

How to print this booklet

Open the PDF, choose Print, and set these:

Paper size	US Letter (8.5 × 11 in)
Orientation	Landscape
Print on both sides	On (two-sided / duplex)
Flip on	Short edge
Scale	100% / Actual size — not “Fit to page”
Pages	All

THEN

1. Take the whole stack out of the printer. Keep the sheets in order.
2. Fold the stack in half, so this page is on the outside.
3. Staple twice along the fold.



Make another at didtheyreallyread.com

Reading Journal

My thoughts, chapter by chapter

Reader:

Book Title:

Before we were free

Author:

Julia Alvarez

Date Started:

Date Finished:

Keep reading. Keep wondering.
Created by didtheyreallyread.com

How to Answer

Your answer does not have to be perfect. Just answer in complete thoughts and use details from the chapter.

How to structure your answer

A strong answer usually has a few parts. Try these steps:

- 1. **Answer the question.** Start with one sentence that answers the question directly.
- 2. **Give an example.** Add a detail or moment from the chapter that shows what you mean.
- 3. **Explain why.** Tell why it mattered, or how it made you think or feel.
- 4. **Wrap it up.** Finish with a closing thought, a question, or a prediction.

In Chapter 2, Anita starts to understand that adults are keeping secrets. How does this affect the way she feels about her family and her home?

Example answer: I think the secrets make Anita feel confused and unsafe. Her home used to feel like a place where everyone belonged, but now people whisper and leave without explaining. I can tell she still loves her family, but she is starting to notice that something serious is happening. This makes her feel more grown-up because she has to pay attention to things she did not understand before.

Chapter 12

In Chapter 12, what does Anita learn about freedom, family, and hope by the end of the story?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 11

In Chapter 11, Anita has to live with fear and uncertainty. How does she change from the beginning of the book to this point?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

How to Answer (continued)

In Chapter 7, do you think the adults are right to hide some truths from Anita? Why or why not?

Example answer: I think the adults are partly right because they want to protect Anita from being scared and from saying something dangerous by accident. In their country, even children could get their families in trouble without meaning to. But I also think hiding everything makes Anita feel lonely and confused. She needs some truth so she can understand why her life is changing.

In Chapter 12, what does Anita learn about freedom, family, and hope by the end of the story?

Example answer: By the end, I think Anita learns that freedom is not just doing whatever you want. It means being able to speak, live safely, and make choices without fear. She also learns that family love can stay strong even when people are separated or hurt. Even though the ending is sad in some ways, Anita still has hope for a better future.

Chapter 1

In Chapter 1, what changes does Anita notice in her family compound, and what do those changes make her wonder about?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 10

In Chapter 10, after the danger grows even stronger, what do you think might happen next to Anita and her family? Explain your prediction.

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 9

In Chapter 9, what are some ways Papi and other characters show courage? How is their courage different from just being unafraid?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 2

In Chapter 2, Anita starts to understand that adults are keeping secrets. How does this affect the way she feels about her family and her home?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 3

In Chapter 3, words and names like "El Jefe" and "SIM" are important. What do these words mean in the story, and how do they help create a feeling of danger?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 8

In Chapter 8, Lucinda is in danger because of the ruler's power. How does the family try to protect her, and what does this show about them?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 7

In Chapter 7, do you think the adults are right to hide some truths from Anita? Why or why not?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 4

In Chapter 4, Anita learns that people in her country cannot always say what they really think. What does this chapter show about freedom?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 5

In Chapter 5, based on the whispered conversations and strange events, what do you predict Anita’s family may be involved in? Use details from the chapter.

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?

Chapter 6

In Chapter 6, how does Chucha help Anita understand what is happening, even when Chucha speaks in unusual or mysterious ways?

New word I learned:

What do you think it means?
