

QUESTIONS FOR AN ENSLAVED WOMAN DECLARES HER NAME

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS:

1. What do the soldiers tell Liza to say the next time someone calls her “nigger”?
2. Who is Liza speaking to when she takes the soldiers’ advice? What does she say and how does she say it?
3. What are the consequences of Liza’s taking the soldiers’ advice?

INFERRING QUESTIONS:

4. Why do the soldiers tell Liza that Mixon is her last name?
5. What is the difference during this time between the labels “Negro” and “nigger”?
6. Why does John respond so negatively when Liza resists the label “nigger”? Why does her grandmother respond so negatively?
7. What does the conflict between Liza, her owner, and her grandmother reflect about the amount of power Liza has to define herself and her own identity?

THEMATIC QUESTIONS:

8. Do names have an effect on the way others think about our identities? Do they have an effect on the way we think about ourselves? Explain.

9. What name do others use for you most often? Who decided it? What does that name reflect about your identity? What does it hide?