Group Member’s Names\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Period\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Recitatif Group Discussion Questions

American Literature

Directions: Choose five (5) of the following questions to discuss as a group. Choose a discussion leader to lead the discussion and a scribe to take good notes on what was said during the discussion. On a separate sheet of paper, write down the insightful and thoughtful comments that your group discusses. Write the question on the top.

1. Who is the audience of “Recitatif” and what is its purpose? What is the story trying to teach us? Explain.
2. Twyla and Roberta are different races. At the end of the orphanage section, who do you think is black and who do you think is white? Point to specific evidence in the section.
3. When Twyla says that she and Roberta had to discover “How to believe what had to be believed,” what does she mean? Explain.
4. Is “Recitatif” ultimately an optimistic or pessimistic story?  Explain.
5. Do Twyla’s and Roberta’s friendship transcend race? Explain.
6. According to The American Heritage College Dictionary and the Encarta World English Dictionary, “recitation” and “recitative” are given the following definitions.  How might these help to explain Morrison’s story title?

* The public reading aloud of something or reciting of something from memory, esp. poetry.
* The listing or reporting of something.
* Of, or relating to, or having the character of a recital or recitation.
* A style of singing that is close to the rhythm of natural speech, used in opera for dialogue and narration.

1. Why are stereotypes necessary? Why are they dangerous? Explain.
2. Do you associate the stereotype of a subculture or style with their fashion, music and behavior? Why or why not?