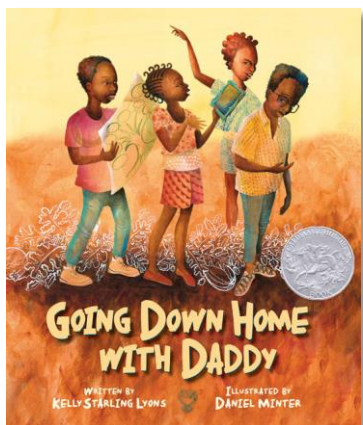

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



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Going Down Home With Daddy

by Kelly Starling Lyons | illustrated by Daniel Minter

Down home is Granny's house. Down home is where Lil Alan and his parents and sister will join great-grandparents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins. Down home is where Lil Alan will hear stories of the ancestors and visit the land that has meant so much to all of them. And down home is where all of the children will find their special way to pay tribute to family history. Sis will sing "His Eye is on the Sparrow," Granny's favorite song. Isaiah will read "Mother to Son" by Langston Hughes. Devin has made a scrapbook in Granny's favorite color blue. But what will Lil Alan do?

1. Have you ever been to a family reunion? If so, what was it like? If not, how do you imagine it would be?
2. Lil Alan and his family gather every year for a family reunion. Each year, the children take something special to share as a way to pay tribute to their family history. What might you take to your own family reunion to pay tribute to your family history?
3. Why do you think Lil Alan is so anxious about what he's going to share with his family?
4. A symbol is a thing that represents or stands for something else, such as an idea, object, relationship, or something similar. Symbols of cotton, tree branches and roots, and okra can be seen in the artwork throughout Lil Alan's story. What do you think are the meanings of these symbols in the story?
5. What types of symbols would you choose to represent you and your family? Why?
6. The history of Lil Alan's family began in Africa and continued in the United States as enslaved people. Generations later, the family owns many acres of land that mean so much to the family. What is your family's history? What's something that means a great deal to your family?
7. Lil Alan's family story is told through the generations of his family: grandparents and parents and aunts and uncles and even further down his family history. Use a "family tree" activity to help structure the story of your family.
8. Lil Alan's Daddy passes down stories from his own father. What traditions, knowledge, or stories have been passed down to you from your family?
9. One of Lil Alan's cousins reads the poem "[Mother to Son](#)" by Langston Hughes. Read the poem and consider these questions: How does this poem relate to Lil Alan's family history? How can this poem relate to you and your own family?
10. When Lil Alan's family gathers for dinner, they all share what they are thankful for. What are you most thankful for?
11. Do you and your family have any special foods or meals that you eat as part of a tradition? What are your favorites?
12. Lil Alan's family reunion is about remembering and celebrating the history of their family. Read George Ella Lyon's poem "[Where I'm From](#)", then create your own list or poem, taking inspiration from the poem and *Going Down Home with Daddy*.