



Sing Unburied Sing
by Jesmyn Ward
Discussion Questions

1. How does Given's death shape Leonie, Pop, and Mam? How does it change how they relate to each other?
2. Why does Given begin appearing to Leonie after Michael goes to jail, whenever she gets high? Why doesn't Leonie tell anyone about seeing Given?
3. Leonie says from the first moment she saw Michael, he "saw me....Saw the walking wound I was and came to be my balm." (p54). Discuss how guilt, desire, taboo, defiance, and grief are at work in Michael and Leonie's connection to each other.
4. What does Leonie get out of her friendship with Misty? What does Jojo see in the dynamics at play between Misty and Leonie?
5. Why can Pop only tell Richie's story to Jojo in pieces (p 70)? What do you think Pop wants or needs Jojo to understand?

6. Why is Jojo convinced that “Leonie kill things” (p 108)? Why are Leonie and Jojo always in conflict, especially concerning how to take care of Kayla?
7. When Richie joins Jojo at Parchman, is it a surprise? Why is Richie tied to Parchman? And to River?
8. Why does Michael brawl with Big Joseph and ultimately choose to leave with Leonie rather than stay with his parents (p 208)?
9. When Mam insists that Leonie help her die, to “Let me leave with something of myself” (p 216), what makes Leonie hesitate? Why does she wish for Given to be there in that moment?
10. Water plays an important role throughout the novel. Pop’s name is River. Mam is known as the “saltwater woman”. The town and prison where Pop and Michael are incarcerated are named for the “parched man”. Jojo wonders who the parched man is, if he looked like Pop, Jojo, or Michael. Which characters seem to need water? Which are of the water?
(Readinggroupguides.com/reviews/sing-unburied-sing/guide)

Find additional copies of printable discussion questions here:

www.sussexlibraries.org/just-mercy-expansion-kit-3

