**Questions and Thinking Across a Story**

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|  | **Tracking Thinking** | **Character** | **Setting** | **Narrator** | **Figurative Language** | **Issues/ Themes** |
| **Beginning** | What do I know about how stories go, the topic, and/or the author that may help me understand this story?  Do I understand what’s going on?  Why is the story starting out this way?  Are there any unusual plot structures like multiple narrators or flashbacks? Why? | What are the characters’ major problems/ conflicts?  How is the character responding differently to the various problems/ conflicts?  What do the major characters look like? Why do they act, talk, dress the way they do? Are their names significant? | What can I visualize about the setting?  How does it make me feel?  What do I know about this time and place? | Who’s telling the story?  What do I know about the narrator? | What symbolism (images, objects, metaphors, events) exists in this story? | What is this story really starting to be about?  What social issues (gender, class, race, sexuality, religion) are beginning to emerge? |
| **Middle** | How does the new info I’m gaining fit with, challenge, or expand what I’m now learning in the story?  What’s the backstory with these characters?  Why is the author making the choices s/he’s making? | What role is the main character taking in this story?  How are the characters set up in groups that have different kinds of power?  What are the different characters’ roles in the power struggles?  Which characters uphold stereotypes? Which ones disrupt them? | What are the rules of this setting?  Who makes the rules?  What happens if the rules are broken?  How does the setting impact the characters in different ways? | Is the narrator reliable? Unreliable?  Which perspectives are valued? Which are devalued?  Why did the author choose this narrator to tell the story? | What symbols seem to matter the most to the characters? Why?  What language—words, phrases, continue to repeat themselves?  Which words, phrases seem important, memorable? | What is this author wanting us to think about the social  issues presented?  How does what I know about social issues help me understand characters & events?  Is the author repeating stereotypes? Challenging them? |
| **End** | When did my own thinking and emotions about the characters and events change? | Which characters best reflect what the author is trying to say about the way people are in life and in society? | How did the setting change over time or across sections? | Was the narrator trustworthy? | How does the author use symbols & other language choices to advance the themes? | What moments best reflect what the author is trying to say about the way people are in life and in society? |