

I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings **By Maya Angelou**

Description:

I Know Why The Caged Bird Sings is an autobiographical work that focuses on the early years of Maya Angelou's life. Angelou is a poet and her flowing style adds to the pleasure of reading her work.

Discussion questions:

- The race/ethnicity of the perpetrator or survivor often plays a role in how people respond to sexual violence. How does the town react to a white woman being assaulted? How is this different from Maya's experiences?
- What role does vigilante justice play in the novel? Knowing that very few reports of sexual assaults or rape lead to convictions, why might vigilantism hold an appeal?
- Maya describes a desire to feel loved and a desire for closeness that she uses to justify being victimized. Do you feel that this is a common sense that children might blame themselves for a sexual assault because of a wanting to feel loved or be close to an adult?
- Maya suffers two experiences, one of rape the other of knowing her rapist was killed (hinted that family and friends carried out this action), which of these do you believe Maya is most traumatized by? Why?
- Survivors of sexual violence cope with their experiences in a variety of ways. How do you feel about Maya's decision to stop talking for a time after her experience? How do others, such as her school teacher and grandmother, react to her silence?
- What role does Maya's early encounters with sex and sexuality play in her views of sex as a young adult? Draw on her sexual assault as well as her views around her brother's early escapades.
- Does Maya develops trust and love at the end of the book, or does she just realize she has always had the gifts and just needed confidence to use them?

dedicated to healing.
advocating for change.

{www.barcc.org}