ANTICIPATION GUIDE

Agree or disagree?
Instructions: Read each of the following statements. Then, indicate whether you agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or disagree with each statement by writing your answer on the line.

\[ \text{A = agree} \]
\[ \text{SA = somewhat agree} \]
\[ \text{SD = somewhat disagree} \]
\[ \text{D = disagree} \]

1. _______ When in danger, running away to safety is the best option.
2. _______ Happy moments and memories cannot exist in the same place and time as bombings and war.
3. _______ Making decisions is easy if you examine all of the facts.
4. _______ Being a new student at school is exciting.
5. _______ The most difficult part of learning a new language is understanding all of the rules of grammar.
6. _______ Fulfilling your own desires and goals in life is more important than pleasing your parents.
7. _______ A mother will always put the needs of her children first.
8. _______ Grief is easier to bear if it is shared.
9. _______ The history and heritage of one’s country defines the person.
10. _______ People cannot have a fresh start until they have let go of their past.
First look at the book
1. Look at the cover of the book. What awards and honors has the book received?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
2. What do you notice first about the artwork and design on the cover? __________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
3. Based on the cover, what do you think the book will be about? __________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
4. Read the plot preview and critical reviews of the book. Based on these, list one reason why you might find the book interesting. __________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Read the poem “Early Monsoon” at the start of the book.
5. What is a monsoon? __________________
6. What is the noise described in the poem? __________________
________________________________________________________________________
7. What is the date of the poem? __________________
8. To whom is the book dedicated? __________________
9. What is a refugee? __________________
Quick background information:

The Vietnam War

- Vietnam is a small country in Southeast Asia. It is a bit larger than New Mexico.
- On September 2, 1945, Vietnam gained independence from France.
- An international conference in Geneva on November 1, 1955 split Vietnam into a communist North and a noncommunist South.
- The start of United States involvement in the Vietnam War is not definitive. During the late 1950s and early 1960s, United States support of South Vietnam increased.
- During the Vietnam War, the United States supported noncommunist South Vietnam against communist North Vietnam and their allies in the South, the Viet Cong.
- The United States withdrew combat forces from Vietnam in 1973.
- On April 30, 1975, North Vietnam gained control of Saigon, the capital of South Vietnam, ending the war and reunifying Vietnam under communist rule.
- Saigon is now called Ho Chi Minh City, and it is the most populous city in Vietnam.
- Over 3 million people, including 58,000 Americans, were killed in the Vietnam War.

Part I: Saigon

1. What is the year for the **setting** of the story? ____________________________

2. What is Tết and how is it celebrated? _________________________________________

3. How old is the **narrator**? ________________________________________________

4. What is the Teller of Fate’s prediction for Hà’s family? What do you think this means for the family? _____________________________________________________________

5. Fill in the following chart for the characters in Hà’s family:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Descriptive details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>Ten years old; named for the Golden River; loves her papaya tree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quang</td>
<td>Eighteen years old; idolizes Bruce Lee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khôi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. **A symbol** is something used to represent another thing, person, or idea. Explain what papayas and the papaya tree symbolize in this novel.  
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

7. Who is Titi? Where does she go?  
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

8. What has happened to Hà’s father? How does the family deal with his absence?  
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

9. What does Hà do when her mother send her to the market to shop for the family?  
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

10. **A simile** is a comparison between two things using the words “like” or “as.” Find an example of a simile in “Two More Papayas.”  
_____________________________________________________________________

11. Why are some words written in italics in this text?  
_____________________________________________________________________

12. In the poems “Current News” and “TV News” Hà hears that what group is coming closer to Saigon? As these people come closer, how is Hà’s family and community impacted?  
_____________________________________________________________________

13. How did Hà’s mother become separated from her father and family?  
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

14. In “A Day Downtown” Hà and her mother go to a ceremony for military wives. What comment does the President make to the crowd? What is Mother’s response to the speech? ________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

15. Identify one simile in “Twisting Twisting.” What does the simile show the reader about Mother? ________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

16. What does Hà do to Tram? Why does she do it? ______________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

17. “Promises” is a poem about papayas on Hà’s tree, which are symbolic of Hà. It says that the papayas “cling to the trunk” and they are “Still green / but promising.” How can these lines be applied to Hà as well? ______________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

18. Who is Uncle Sôn and what does he find for Hà’s family? ______________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

19. Mother asks for the sons’ opinions about leaving Vietnam in “Should We?” Why is Vũ’s answer different from his brothers’? ______________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
20. **Repetition** is the use of a word or phrase more than once, and it can be used for several purposes in poetry. How is repetition used in “Sssshhhhhhh”? ____________________________________________________________
   _____________________________________________________________________
   _____________________________________________________________________

21. When a reader takes clues from literature and uses them to come to a conclusion about meaning, the reader is making an **inference**. Using the title of “Quiet Decision,” the description of Hà’s cutting of the sweet potato, and the dialogue at the end of the poem, what inference can be made about Mother’s thinking? ________________________________
   _____________________________________________________________________
   _____________________________________________________________________

22. A **metaphor** is a comparison between two things that does not use like or as. Identify one simile and one metaphor from “Crisscrossed Packs.” _________________________
   _____________________________________________________________________
   _____________________________________________________________________
   _____________________________________________________________________

23. In addition to necessities, each family member packs one “choice” item in their bag before leaving Vietnam. What does Hà choose to take? Why does she take it?
   _____________________________________________________________________
   _____________________________________________________________________
   _____________________________________________________________________

24. What happens to Hà’s papaya tree before the family leaves Vietnam?
   _____________________________________________________________________

25. What are conditions like on the ship? ________________________________
   _____________________________________________________________________
   _____________________________________________________________________
   _____________________________________________________________________

26. When the helicopter pilot comes aboard the ship, what news does he bring? _________
   _____________________________________________________________________
**Part II: AT SEA**

1. Describe some of the challenges Hà and her family face on the ship as they flee Vietnam.

   ________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________

2. When Hà eats her ration of rice, what does she imagine? Why might she connect these two things “although one has nothing / to do with the other”?

   ________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________

3. After one week on the ship, what does Mother have Hà’s older brother do for the children onboard?

   ________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________

4. What is Khôi’s secret?

   ________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________

5. What does Hà give up in order to make Khôi feel better?

   ________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________

6. What do the doll and the chick symbolize for Hà and Khôi? Why is it important, then, that they throw these items overboard?

   ________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________
7. **Personification** means that human characteristics are given to objects. In “A Kiss”, two objects are personified and their kiss begins a party. What objects are personified as kissing and why is their kiss cause for celebration? ____________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

8. What does Hà notice about the soldier who helps her board the small boat to go to shore? Why does it stand out to her? ____________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

9. Where does Hà’s family land to wait in a camp? ____________________________________________

10. What is **nuốc mắm** and how does it help the people in the camp? __________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

11. What does the amethyst ring **symbolize**? ____________________________________________

12. What three countries are options for Hà’s family’s relocation? __________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

13. What do people need in order to leave the camp in Florida? What does Mother do to improve the family’s chances of leaving? ____________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

14. Where does Hà’s family go when they get a sponsor? __________________________

15. Describe the physical appearance of Hà’s family’s sponsor. __________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
READING COMPREHENSION AND ANALYSIS QUESTIONS

Part III: ALABAMA

1. Why does Hà’s family repack their bags after arriving in Alabama? __________________________
________________________________________________________________________

2. What does Mother say is the most important priority for the children now that the
family is in America? __________________________
________________________________________________________________________

3. What does “the cowboy” bring to Hà’s family to eat? What do they think of the meal?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

4. Describe Hà’s family’s new house and furniture. __________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

5. What are the rules Hà discusses in “First Rule,” “Second Rule,” and “Third Rule”? Why
does she find them frustrating? __________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

6. Explain the title of “Neigh Not Hee.” __________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
7. Why does Miss Scott laugh sadly at Hà on her first day at school? __________________
________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________

8. In “Rainbow,” what two physical traits does Hà notice about the other students? What
does she notice about herself in comparison to them? ____________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________

9. Based on Hà’s description of her first school lunch, what food did she receive in the
cafeteria? ____________________________

10. What part of the school day does “Loud Outside” describe? What happens to Hà during
this time? ____________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________

11. How is Vũ treated by others at school? How is his response different from Hà’s?
________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________

12. How will brother Khôi help Hà? ____________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________

13. What happens in class to make Hà feel dumb? ____________________________
________________________________________

14. What does Vũ ask to be called now? Why do you think he takes this name? ________
________________________________________
________________________________________
15. Identify two **similes** at the beginning of “Neighbors.” What do these similes reveal has happened to Hà’s home? ______________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

16. Who is the only neighbor who is welcoming to the family? What does she offer to do for them? ________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

17. Why does Hà feel regret when she starts to learn English? _________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

18. In “HA LE LU DA” what do Hà and each of her family members do at church? What does Hà realize at the end of the poem? ______________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
19. **Imagery** is descriptive language that uses one or more of the five senses: sight, sound, smell, touch, taste. Find examples of imagery from each of the five senses in “Can’t Help.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SENSE</th>
<th>EXAMPLEs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sight</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound</td>
<td>“day of shouts and HA LE LU DAs”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smell</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Touch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taste</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

20. Why is October 14 Hà’s “Most Relieved Day”? ____________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
21. What does Hà do that makes her feel “Smart Again”? ________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

22. What does Miss Scott teach Hà’s class about Vietnam? What does she miss in her
lesson? __________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

23. What name does Pink Boy call Hà? Why is it offensive? ______________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

24. What experience has she had and what does Mrs. Washington know about Vietnam,
both the good and the bad?
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

25. Why do the children chant “Boo-Da” at Hà? __________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

26. What “Confessions” does Hà make to her mother? What does Hà believe her behavior
has caused? ________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
27. How does Hà finally escape the bullying of Pink Boy? Why do people start to treat her better at school? ________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

28. What are the “three packages of something orange and dried” that Mrs. Washington gives Hà for Christmas? ____________________________________________________

29. What does Hà do with the present? What does Mother do with the gift? What lesson does Hà learn from the gift? How can this lesson apply to her new life in Alabama?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Part IV: NOW ON

1. What gift does “Pem” (Pam) give Hà? _______________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________________

2. Why is Hà embarrassed by what she wears to school on the first day back from
   Christmas break? __________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________________

3. What type of ceremony does Hà’s family hold? What sign leads Mother to decide to
   have the ceremony? ________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________________

4. What career does each of Hà’s brothers want to have? __________________________
   ________________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________________

5. What is Mother’s prediction for the family for the year 1976? ___________________
   ________________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________________