

**Week 4**  
***The Poisonwood Bible***  
**Discussion Questions**

**WARNING: THIS DISCUSSION WILL CONTAIN SPOILERS.** If you haven't read Books 6-7 and don't want spoilers, please come back to discuss when you are done with those sections.

**Story Recap**

Book 5 ended with Orleanna and the girls leaving the village and start their journey to freedom. Adah and Orleanna head back to the US while Rachel and Leah settle in different parts of Africa. In these last two books, Rachel is 50 years old and runs the Equatorial hotel, Leah and Anatole have 4 sons, the girls learn what has become of their father and the Price women try to return to Kilanga and find Ruth May's grave.

**Discussion Questions**

1. Rachel whined through most of the book about wanting to go back home. Now that she had the chance, she still didn't go. She said she felt like she didn't fit in with the typical American teenager after all she had been through in the Congo. How do you think Rachel's life would have been different if she went back to the US? Do you think she would have been as financially successful or married?
2. How do you think Leah's life would have been different if she and her family stayed in the US?
3. Leah says "Nearly always I learn they've made a circular migration in their lifetime, first having fled their home villages for the city, bluntly facing starvation there, and now returning to their small, remote outpost, where they have the hope of feeding themselves." How did you feel when you first gained your independence? Like you couldn't wait to flee your hometown or did you stay close to home? How far are you from the place where you grew up?
4. What most amazed, inspired and scared you about life in the Congo? What were you surprised to learn about life there?
5. Do you think you could ever go on a charitable or religious mission to Africa?
6. What do you think of what happened to Nathan? Cruel or he got what he deserved?
7. Adah says "Such childhood energy I spent on feeling betrayed. By the world in general, Leah in particular. Betrayal bent me in one direction while guilt bent her the other way."

We constructed our lives around a misunderstanding... Illusions mistaken for truth are the pavement under our feet. They are what we call civilization.” What does Adah mean by this? Do you think the weight of her feeling like a victim actually caused her physical handicaps? Has stress caused you physical problems?

8. Cast the movie: which celebrities would you choose to portray Orleanna, Nathan, Rachel, Leah, Adah and Ruth May?
9. Who do you think is narrating Book 7? Why is this the only book where Kingsolver doesn't tell us who narrates?
10. One of my favorite quotes is “Every life is different because you passed by this way and touched history.” How is Kilanga different because of the Price family? How is the Price Family different because of the Congo? How do you hope your life touches history?
11. Share some of your favorite quotes from this book.