste of Salt, Day 7



Key Paragraph, p. 62

“Titid says the thief hurts himself. That the thief is not a proper man.

And all these thieves in central, are they not ashamed? The charette-man, colmando-man, gun-man. Lagurie himself. Is Donay the only proper man here?

And I think, too, and I feel bad to think this, Jeri, but I ask myself, Is Donay himself a proper man? Is he the way man should be?” (p. 62).

Writing Prompt

What qualities does a proper man have? Based on your reading and what you have learned so far is Donay a proper man?

Write a one-paragraph argument in which you defend your claim. Acknowledge the opposing claim. Give examples from the reading and other relevant sources to support your viewpoint. Use transitions with clear and coherent words and phrases. Conclude with a statement, which supports your original claim.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Taste of Salt, Day 8



Key Paragraph, p. 75

“...I knew if I waited even one more day to make plans, I might lose my will” (p. 75).

Writing Prompt

Djo knows that Donay is past caring about a better life. He realizes that the other men had hoped at one time to get out and dreamed of escape. He was afraid that if he didn't start planning he would lose his will.

Pretend you are Djo and you want to convince Donay to escape with you. Write him a letter in which you give him reasons to escape with you (write 1 paragraph to argue your position). Use logical and reasoning to support your viewpoint. Acknowledge and honor his position. Use logic and reasons from the text or from another credible source to support your viewpoint. Close with a strong statement that supports your viewpoint.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Taste of Salt, Day 9



Key Paragraph, p. 79

“Do you see, Jeremie? The slave needs to be stupid and quick, carefree and careful. Is hard work. Harder even than cutting cane” (p. 79).

Writing Prompt

Think about Djo’s description of a slave as stated above. Do you agree with his perspective? (Be prepared to write using the opposing viewpoint of what you believe)

Write a one-paragraph argument in which you support the opposite perspective. If you agree with Djo—write from the perspective that you don’t agree with him. Acknowledge the opposing viewpoint. Give examples from the text and your experiences to support your viewpoint. Use good transitions, words, and phrases to give your reader clarity. Conclude with a statement that supports your argument.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Taste of Salt, Day 10



Key Paragraph, p. 89

“There be two kids of freedom. The one I already did know about, had a taste of at Titid’s, and before too...But, the other kind, when I think about how in time I will be dead, it seem more true. That be freedom from worrying what to do for Djo. That the kind of free some Donay had always. Donay not think about himself. And I think if I can find Donay’s kind of freedom, then I will be ready for the other kind. Be ready to use it right” (p. 89).

Writing Prompt

Think about Freedom and all the forms it can take. Based on today’s reading list three forms of freedom that can be supported by the novel. Chose the one you think is the most important.

Write a 1-2 paragraph argument in which you introduce your freedom and support why it is the most important to you. While writing you may acknowledge other peoples viewpoints or claims. Give examples from the novel or secondary sources to support your claim. Use clear transitions, words, and phrases to give your paragraph cohesion. Close with a statement that supports your claim.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Taste of Salt, Day 11



Key Paragraph, p. 99

“Djo may very well die, Jeremie,” Titid told me just before he left. “You must look that sadness in the face, every day.” If Djo dies, his story will be part of me. I will be alive. (p. 99).

Writing Prompt

Describe what you think Jeremie means by saying that his story will be a part of her. Have you ever been the one to carry on someone’s memory yourself? If so, who? It could even be a family pet. What keeps the memory alive of someone or something that has passed away? Do you agree or disagree that one can keep someone’s memory or legacy alive?

Write a one-paragraph argument in which you defend the claim you made above. Acknowledge the other person’s claim or viewpoint. Give examples that help support your claim. Conclude with a statement that supports your argument.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Taste of Salt, Day 12



Key Paragraph, p. 104

“Leave my girl be, Sister,’ Maman broke in. ‘Is Education and Education alone will free her from this misery’” (p. 104).

Writing Prompt

Maman tells auntie to leave Jeremie alone. She knows that education is the only thing that will free her from their misery. Different people and groups value education differently. How do you value education (formal or informal)?

What is your definition of education? Write a one paragraph argument in which you defend your claim of education. Include words and phrases, which support cohesion and clear transitions. Support your claim with relevant evidence from your life, outside sources, or the novel. Acknowledge the counterclaim. Conclude by including a statement that supports your claim.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Taste of Salt, Day 13



Key Paragraph, p. 118

“When it became obvious that the constitution was not being obeyed, somebody, maybe Titid, Maybe someone else, began talking *dechoukja*, the word farmer’s use when they dig up a big stump, one with deep roots. It is a job that takes several men, some crowbars, maybe even chains and a mule. People began to use the word *dechoukja* to talk about getting rid of the Tonton Macoutes” (p. 118).

Writing Prompt

The people are starting to relate the Tonton Macoutes as a stump with deep roots. Do you think this is a fitting description for them? If they are wanting change they are going to need many things to make it happen. Using this analogy list 3-5 things the people need to do to get rid of the Tonton Macoutes.

Using this list write a letter to Titid or to the people of Haiti. Introduce your ideas/claims. Argue why you think your ideas will help the people rise against their leaders. As you write acknowledge their fears and counterclaims. Provide resources and information to support your ideas. Include words and phrases to help your writing have cohesions. Conclude with a strong statement which supports your claim.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Taste of Salt, Day 14



Key Paragraph, p. 132

“Sister Claire straightened. ‘You sound as if you have been around Father Aristide,’ she said. ‘I think you should be very careful, Jeremie. Father Aristide is far too outspoken. The role of the church is to promote peace, not to incite violence’” (p. 132).

Writing Prompt

Regardless of your religious or political perspective churches fulfil many community needs for many people worldwide. Think about the historical role of churches (the first hospitals, educational facilities, community meeting areas, political forums). Do you agree or disagree with Sister Claire?

Write a one-paragraph argument in which you either agree or disagree with the claim Sister Claire made. Introduce your topic with a strong claim.

Acknowledge the counterclaim. Give evidence to support your claim. Use strong words, transitions, and phrases to create cohesion. Conclude with a statement to support your claim.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Taste of Salt, Day 15



Key Paragraph, p. 139

“Prayer isn’t enough. Prayer by itself is nothing” (p. 139).

Writing Prompt

Jeremie is making a very strong statement in the quote above. What do you think she means? What else does she need to create change?

Write a one-paragraph argument in which you agree or disagree with Jeremie’s statement above. In order to clarify you will need to consider the “Change” theme in this unit. As you write introduce your claim. Acknowledge the counterclaim. Support your claim with evidence and facts. Conclude by adding a statement to support your claim.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Taste of Salt, Day 16



Key Paragraph, p. 147

“We applied for a university grant. I just got word: there is place for you at the University of Paris. Yes, my dear, at the Sorbonne!”

‘...But, I want to stay here, Sister. This will be a good year in Haiti” (p. 147).

Writing Prompt

Jeremie has worked hard and her family has sacrificed much. She has earned a scholarship and now wants to stay in Haiti. Do you agree or disagree with her choice? Where do you think she will be the most effective?

Write a one-paragraph letter to Jeremie. In your letter argue why you think she should stay in Haiti or take the scholarship. In your letter acknowledge the opposing claim. Give evidence and details to support your claim. Use good words, transitions, and phrases to create cohesion in your writing. Conclude with a statement that supports your initial claim.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Taste of Salt, Day 17



Key Paragraph, p. 162

“‘Was for Donay I but the coffin.’

‘Yes?’

‘So the thing to do, for Donay, is the more peaceful thing. The more proud thing. Not to let them make us into thieves or killers.’

‘You want just only to be his legs, Djo, like the man say’” (p. 162).

Writing Prompt

Djo has to make a choice to go and get his money and possibly kill a man in revenge or to escape and do the peaceful and proud thing. He wants to pay tribute to Donay. He knows he has to be his legs and tell his story.

Write a one-paragraph argument in which you support his desire to be peaceful. Introduce your topic and acknowledge the opposing viewpoint. Give evidence to support your claim. Use clear transitions and words to create cohesion in your writing. Close with a statement to support your claim.

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Taste of Salt, Day 18



Key Paragraph, p. 167

“He waves the bone something like a priest giving blessing, Jeri. I think it is a blessing or salute, for the old lady” (p.167).

Writing Prompt

Describe a time in your life you helped a stranger just to be nice or a time someone you didn't know helped you. How did it feel? Would you have a better world if we all did that more often?