

Theories of Relativity
By
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For the following questions, answer in full sentences and use quotations from the novel to support your views. Include page numbers for quotations

Chapter One

1. For the following characters Jenna, Dylan, and Brendan, explain who they are, where they came from in terms of family, and anything else about them which may be relevant.
2. Where does the story take place?
3. Dylan has a theory that, "every fourth person will give me money." (Haworth-Attard 1) What are the reasons for giving homeless people money and what are the reasons people give for not giving the homeless money?
4. "You should be in school getting an education, so you can get a job." (Haworth-Attard 3) Explain how you feel about this statement. Do you believe you have to have a good education to get a good job and make lots of money?

Chapter Two

1. According to Dylan, why is the "shrug" an effective communicating tool?
2. What does the expression "frost on the pumpkin" mean?
3. What is the local hangout? Why are Dylan and Jenna ok going there?
4. What does the line "Vulture watches out for his investment" (p12) suggest?
5. On pg 12, Jenna asks Dylan some personal questions, according to the streets is that ok? Provide a direct quote.
6. Chapter Two provides background on the Dylan's homelife. What do we learn about how Dylan's parents?
7. In his youth, where did Dylan feel safe? (p14)
8. Who is Pete?
9. Why does Dylan's grandfather stop coming around?
10. What does Dylan lie to Vulture about? Why did he do this?
11. Why does Dylan refuse to go to Vulture's party?

Journal Response #1:

You find out that one of your friends has been kicked out of their house and has no place to live. Your parents won't let your friend stay with you. What do you do? How do you go about helping your friend?

Chapter Three

1. How does Dylan feel about the library? Provide a direct quote.
2. What is Dylan referring to when he says "I live in constant fear of losing me." (p20)
3. Describe Twitch. Provide three characteristics,
4. Who is the "nice guy" Twitch suggests they visit?
5. Describe TWO qualities we see in Dylan on pg 27.

Chapter Four

1. What happens at the "nice guy's" home and why does Dylan feel betrayed?
2. Why is Jenna mad at Vulture? How does this make Dylan feel?
3. Where are Jenna and Dylan going? How does Dylan describe their adventure?
4. Who is Micha? Show proof Dylan cares about him.
5. Who is Harley? What happened to him?
6. Why does Dylan's mom kick him out? What day is he kicked out?

Journal Response #2:

Are there any characters to this point that remind you of any friends you have? If so, explain where you think they will be in 10 years. If not, then choose a character from the book and describe where you think they would be in 10 years if the book revisited the characters in 10 years.

Chapter Five

1. Why does Dylan have a “swagger” at the beginning of chapter five?
2. Describe Dylan’s encounter with his old teacher, Mr Crowe.
3. What more do we learn about Jenna’s family life?
4. Where does Dylan spend his bus money? Why? What more do we learn about Dylan through this action?
5. What is Dylan’s theory about social workers (p43)?
6. What lie does Dylan tell Jordan to keep him in line?

Journal Response #3:

Describe your relationship with your siblings. How do you feel about them? What were you like as little kids together? What kind of things did you do together to have fun? What could you do to make your sibling happy?

Chapter Six

1. Why is Dylan excited at the beginning of the chapter?
2. Why does Dylan need to use the library bathroom?
3. How does Dylan treat Twitch?
4. What does Twitch steal for Dylan?
5. How does the job interview go?
6. Why is Dylan rejected by the employer?
7. Do you think this is fair?

Chapter Seven

1. What personal mementos does Dylan carry with him in his backpack?
2. Why does Vulture want Dylan to work for him?
3. Why does Dylan hate Vulture so much?
4. What seems to have happened between Jenna and Vulture?
5. When Dylan is helping Jenna, how does he picture himself?
6. Why are the police concerned about Jenna, but not Dylan?
7. Why doesn’t Dylan want a nickname?

Chapter Eight

1. Describe the youth center. What do they do there?
2. Why is Amber so angry with Dylan?
3. What shocking news does Dylan learn about Amber?
4. Describe Lurch. What does he want with Dylan?
5. How does Twitch betray Dylan?

Journal Response #4:

Have you ever been betrayed by, or betrayed, someone? What was the situation? How did you feel?

Chapter Nine

1. How is Jenna’s appearance changing?
2. Who is Albert Einstein?
3. What opportunity is Glen trying to offer Dylan?
4. Why do you think Brendan is called “Vulture”? What are the qualities of a vulture?
5. What is the situation Dylan is rescued from? How and by whom?

Chapter Ten

1. What is a gargoyle? What is their historical and modern day usage?
2. What is it like at the Youth Centre?
3. According to Dylan, who does Mother Nary like?
4. Why does Dylan feel comforted and safe in Church?

Chapter Eleven

1. Why is Dylan "living" in the library?
2. What are some memories Dylan has of his grandfather?
3. What are Amber and Dylan fighting about?
4. Do you think it is appropriate to have swearing in the novel?
5. Why or why not?
6. When Dylan swears, why is it different from when Amber swears?
7. What personal information is offered about Albert Einstein? Why is Dylan angry with him?
8. What effect does the constant statement of the time have on the story/reader?

Chapter Twelve

1. Why doesn't Dylan have any ID?
2. Who comes to Dylan's rescue? What does he do to help him?
3. Who is the only family Dylan seems to have good memories of?
4. Why does Glen tell Dylan he is not litter?
5. What is wrong with Twitch?
6. What inference can you make about why Jenna is living on the streets?

Chapter Thirteen

5. Why does Twitch say that Christmas is a good time for street kids?
6. Why does Ainsley tell Dylan that he is going to get hurt by both Brendan and Jenna?
7. What is Dylan's greatest fear regarding his home life?
8. Why does Dylan resent the Christmas tree and decorations so much?
9. Explain how Dylan gets back at his mother for disowning him.
10. Why do you think Dylan refuses Dan's offer to spend Christmas day with them?

Chapter Fourteen

1. Why does Dylan think his mom never gave him the letter from his grandfather?
2. Describe the "squat" that Twitch has found.
3. Who are some of the people that Dylan recognizes there?
4. What has happened to Amber since Dylan last saw her?
5. What does the word "desolation" mean?

Chapter Sixteen

1. What is Dylan's reaction to his Christmas present from Glen? Why do you think it affects him so much?
2. What is Ainsley studying at the tutor centre?
3. What effect has Vulture started to have on Jenna?

Journal Response #5:

Describe your favorite Christmas you have experienced so far. Where were you? What did you eat? What were the favorite presents you received?

Chapter Seventeen

1. Who does Dylan go to visit just before Christmas?

2. How does Dylan's mom react to his visit? List some of the mean things she says or does while he is there.
3. What are some of the lies Dylan's mom has told Dan?
4. What was Dylan's mom's upbringing like?
5. What disappointment does Dylan have at the bus station?

Chapter Eighteen

1. What happened one Christmas when Dylan decided to cook the turkey himself?
2. What does Dylan learn about Glen?
3. What has happened to Dylan's grandfather?
4. What reason does Miriam suggest that Dylan's grandfather has for still being alive?
5. How do Dylan's memories of his grandfather's appearance conflict with his present state?

Journal Response #6:

Think about a member of your family (immediate or extended) that has meant a lot to you. How has this person made an impact on your life? What would you like them to do differently?

Chapter Nineteen

1. How does Dylan spend Christmas day?
2. What theory does Dylan have in this chapter?
3. Why do you think Albert Einstein means so much to Dylan?
4. What things at the house spark Dylan's memory?
5. Describe the appearance and behavior of Dylan's father.
6. What is Phil's reaction when he is told that Dylan is his son?

Journal Response #7:

Name one historical figure (living or dead) who you admire. What is it about this person's beliefs or theories that appeals to you?

Chapter Twenty

1. What is the condition of the house?
2. Why does Dylan's dad ask him for money?
3. How does Phil treat his family's home? Give an example.
4. Who does Phil blame for Dylan's birth?
5. How does the chapter end? Besides the present situation, why do you think a fight breaks out between Dylan and Phil?

Journal Response #8:

Describe the appearance and behavior of your own father. What is your relationship like? What qualities, if any, do you share with him? What would you change about your father if you could?

Chapter Twenty-One

1. How does Dylan make his getaway?
2. Where does the car end up?
3. Who picks up Dylan at the side of the road?
4. What tender gesture does Dylan share with his grandfather? Why is this significant?
5. What does Dylan mean when, at the end of the chapter, he reflects, "This isn't television"?

Chapter Twenty-Two

1. Why is Ainsley concerned about Amber?
2. What has happened to Twitch?
3. What is Jenna now doing for money? Why does Dylan react so angrily/violently to finding out Jenna's situation?
4. What terrible occurrence seems to have occurred in Jenna's history?
5. Who attacks Dylan? What do they do to him?
6. What does Dylan mean when he states, "They've taken my entire life. They've taken me"?

Journal Response #9:

What personal possessions do you have that mean a great deal to you? Explain why?

Chapter Twenty-Three

1. What injuries has Dylan sustained in the attack?
2. Who takes care of him?
3. Where do they decide to go and how do they get there?
4. Why does Vulture really show up at the factory?
5. How does Amber 'help' Dylan's pain?
6. What does Dylan hallucinate about?
7. Why does Amber really think Jenna is giving Dylan drugs?
8. What are Amber's, The Swear Lady and the Garbage Man's real names?
9. Why did Amber end up living on the streets?
10. What promise does Amber make regarding when the baby is born?

Chapter Twenty-Four

1. How does Dylan look and feel when Jenna does not bring him any more drugs?
2. What does Dylan go looking for?
3. What family history does Glen share, and why is this significant?
4. Where does Dylan go that night?
5. What is Jenna now doing for Vulture?
6. What is the reason Jenna tells Dylan she ran away from home?

Chapter Twenty-Five

1. What does Vulture recommend that Dylan do for the payment he 'owes' him?
2. What does Dylan find in the second bedroom, and what decision does he make?
3. What part did Jenna play in getting Dylan dependent on Vulture?
4. Where does Dylan go? How does Dylan's mother greet him?
5. What does Dan do to help Dylan?

Chapter Twenty-Six

1. Where else does Dylan look for help?
2. What hallucination does Dylan experience while in the washroom? Describe it.
3. What is Dylan's version of the "Theory of Relativity"?
4. What is Dylan's theory about black holes?
5. Why does Dylan need to have theories?
6. What theory does Einstein share with Dylan about himself?