

DISCUSSION GUIDE

The Home Place Wright Morris

“Great Books” Discussion Format

1. The “pattern” in the carpet and the “pattern” in the linoleum are mentioned several times. What is the allusion to the “pattern?”
2. When Eddie is talking to Clara about farming Ed’s place, he says, “I’m a Muncy.” Later Eddie Cahow, the barber, greeted him with, “You’re an Osborn. That’s what you are. You’re an Osborn.” Is Clyde a “Muncy” or an “Osborn?”
3. When Clara asked Peggy Muncy “...you mean you want to live on a farm?” Peggy answered “I want to live...and I don’t care where it is.” Why did Peggy not want to live on Ed’s place?
4. Someone said to me that if they had known that *The Home Place* was a picture book, they would have joined this discussion. How did the photographs affect your reaction to the book?
5. Why didn’t they tell the boy what “croquet” is?
6. How does the story of Grandmother Osborn saving the cane from the chair when she came out West tie into the story? “Making the Connection.”
7. What were the reactions of the various characters to the children’s haircuts? The old man/Clyde/Peggy?
8. Why were the women referred to by name, but the men were “the old man” and “the boy?”
9. Did the land wear out the people, or did the people wear out the land? (Ed’s place with the trees, the home place grassy lawn)
10. The teenage girl in the drug store was described as “skimmed milk” and the author said, “This girl was further from the farm, the old man, and the home place, than the half million kids with the firm flesh, and the high pollen count, behind the counters and windows of New York.” What did the author mean?
11. Was there any significance in the fact that Clyde was born in Lone Tree rather than on a farm?
12. The author makes the statement that city kids escape to their books and do not have original thoughts. He talked about sitting on the small hole of the three-seater with the mail order catalog and dreaming while looking out of the unhinged door. Do farm kids have a creative advantage over the city/town kids?