

*Color me Dark*, Patricia C. McKissack

Reading Guide/Journal Activity

The novel *Color me Dark* is historical fiction, meaning the events described are based on actual historical events. The characters may be based on real people too, but were created by the author. Patricia McKissack has written nearly 100 novels about the experiences of African Americans.

You will keep a journal for this novel. Please label and number each part of your journal using the lists and model below, and skip lines between each part. Before you begin the novel, read the author's biography at the end of the book. List at least 3 details that might be important to this novel. Next, look at the migration pictures, and read the caption for each. Select three pictures that were the most interesting to you, and explain why in a sentence for each. Finally, read the "Historical Note" on page 159. List three details you learned about Jewish migration.

Patricia C. McKissack Biography (p. 213-214)

Migration pictures (p. 201-208)

Historical note (p. 189-199)

As you read the novel, record the following information for each "clump" of diary entries listed:

Record the date

1. Explain in a sentence or two each, at least two examples of migration factors (the journey, push and pull factors, settlement, work and mobility, reception/reaction, adjustment, assistance, assimilation) including the page on which that example can be found.
2. Summarize the entries in 2-3 sentences.
3. Record at least one question that you want or need to be answered.

January, 1919 (p. 3-30)

February, 1919 (p. 30-52)

March-May 20, 1919 (p. 52-78)

May 20- June 1919 (p. 81-107)

July, 1919 (p. 108-129)

August- September, 1919 (129-150)

October-November, 1919 (p. 150-168)

December-Epilogue, (p.168-185)

Diary Entry "Clump" Model

January, 1919 (p. 3-30)

1. Push— \_\_\_ talks about how most of the people (but not her family) who live around Bradford corners are sharecroppers who "end up in debt no matter how hard they try" and their children have to help in the fields and rarely attend school. (4-5)  
Push— \_\_\_ hears her parents talk about the Ku Klux Klan; \_\_\_ doesn't like them, and her father says if they took off their sheets they wouldn't like themselves either. (14)  
Push— \_\_\_ and her sister Erma Jean pass the white only school on the way to the one-room colored school; the roof is so bad they have to let school out when it rains. (15)  
Push— The Love family men are members of the NAACP, and read the *Crisis* every month; however, they find out that the Klan is going after members, and the sheriff won't allow the *Crisis* to be sold there any more. (28)
2. The narrator and her sister, Erma Jean, are 9 months apart in age, and best friends. The Love family lives in a large house in town; the narrator's father runs the funeral parlor. The Love family is very loving, and well respected in the town, at least on the colored side of the tracks.
3. Why doesn't the author tell us the narrator's name?