

QUESTIONS ABOUT
TAUGHT BY AMERICA
By Sarah Sentilles
Part 2

Sarah Sentilles Joins a program called *Teach for America* after graduating from Yale University and is sent to teach in the Compton Unified School District in southern California. She learns more than she teaches, and what she learns is that in some parts of the country children go to falling-down schools without books or services, live with violence every day, and nobody seems to care.

The questions below concern pages 86 to the end of the book.

CHAPTER III (Last half): A DIFFERENT VIOLENCE

1. In what ways is Sarah's relationship with Eliot Carleton inappropriate?
2. What happens at 4:15 in the afternoon on Riverdale Avenue in front of Madison Elementary School? What is Sarah's reaction?
3. What provisions are lacking from the student restrooms?
4. Sarah believes she has failed her students when she witnesses Eva's mother strike her daughter. Is striking or spanking children ever appropriate punishment?
5. What is a compound word? What compound word does Martin use? What did Martin do to learn this word?
6. Elise is a very disruptive student. One day Sarah "can't stand it anymore" and "loses her cool" and almost throws Elise down the stairs. How does Sarah feel about her own behavior afterwards?

CHAPTER IV: WHAT WE NEED

7. How much does the school district offer to pay for school supplies each year? How quickly do those supplies reach the classroom? How much does Sarah spend on classroom supplies each year using her own money?
8. What two methods does Sarah use to get supplies out of the supply room?
9. Why does Raymon's stomach hurt? What is done about it?
10. Why does *Death Row Records* bring gifts for the children?
11. Why can't Kendol Law type his name with the computer?

12. What medical problem does Sarah experience? How will this affect her future?

CHAPTER V: A KIND OF BELONGING

13. Compton students are mostly black and brown, but they don't label people only by their skin color. Why does Deon believe the white-skinned Ms. Levinson is black? Are their skin color and the shape of their facial features critical to how we behave toward people we meet?

14. Name some ways the community shows Sarah she belongs. Name some ways they show she does not belong (See pages 133 to 136).

15. How is Loretta punished for being late to class? Loretta is the only white girl in Sarah's class. Why doesn't Sarah like her?

16. Simone is absent most of first grade and never learned to read. Why was she absent? How long do you think it will take for her to recover?

17. What does an "A" mean in the American educational system? What does Andre's mother give him for each "A" he gets?

18. How does Andre's mother earn money? Where is his father?

19. Why does Andre miss school for two days? Is the man his mother is hiding from his father?

20. Why does the museum guard believe Sarah has brought the children to the wrong museum? Is it unusual for seven-year-olds to be familiar with paintings by famous artists?

CONCLUSION: TAUGHT BY AMERICA

21. Sarah intended to study for a Ph. D. in comparative literature after her two years of teaching. What do you think makes her change her mind?

22. What does the airplane passenger probably mean by "welfare reform"? Why does Sarah react so violently to his ideas?

23. Why does Sarah decide to become a priest? Why does she change her mind?

24. What does Sarah hope to accomplish by returning to Compton?

25. Who does she believe is responsible for the deplorable conditions of Compton schools?