



Jazz Owls: A Novel of the Zoot Suit Riots

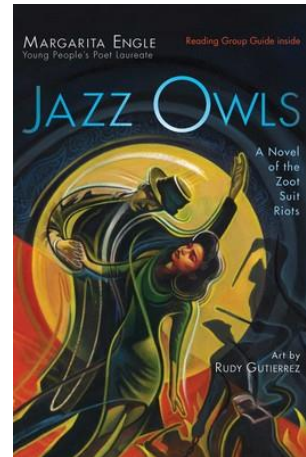
Written by Margarita Engle

Art by Rudy Gutierrez

Grades 9-12

Date of Publication: 2018

ISBN: 978-1534409446



Questions and Activities

1. The zoot suit has meant different things to different people ever since appearing on the men's fashion scene in the 1930s. Research the variety of associations that zoot suits have had over the decades. What do zoot suits symbolize in the novel? Do they represent different things to different characters? To different communities?
2. Are there different types of clothing that are important to your community or family's heritage? What are they and when are they worn? Do you wear them? Or, if not, why not? Does this clothing represent something different to those outside your family or community?
3. What kind of challenges did Ray, Lorena, and Marisela face during World War II in Los Angeles? Are there stories of racial discrimination and social injustices in your neighborhood? Why is it necessary to understand these challenging histories and to learn more about sites like the Sleepy Lagoon?
4. In the novel, the three reporters seem to want a certain angle when they are writing the "news." Think about an event relating to racial discrimination or another form of injustice or inequity that has taken place where you live.



LOS ANGELES
CONSERVANCY

Find three news reports about this event from three different news sources and describe how the reports are the same and how they are different. What methods does each news source use to influence the reader's or viewer's understanding and feelings about the event? What facts are missing? How can people develop a more comprehensive understanding about current or historic events and the sites associated with them?

5. How is dance significant to the Mexican American community? Why do you think the author chose the term "Jazz Owls" for the title of the book? What activities or traditions does your family or community participate in? Where do these activities take place? Why are these activities or traditions significant for you and your family or community?

