1. How did you experience the book? Were you engaged immediately, or did it take you a while to "get into it"? How did you feel reading it—amused, sad, disturbed, confused, bored...?

2. How do your memories of the 60s fit with this book?

3. Describe the main characters—personality traits, motivations, and inner qualities.

• Why do characters do what they do?

• Are their actions justified?

• Describe the dynamics between characters (in a

marriage, family, or friendship).

• How has the past shaped their lives?

• Do you admire or disapprove of them?

• Do they remind you of people you know?

4. Does Lyndon Johnson manipulate his cabinet and advisors or do they manipulate him in terms of reacting to national and world events?

5. Are the main characters dynamic—changing or maturing by the end of the book? Do they learn about themselves, how the world works and their role in it?

6. Has the book caused you to change your opinion about politics in the mid-20th century?

7. What personality traits motivated Johnson?

8. Talk about the book's structure.

• Is it a continuous story...or interlocking short stories?

• Does the time-line move forward chronologically?

• Does time shift back & forth from past to present?

• Is there a single viewpoint or shifting viewpoints?

• Why might the author have chosen to tell the story

the way he or she did?

• What difference does the structure make in the way

you read or understand the book?

9. What main ideas—themes—does the author explore? (Consider the title, often a clue to a theme.) Does the author use symbols to reinforce the main ideas?

10. What passages strike you as insightful, even profound? Perhaps a bit of dialog that's funny or poignant or that encapsulates a character? Maybe there's a particular comment that states the book's thematic concerns?

11. Is the ending satisfying? If so, why? If not, why not...and how would you change it?

12. If you could ask the author a question, what would you ask? Have you read other books by the same author? If so how does this book compare. If not, does this book inspire you to read others?

13. Has this book changed you—broadened your perspective? Have you learned something new or been exposed to different ideas about people or a certain part of the world?