



Flower Power

Ann Walsh

Interest level: ages ten to fourteen

Reading level: 3.5

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AR Quiz # 102518

Book Summary

Callie's mother has chained herself to the neighbor's tree and is living inside the tree house. She refuses to come down until her neighbor, Mr. Wilson, agrees to leave the tree standing. Soon reporters arrive to interview Callie about her mother's protest. Callie doesn't want to talk to anyone. More chaos ensues when Callie's grandmother invites the "Singing Grannies" to help save the tree, Mr. Wilson's biker friends come to his aid, and Callie's friends show up to try to get themselves on TV. Callie needs to figure out how to get her mother to come down from the tree so that her life can return to normal.

Author Biography

Ann Walsh is the award-winning author of many popular historical novels for children and young adults. *Flower Power* is her first novel with Orca Book Publishers. She began writing the story while her mother, a dedicated environmentalist, was ill. In many ways, she says, this novel is a tribute to her own mother's beliefs and values. Ann lives in Williams Lake, British Columbia, with her husband.

Connecting to the Text

Character and Conflict

In *Flower Power*, Callie Powers is placed in the middle of a conflict close to home: Her mother, Dian Powers, is protesting the removal of a tree in her neighbor's yard and has chained herself inside its tree house. Dian refuses to come out of the tree house until her neighbor, Mr. Wilson, agrees to leave the tree standing. Mr. Wilson has refused and insists that the tree come down so that he can build a garage for his motorcycle.

(p. 10) *"It's time that tree went, Dian," [Mr. Wilson] told her. "The tree house too. Callie hasn't used it in months. Why should I let it take up so much of my yard? For the sake of old times?"*

...Mom told me that when they were young, she and Mr. Wilson and their friends spent a lot of time in the tree house. They stayed out until the night became too dark and they got scared. I used to do that too, but not this year. Most of my friends aren't into tree houses anymore.

Neither am I.

(p. 13) *I'd wondered if I should write a letter to Mr. Wilson, asking him to leave the tree alone, but I didn't know what to say after "Dear Mr. Wilson."*

As a writing exercise, ask students to choose one of the following to complete:

1. Pretend you are Callie and you want to keep the tree house. Write a letter to Mr. Wilson. How can you persuade him to leave it the way it is?
2. Pretend you are Callie and you don't want to keep the tree house. Write a letter to Dian, your mom. How can you persuade her to stop her protest and let Mr. Wilson cut the tree down?
3. Think of something from your childhood that you have outgrown but still find it hard to part with (perhaps a favorite toy, movie or book). Write a journal/diary entry about this item. What makes it special to you? Why is it hard to get rid of it? If you had to get rid of it, what would you do with it? Is there someone special you could give it to? If so, why did you choose that person?

Callie's father becomes involved when he sees the protest on the nightly news. Callie contemplates going to stay with him for a while, but changes her mind:

(p. 45) *I started to say, "Yes, I'd love to come," but then I remembered how awkward I'd felt the last few times I'd visited. The twins were cute, I guess, but Dad was always "ooohing" and "aaahing" over them and talking baby talk. ... Dad and I used to do things together during my visits. ... But now Dad stays home and crawls around on the floor with the babies, and the only shows we watch are Teletubbies video..*

As a writing exercise, ask students to choose one of the following to complete.

1. Pretend you are Callie. Write a letter to your dad, explaining how you feel. Is there a way to make the relationship work better? Think of ideas and express them in your letter.
2. Pretend you are Callie. Write a journal/diary entry, expressing your feelings about your dad and his new family. Is there a way to make the relationship work better for you?

Theme and Point of View

In *Flower Power*, there is much discussion of the value of the tree to Callie, to her mother, and to the community. Have the students discuss as a group the overriding conflict: Dian Powers wants to keep the tree and tree house, and Mr. Wilson wants to remove it so that he can build a garage for his new motorcycle.

(p. 11) *[Mr. Wilson] The tree house is probably half rotten,” he said. “If a kid falls from it, I could be sued. Besides, I need a garage and that’s the only place I can put one. So the tree has to go.*

(p. 12) *[Dian] Memories and heritage and neighborhood values—don’t these things mean anything to you?*

Have students work in small groups to complete one of the following.

1. Debate: Removing the Tree—For or Against
Separate into two sides, each with an equal number of participants. You will be engaging in a debate to be presented to the large group. One side will be for the removal of the tree and tree house, and the other side will be against its removal. Working with your side or group, brainstorm ideas to defend your side’s opinion, for or against removing the tree. List three reasons on index cards. With the teacher acting as moderator, present your debate in front of the large group.
2. Debate: Who owns the tree and the tree house?
Separate into two sides, each with an equal number of participants. You will be engaging in a debate to be presented to the large group. One side will argue that Mr. Wilson owns the tree and the other side will argue that Dian Powers owns the tree. Note, the tree was originally planted in Mr. Wilson’s yard but the tree house is in the part of the tree that is in Dian Powers’ yard. The lumber for the tree house was purchased by the Powers family, and both families built the tree house together. Working with your side or group, brainstorm ideas to defend your side’s opinion. List three reasons on index cards. With the teacher acting as moderator, present your debate in front of the large group.

Character Description

In *Flower Power*, Callie describes Peter Dawl in the following way:

(p. 14) *The someone turned out to be a skinny guy with thick glasses and a notebook.*

1. Here, Callie has briefly described Peter Dawl, a local reporter. Ask students to write a brief description of the other main characters in *Flower Power*.
 - Callie is _____.
 - Dian is _____.
 - Mr. Wilson is _____.
 - The Singing Grannies are _____.
 - The Motorcycle Club members are _____.

Callie's mom, Dian Powers, is a prominent figure in *Flower Power*, and she and Callie don't always get along. Callie has mixed feelings about her mother and her mother's intentions.

(p. 9) *While I made Mom's toast and filled the kettle, things started to make sense. Not that anything Mom did made much sense.*

(p. 22) *I shrugged. "Mom didn't tell me anything. She never does."*

(p. 22) *[Grandma] "Your mother's had a lot to think about, dear. This is a brave thing she's doing."*

[Callie] "Brave? I think it's stupid."

As a writing exercise, ask students to complete one of the following.

1. Peter Dawl says that Callie's Mom "...sounds like an interesting lady," to which Callie responds, "That's not exactly the word I'd use to describe Mom." (p. 5). Write a paragraph describing Dian Powers. What kind of a person is she? Is she someone you would want to get to know? Why, or why not? Use examples from *Flower Power* in your description.
2. Write a paragraph describing Callie. Is she someone you could be friends with? Why, or why not?
3. Dian Powers tells the press that she won't leave the tree until Mr. Wilson changes his mind about taking the tree down; however, Dian sneaks out of the tree house when nobody is looking—using Callie as a cover—so that she can have a shower. Callie asks, "...Isn't that cheating?" (p. 38). Write a paragraph describing your response to this. Is it okay for Dian to do this? Why, or why not?

Symbols

In *Flower Power*, a number of symbols are presented. Use the symbols from *Flower Power* listed below as a lead-in to a discussion about symbols and their meanings.

- (p. 28) “Back in the sixties, the hippies were called ‘Flower Children.’...Flowers were a symbol of love...”
- (p. 33) ...three women, three generations, each dressed in the color of the flower she is named for...The vibrant colors they wear reflect the determination of these remarkable women...

Have students complete the following exercises as a group.

1. Discuss the two symbols listed above, flowers/peace and color/determination. How do symbols work? Why are they so powerful? Can you think of other symbols that are used in *Flower Power*? Ideas might include: a red rose, a motorcycle and the chain around Dian Powers’ ankle.
2. Introduce common cultural symbols and discuss their meanings. Ideas might include: the national flag, a judge’s gavel, wedding rings, a leather jacket, a crucifix, a skull and crossbones, etc.

Option: You may wish to delineate between universal symbols and local, cultural-specific symbols. For example, students may be able to comment on the American flag as a universal symbol of freedom, democracy, etc. Challenge them to think of smaller, more locally-used symbols within their daily school lives, such as wearing certain styles of clothing. Encourage students to look at the symbols around them as objectively as possible.

Flower Power Word Search

g	b	s	b	x	n	i	e	l	w	k	j	g	e	n	e	r	a	t	i	o	n	s
e	p	r	o	t	e	s	t	p	o	i	u	e	t	r	e	e	p	w	q	a	s	s
s	z	x	c	v	c	n	m	l	k	j	h	g	f	f	o	d	n	a	t	s	i	e
e	n	v	i	r	o	n	m	e	n	t	c	v	t	n	e	m	e	t	a	t	s	r
u	y	e	v	d	n	s	s	t	w	x	h	p	y	u	i	l	d	i	m	v	e	p
q	r	s	t	v	f	c	a	t	c	y	u	r	i	g	h	t	s	e	e	t	h	u
g	b	s	b	x	l	i	e	s	w	k	j	o	x	w	h	t	e	w	w	j	y	e
e	w	q	g	h	i	k	l	p	x	i	u	p	t	r	e	e	e	t	e	a	s	c
s	z	x	c	v	c	n	m	l	k	i	h	e	d	q	w	e	i	t	i	u	i	n
q	w	w	d	h	t	y	u	m	p	t	c	r	z	a	d	m	g	h	v	k	k	e
u	y	g	n	i	s	s	a	p	s	e	r	t	y	u	r	l	i	i	r	v	e	r
g	e	x	c	l	u	s	i	v	e	k	j	y	x	e	h	t	e	w	e	j	y	e
e	w	q	g	h	j	k	l	p	o	i	u	e	p	r	e	e	e	w	t	a	s	f
s	z	x	a	s	s	e	r	t	i	n	g	g	d	q	w	e	r	t	n	u	i	n
q	w	w	d	h	j	y	u	m	p	t	c	v	z	a	d	f	g	h	i	k	k	o
u	y	e	v	d	i	s	a	g	r	e	e	m	e	n	t	l	i	i	m	v	e	c

environment	property	rights	trespassing	generations	press
conflict	permit	asserting	interview	disagreement	protest
exclusive	statement	conference	standoff		

Flower Power Word Search Answer Key

g	b	s	b	x	n	i	e	l	w	k	j	g	e	n	e	r	a	t	i	o	n	s
e	p	r	o	t	e	s	t	p	o	i	u	e	t	r	e	e	p	w	q	a	s	s
s	z	x	c	v	c	n	m	l	k	j	h	g	f	f	o	d	n	a	t	s	i	e
e	n	v	i	r	o	n	m	e	n	t	c	v	t	n	e	m	e	t	a	t	s	r
u	y	e	v	d	n	s	s	t	w	x	h	p	y	u	i	l	d	i	m	v	e	p
q	r	s	t	v	f	c	a	t	c	y	u	r	i	g	h	t	s	e	e	t	h	u
g	b	s	b	x	l	i	e	s	w	k	j	o	x	w	h	t	e	w	w	j	y	e
e	w	q	g	h	i	k	l	p	x	i	u	p	t	r	e	e	e	t	e	a	s	c
s	z	x	c	v	c	n	m	l	k	i	h	e	d	q	w	e	i	t	i	u	i	n
q	w	w	d	h	t	y	u	m	p	t	c	r	z	a	d	m	g	h	v	k	k	e
u	y	g	n	i	s	s	a	p	s	e	r	t	y	u	r	l	i	i	r	v	e	r
g	e	x	c	l	u	s	i	v	e	k	j	y	x	e	h	t	e	w	e	j	y	e
e	w	q	g	h	j	k	l	p	o	i	u	e	p	r	e	e	e	w	t	a	s	f
s	z	x	a	s	s	e	r	t	i	n	g	g	d	q	w	e	r	t	n	u	i	n
q	w	w	d	h	j	y	u	m	p	t	c	v	z	a	d	f	g	h	i	k	k	o
u	y	e	v	d	i	s	a	g	r	e	e	m	e	n	t	l	i	i	m	v	e	c

environment property rights trespassing generations press
 conflict permit asserting interview disagreement protest
 exclusive statement conference standoff

Connecting to the Curriculum

Language Arts—Newspapers and Reporting

In *Flower Power*, Callie Powers’ mom, Dian Powers, gets the attention of the local media by staging a “sit in” in her backyard tree house. Dian Powers uses different methods to attract their attention, such as asking Callie to call the local newspapers:

(p. 3) *You’ll be calling offices. Newspapers. TV stations. They’ll have answering machines or voice mail. Read what I wrote for you to say—every word, Callie—and make sure you give our address.*

Discuss the conversation between Callie and Dian above as a lead-in to the following exercises:

1. Ask students to complete the following, either in small groups, with partners, or individually. Discuss as a group. You may wish to bring in outside resources (see Web Resources for a list of related websites).

- Using the context of the novel, find definitions for each of the following media terms listed below.

holding a press conference	(p. 5)
the press	(p. 46)
an exclusive	(pp. 53–55, 70–71, 106)
breaking story	(p. 57)
shots (“ <i>I need shots for the news at noon</i> ”)	(p. 66)
reporters	(p. 66)
background information	(p. 70, 72)
sound bite	(p. 94)
deadline	(p. 94)

2. Newspaper stories are organized and written in a particular way. In a group, compare the organization of a newspaper article to other compositions students are familiar with, such as journal writing, fiction, comic strips/graphic novels, poetry, etc. Present and discuss the different parts of a newspaper article. You may wish to bring in local newspapers so that you can deconstruct a few of the articles. Newspaper articles must report on the 5 W’s: who, what, when, where and why. These details are summarized in the first paragraph, and then they are expanded on in the following paragraphs. For an excellent resource, see:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Newspaper#Format>

This website has many relevant topics, including: school newspapers, a list of major world newspapers, daily showcase of newspaper front pages from around the world, journalism ethics, journalism terms, history of newspapers and journalism, and so on.

3. Ask students to write a newspaper article reporting on Dian Powers’ “sit-in” in the tree, using the guidelines above. Use the model below as a guideline for the format of a newspaper article.

Option: Ask students to break into pairs and hold mock interviews. Role-play the characters of Peter Dawl, Callie Powers, Dian Powers and Mr. Wilson. Take turns with the roles so each student has the opportunity to be Peter, interviewing either Callie, Dian or Mr. Wilson. After each interview, students can write a newspaper article reporting on what they learned in their interview.

Option: Ask students to write a newspaper article on a topic of their own choice or a local event such as a school outing, sports game, school assembly, etc.

Headline: _____
Who: _____
What: _____
When: _____
Where: _____
Why: _____

First paragraph (summarizing the 5 W's):

Second paragraph (expands on the first paragraph with more details):

Option: You may wish to continue on the newspaper theme by asking students to work in small groups to create a class newspaper, complete with headlines, stories, pictures, advertising, classified ads, comic strips, horoscopes, weather, table of contents, etc. Designate responsibilities to individuals or small groups, including the roles of editor, photographer/illustrator, reporters, layout expert, headline writer, advertising specialist and production workers.

Lifeskills and Personal Planning—Gangs, Clubs and Belonging

In *Flower Power*, Callie Powers' neighbor, Mr. Wilson, joins a motorcycle club. He describes how he feels about the club and his membership in it in the following examples:

- (p. 11) *Then Mom laughed. "But you're an accountant. You don't even know how to ride a motorbike."*
"I do too," he said. "I joined a club. I'm learning to..."
- (p. 12) *"A motorcycle gang? You belong to a gang?"*
"No. It's a club. It's not a gang."
- (p. 63) *"They're members of my bike club—my new friends," he answered. "They've come to support me..."*

Many children, youth and adults are drawn to membership in groups. Typically, youth gangs, youth groups and membership clubs have the following in common:

- They provide to their members a sense of belonging and identity
- They wear (and present to others) a common style of dress or uniform
- They share common interests and goals.

1. As a group, discuss some of the elements of groups/clubs/gangs that are attractive or appealing to youth. Talk about clubs and gangs. What's the difference between the two?
2. What characteristics do youth groups/clubs/gangs share? Why do kids join them? Assign or elect a scribe who will list the reasons given on the board. Encourage the students to discuss the reasons as objectively as possible.
3. Invite the students to research and discuss well-known youth organizations that are accessible in your community (such as Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Girl Guides, Boys and Girls Club, YMCA, etc.) How can kids join? How much does it cost? What kind of activities do they participate in? Discuss the ways that these organizations fulfill the three elements listed above (i.e., Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts wear uniforms, have ceremonies, are organized in packs or troops and go on camping and hiking trips together).

Science and Nature—Flowers

In *Flower Power*, the Powers family women are named for flowers: Calendula (Callie, our main character), Dianthus (Dian, Callie's mom), Rose (Callie's grandmother), and Geranium (Gerrie, Callie's aunt).

1. Ask the students to work in groups to research these four flowers (you may wish to use the following questions):
 - What is the Latin name of the flower?
 - What is the color and shape of the flower?
 - What is the color and shape of the leaves?
 - Is this flower a perennial, an annual or a shrub?
 - Write one interesting fact about this flower (its history, medicinal qualities, the meaning of its name, the climate it is home to, superstitions associated with it, etc.).
2. Ask the groups to draw pictures of the flowers and create a poster using the images. Write descriptions under the pictures.

Option: Depending on space, time of year and classroom resources, you may wish to plant a classroom garden. Ask students to research the soil, water and light requirements for different plants. Students may wish to assign or elect caretakers over the growing season.

Name: Calendula
(*Calendula officinalis*)

Annual & Perennial

Color: orange, daisy shaped

Leaves: spirally arranged, 5-18 cm long, simple, and slightly hairy

Interesting facts: The ointment of this herb is thought to cure a range of skin problems from burns to acne as it has properties that reduce inflammation, control bleeding and soothe irritated skin.

Name: Dianthus
(*Dianthus plumarius*)

Perennial

Color: pale to dark pink with 5 petals, frilled at the outside edges

Leaves: opposite, simple, mostly linear and often gray-green to blue-green

Interesting facts: The name *Dianthus* is from the Greek words *dios* (“god”) and *anthos* (“flower”).

Name: Rose
(*Rosa*)

Shrub Perennial

Color: wide variety

Leaves: long, with leaflets; the leaflets usually have a serrated edge, and often have a few small thorns on the underside of the stem

Interesting facts: Roses are ancient symbols of love and beauty and are the most common flower sold by florists. Of the 100+ species of wild roses, and all are from the Northern Hemisphere.

Name: Geranium
(*Pelargonium*)

Perennial

Color: white, pink, red, purple

Leaves: usually alternate, and lobed or pinnate, often on long stalks, and sometimes with light or dark patterns

Interesting facts: The *Geranium* is indigenous to Southern Africa and was introduced to England in 1631. They are extremely popular summer plants in the US and Canada.

Terms

Annual: An annual plant is a plant that usually germinates, flowers and dies in one year.

Perennial: A perennial plant (Latin *per*, “through,” *annus*, “year”) is a plant that lives for more than two years.

Botany: Botany is the scientific study of plant life. As a branch of biology, it is also

sometimes referred to as plant science(s) or plant biology. Botany covers a wide range of scientific disciplines that study the structure, growth, reproduction, metabolism, development, diseases, ecology, and evolution of plants.

Horticulture: The Latin words hortus (garden plant) and cultura (culture) together form horticulture, classically defined as the culture or growing of garden plants. Horticulturists work in plant propagation, crop production, plant breeding and genetic engineering, plant biochemistry, plant physiology, and the storage, processing, and transportation of fruits, berries, nuts, vegetables, flowers, trees, shrubs and turf. They improve crop yield, quality, nutritional value, and resistance to insects, diseases, and environmental stresses.

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Connecting to the World—Writing and Research Topics and Activities

The Raging Grannies

In *Flower Power*, Callie Powers meets the Singing Grannies. The Singing Grannies sing a protest song and draw media attention to Dian's sit-in. They sing to the tune of "This Land is Your Land": This tree's a good tree, a very fine tree, please leave it standing, don't cut it down (p. 43).

The Singing Grannies are based on a real group called The Raging Grannies. In 1987 in Victoria, Canada, a group of older women peace activists who called themselves the Raging Grannies protested the presence of a nuclear submarine in a Canadian port. The small group of “Grannies” rowed a kayak out to the submarine and caught media attention around the world. There are now Raging Grannies organizations in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia and Greece.

Divide the class into small groups and ask each group to choose from the questions below. Have them complete the questions and present their findings to the big group.

1. Research the Raging Grannies. What is their mission or goal? How do they achieve this? Create a collage of images of Raging Grannies. How are they different from other protesters or activists? Give examples.
2. Explore the history of the Raging Grannies. Prepare a short presentation describing their beginnings in Victoria, Canada. What were they protesting? Why did they get so much attention?
3. The Raging Grannies started as a small local group at a single event but soon grew into an international phenomenon. There are now many groups all around the world. How are the groups similar? What kind of issues and events do they protest? Find three examples. Make a poster showing three of the issues or events the Raging Grannies have protested. Present your poster to the class, describing the examples.
4. The Raging Grannies use costumes, signs and music to get their message across. Pretend that you are a group protesting an issue in your community and create a poster which shows how you feel. Decide first what issue your poster will address: it could be a local issue, such as school rules, uniforms, curfews, etc., or a global issue, such as pollution or global warming. Present your poster to the class, talking about the issue you chose—and the methods you used to get your message across.
5. The Singing Grannies in *Flower Power* wrote their own words to the tune “This Land is Your Land.” The Raging Grannies sing too. Research some of their songs. Write your own protest song to the tune of “This Land is Your Land” (or another well-known song, such as “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star” or “Jingle Bells”). Decide first what issue your song will address; it could be a local issue, such as school rules, uniforms, curfews, etc., or a global issue, such as pollution or global warming.

Government and Local Regulations

In *Flower Power*, there are many references to local regulations and permits:

(p. 74) [Policeman] “We understand that the resident at this address is holding a protest. We came to make sure the permit is in order.”

- (p. 77) *“Ma’am, your daughter needs a permit to hold a protest,” said one of the policemen. “Otherwise, it’s illegal.”*
- (p. 91) *“This has gone far enough, Dian. I’ve got a permit to remove this tree. Come down or you’ll be sorry.”*

Each community has codes and regulations which govern matters such as parking and zoning and issues permits for gatherings. As individual or small group exercises, have students complete the following:

1. Research your local community government and its regulations. Call or visit your City Hall or visit their website. What regulations are in place for holding a protest like Dian Powers did? What permits would you have to get and how would you get them? How long does it take? Is there a cost involved?

Web Resources

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Newspaper#Format>

Many relevant topics related to newspaper and journalism themes, including: school newspapers, a list of major world newspapers, daily showcase of newspaper front pages from around the world, journalism ethics, journalism terms, history of newspapers and journalism, etc.

www.education-world.com/a_curr/curr170.shtml

Lists 10 websites with resources on the topic of conflict resolution for kids.

www.theteachersguide.com/plantsflowers.htm

Lots of ideas, resources and activities on flowers and plants.

www.scouting.org/

Boy Scouts of America

www.girlscouts.org/

Girl Scouts of America

www.scouts.ca

Boy Scouts of Canada

www.girlguides.ca

Girl Guides of Canada

www.ymca.net/

YMCA of America

www.ymca.ca/

YMCA of Canada

www.bgca.org/

Boys and Girls Clubs of America