Silent Discussion Questions

1. Minny Jackson has a very strong personality and comes across as fearless in many ways in *The Help.* Do you see anything in her life or personality that contradicts that “strong” persona? Like Jackson, Mississippi, are there any contrasts within Minny herself?
2. We’ve talked about a lot of themes in connection with *The Help* such as racism, equality, and cultural authenticity (if the experience of the black maids is accurate). What other themes besides the ones listed here do you see in the book? (Things like gender norms, revenge and justice, what it means to be loyal, what a true friend looks like, etc.) Think of other ones and explain the them in detail.
3. How is Jackson, Mississippi a city of contrasts?
4. The scene in which Skeeter uses the “Shinolator” (the hair shellac system) for her date with Stuart seems a bit ludicrous to us as 21st century readers. Yet women (and men) today do many strange things to alter their looks to fit society’s definition of “beauty.” Why do you think this happens? Do you think it’s a problem or not?