

7th grade Social Studies Summer Reading Guide for *Fever, 1793*

1. What was Philadelphia like in 1793? What were the advantages and disadvantages of living in the countryside outside of Philadelphia?
2. How was the life of a fourteen-year-old in 1793 different from the life of a fourteen-year-old today? In which period would you rather live and why?
3. Mattie's grandfather didn't think there was any need to rush out of Philadelphia when the fever spread. Why did some people think it was safe to stay? What would you have done?
4. The color yellow is used throughout the story. What does it symbolize? What other symbols are used in the book?
5. What do you think will happen to Mattie, her mother, and friends in 1794? What will their lives look like in 1800? In 1813?
6. During the Revolutionary War, women took on tasks that were traditionally performed by men. After the War, they were expected to go back to their spinning wheels and kitchens. How are Maggie's dreams in conflict with what her society expects of young women? Why does Maggie's mother want a different life for her daughter?
7. The Free African Society volunteered to take care of the sick and bury the dead, even though there was no cure for yellow fever. Why did they do that?
8. No one really knew the causes of the yellow fever epidemic. What are some of the possible causes suggested by various townspeople and doctors?
9. In good times, how are the farmers outside the city dependent on the city dwellers of Philadelphia? How are the city dwellers dependent on the farmers?
10. Matilda changes a great deal from the beginning of the novel to the end. Give three specific examples of those changes.