***Jazz* Discussion Questions, Chapters 1 & 2**

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1. So far, who do you think is the **protagonist**, and who is the **antagonist**? Why? What makes them pro- and anti- to each other? What other options might there be?
2. Morrison opens her book by introducing a main character, Violet, in a **gossipy tone**. What is the author's purpose of introducing Violet this way? What does Morrison include in this initial introduction? Based on your experiences meeting a character for the first time in other books what does Morrison leave out?
3. What description does Morrison give about the **setting** of Harlem, NYC? What does she seem to think is most important about the area? What impressions does she leave you with Harlem—is it a place you‘d want to visit?
4. Explore the **relationship** each of the **characters** Violet and Dorcas have with Joe. How are they the same and how are they different? What do we learn about Violet and Dorcas individually from the descriptions of their relationships with Joe?
5. Think about Malvonne's motivation to rent her extra bedroom versus her feelings of moral obligation to warn a complete stranger about adultery. Explain the **irony** of this situation; what kind of irony is this (look it up if you need a reminder of the kinds of irony). What other instances of irony have we seen so far in Morrison's story?
6. In some ways, Morrison's novel revolves around a **theme** of **racism** toward African Americans in the 1920s. Incidents of racism and segregation, such as during Joe and Violet's train ride north, occur frequently in the background of the book. What other instances of racism or segregation have you seen so far in the book? What theme statement does Morrison seem to be developing in regard to racism and segregation?