

Due the day you return to school

Instructions: Answer the following questions. **Be thoughtful** and refer to specific events or passages when possible. You may write directly on this sheet or on a separate page.

Comprehension Questions

1. Who are the main characters in the novel, and what are their roles?
 - (*Focus: Joe Leaphorn, George Bowlegs, Ernesto Cata, and others.*)
 2. What event initiates the investigation in the novel?
 - (*What happens to Ernesto Cata?*)
 3. What is George Bowlegs searching for throughout the story?
 - (*How is this related to Zuni religious beliefs?*)
 4. How does Lieutenant Joe Leaphorn approach the investigation? What methods does he use?
 5. How do the Navajo and Zuni cultures differ in their beliefs and practices, according to the novel?
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Analytical & Thematic Questions

6. What is the significance of the title *Dance Hall of the Dead*?
 - (*How does it relate to the Zuni concept of life after death and George's quest?*)
7. How does Hillerman use the mystery genre to explore Native American cultural identity?
8. In what ways does the novel address themes of alienation or belonging?
9. How does Leaphorn's identity as a Navajo affect his perspective on the Zuni people and the investigation?

10. What role does the natural environment play in the story? How does it reflect the characters' inner lives or cultural beliefs?
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Discussion or Writing Prompts- CHOOSE THREE to answer in paragraph format (at least 5 sentences). **Include a quote in your paragraphs to prove your point.**

11. Compare and contrast George Bowlegs and Ernesto Cata. What do they represent about cultural identity and spiritual searching?
12. How does the novel portray the conflict between traditional beliefs and modern society?
13. What makes Joe Leaphorn different from other detectives in mystery novels? How is his cultural background essential to his work?
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15. What does the novel suggest about justice—both legal and spiritual?
16. What moment in the novel struck you most, and why? What did it reveal about the characters or culture?
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