

The Color Purple – Discussion Questions

1. In Celie's first letter to God, she asks for a sign to help her understand what is happening to her. Discuss how confusion and deception are used against her. When has truth set her free?
2. What is the effect of not knowing Albert's last name? What does it mean that Celie must call him Mr. ----?
3. Why does Albert encourage Harpo to beat Sofia? What do these scenes reveal about cycles of abuse and learned cruelty?
4. How does Shug Avery influence Celie's understanding of love and self-worth? What price does Sofia pay for being her true self?
5. What finally pushes Celie to reject oppression and claim her independence?
6. What is Celie's view of Grady and his addiction? How does it reflect her growth?
7. Why does Shug struggle with commitment? How does she bring both joy and pain to those around her?
8. Nettie's life with Samuel and Corrine offers stability but also jealousy. Which seemingly small moments become pivotal turning points in the novel?