

SUMMER READING: 6th GRADE

Stella by Starlight by Sharon M. Draper



Stella lives in the segregated South—in Bumblebee, North Carolina, to be exact about it. Some stores she can go into. Some stores she can't. Some folks are pleasant. Others are a lot less so. One late night, later than she should ever be up, much less wandering around outside, Stella and her little brother see something they're never supposed to see, something that is the first flicker of change to come, unwelcome change by any stretch of the imagination. As Stella's community—her world—is upended, she decides to fight fire with fire. And she learns that ashes don't necessarily signify an end.

Please read the following questions before starting the novel and answer them in a separate document. These responses are due on Monday, August 11, 2025, and will be the first quiz grade of the year.

Stella by Starlight Discussion Questions

**Notice there are multiple parts to each question.*

1. Describe Stella's parents. How would you describe the relationship between the parents and the children?
2. Why does Stella sneak out at night? What does she keep in her hidden cigar box, and why?
3. Why is a visit from Spoon Man a reason for excitement in the town? Describe Spoon Man and his wagon, and his effect on the community.
4. Describe the voting registration. How do you think Stella felt throughout the ordeal? What do you think she learned from that experience?
5. Do you think Stella is a hero? Explain. How does she feel about what she did*? How does the community show its pride? (*the Spencer house fire)
6. How do you think the typewriter changed Stella's attitude about and ability to write?
7. How does the community come together on Election Day? Do you think the vote from Stella's father made a difference? Explain.
8. How does Mrs. Odom save the day? Why is it surprising? What more do you learn about the concept of "community" because of what she did?
9. What problems does Paulette face at home? What is surprising about Paulette's revelations?
10. Describe the humorous parts of the Christmas play. Why is it a good place for the story to end?

*The church seems to be an important institution in the community, yet some members say phrases like "lordy, lordy," which can be considered taking the Lord's name in vain. Also, the doctor in the white community (Dr. Packard) is not a caring man. Think about how appearances can be deceiving and how people's actions reflect their beliefs. Be ready to discuss when school resumes in the fall.

