Discussion questions for Summer of My German Soldier

Anticipation Reaction Guide

Chapter 1 (p. 3 – 23)
1. What different groups of people are mentioned in Chapter 1?
2. How are the different groups treated? Find examples that show how each is viewed in a positive way or discriminated against.
3. The novel uses some names for different groups that are no longer acceptable. Should the author have selected words that are more acceptable (such as African American instead of colored)? Why do you think the author decided to use the words that she did?
4. Who are the people in Patty’s house? What can you tell about the way they interact with each other?
5. Use the Character Description Chart to describe the people in Patty’s family.

Chapter 2 (p. 24 – 38)
1. Why did Grandpa not invite Patty’s father to join his company?
2. What can you infer about Patty’s father’s relationship with his family?
3. Why does Patty’s mother tell her not to take money from Grandma?
4. What stories does Uncle Max tell about Patty’s father? Why does it make Patty’s father so angry?
5. What can you conclude about Patty’s parents?

Chapter 3 - 4 (p. 39 – 55)
1. What surprises Patty about Anton?
2. What details does Anton tell Patty about his life?
3. Why is Patty’s mother a good salesperson?
4. What lies does Patty tell? Why do you think she makes up stories?
5. How does Edna Louise react when Patty tells her about Anton?

Chapter 5 (p. 56 – 69)
1. How does Patty spend the day with her grandmother in Memphis?
2. Why couldn’t Patty go with the other girls to the Baptist Training Camp?
3. Describe Patty’s hide-out.
4. Why is Patty not allowed to play with Freddy?
5. Why does Patty’s father beat her so badly?
6. Character Development Chart for Patty: beginning column

Chapter 6 (p. 70 – 84)
1. Patty mentions groups of people that come to town on Saturdays. How are they different?
2. Why does Patty keep trying to please her parents even though they treat her badly?
3. Why does Patty’s mother make her get a permanent?
4. What makes Patty decide to go in Mrs. Reeves’ house?
5. Describe Patty’s hideout.
6. Why is Patty so excited when she sees Anton?
7. Why does Patty think Sharon is the smartest person in the family?
8. **What does each character think about Patty chart**

Chapter 8 (p. 85 - 96)
1. Summarize the article that Patty reads in the newspaper.
2. What does Anton tell Patty about his father?
3. According to what Anton tells Patty, he does not support Hitler. Why do you think he enlisted in the German Army?
4. Think about how Anton speaks English. What can you infer about his background?
5. How did Anton manage to escape from the prison camp?

Chapter 9 -10 (p. 97 – 124)
1. How the FBI agents speculate that Anton escaped?
2. Why are the FBI agents interested in talking to Patty and her father?
3. What do Patty and Charlene Madlee have in common?
4. How did Charlene convince Major Wroper to give an interview?
5. What can you conclude from what Dr. Robinson says about Anton? How is his point of view different than other people’s?
6. Describe Patty’s experience and feelings when she went to buy the Oak Hall shirt for her father.
7. How does Anton react when Patty gives him the shirt?
8. Why does Patty’s father become so angry when he sees her with Freddy?
9. What would have happened if Patty’s father had seen Anton when he ran out?

Chapter 11 – 12 (125-145)
1. How does Patty know that she can trust Ruth?
2. Ruth’s son is in the U.S. Army. Why does Ruth not report that Anton is hiding on the property?
3. Why does Patty feel uncomfortable when she sees Anton again?
4. Anton tells Patty what her father did after he beat her. How does this affect the way Patty views her father?
5. What does Patty learn about Ruth while they are talking in the kitchen?
6. Why does Ruth agree that Anton should leave?

Chapter 13 – 14 (146-165)
1. Contrast Patty’s relationship with her father and the way she would like it to be.
2. Describe Anton and Patty’s goodbye.
3. Why did Patty decide to wear the ring Anton gave her?
4. What details reflect Patty’s changing attitude toward her father?
5. How does Patty’s father find out about the ring?
6. **Character Development Chart** for Patty: middle column
Chapter 15 – 16 (p. 166 – 183)
1. Compare Sheriff Cauldwell and Patty’s father.
2. Why does Mr. Pierce go to Patty’s house?
3. Why does Mr. Pierce not tell Patty right away that Anton has been killed?

Chapter 17 – 18 (p. 184 – 196)
1. Describe how Patty’s father reacts when he finds out about Anton. Has he changed?
2. Why does Patty’s father fire Ruth?
3. What repercussions do Patty’s actions have on her family?
4. How do Patty’s grandparents treat her?
5. What does Charlene do to help Patty?

Chapter 19 – 21 (p. 197- 230)
1. What makes Patty feel hopeful when she is on her way to reform school?
2. Why did Mr. Kishner not want to take Patty’s case?
3. After abusing Patty for many years, her father did everything he could to get an expensive and well known lawyer for her. Why do you think he did that, instead of leaving her on her own?
4. Why does Patty not go to church services at the school?
5. Describe Ruth’s visit with Patty.
6. What does Ruth tell Patty about her parents?
7. Why do the matrons decide to let Patty and Ruth have a few minutes to say goodbye?
8. **Character Development Chart** for Patty: end column