

# THEIR EYES WERE WATCHING GOD: MOVIE VERSION

Study Guide compares the novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston to the movie version *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (2005) starring Halle Berry.



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## **SAMPLE THEIR EYES WERE WATCHING GOD: MOVIE VERSION**

### **THE MOVIE VERSION OF THEIR EYES WERE WATCHING GOD IS NOT LIKE THE BOOK by Zora Neale Hurston**

**RECOMMENDED MOVIE:** *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (2005) starring Halle Berry. The film leaves out some characters and parts of the plot, but is a solid representation of the novel. Some dialogue is directly from the novel. Halle Berry is a perfect choice to portray the main character Janie.

#### **HOW ACCURATE IS THE MOVIE VERSION OF THE BOOK?**

**Plot:** ★★☆☆☆      **Characters:** ★★★★★      **Setting:** ★★★★★

**Structure:** ★★★★★      **Symbols:** ★★☆☆☆      **Theme:** ★★★★★

#### **THE MOVIE: SUMMARY**

The following is a scene-by-scene comparison of the movie to the corresponding chapters in the book.

#### **THE MOVIE: CHAPTER 1**

At sunset, neighbors in Eatonville, Florida sit on their porches gossiping about Janie, an attractive widow walking toward them. (**ACCURATE**) The neighbors are unaware that Janie has survived a hurricane and is returning from burying the dead. (**ACCURATE**) The neighbors wonder why she is wearing muddy overalls. (**ACCURATE**) They wonder what she will do with the money the old man (her second husband Joe Starks) left her. (**ACCURATE**) They wonder what happened to the young man named Tea Cake who used to be her sweetheart. (**ACCURATE**) When Janie reaches the porches she says, “Afternoon ladies,” and walks directly to the gate of her house. (**ACCURATE**, but in the book Janie says, “Good evenin’.”)

After Janie enters her house, the women on the porches continue to gossip and criticize Janie for not stopping to chat with them. (**ACCURATE**) They wonder if she will get back together with her young boyfriend Tea Cake. (**ACCURATE**) One of the women tells someone to go get Janie’s best friend Pheoby Watson. (**ERROR:** In the book Pheoby is on the porch and is the only woman who defends her friend Janie)

As Janie enters her house, she picks a rose. (**ERROR:** Not in the book) Once inside, Janie sits at the piano and plays. (**ERROR:** Not in the book) She looks at the photograph of her husband Joe and her. (**ERROR:** Not in the book)

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**QUIZ**

**This quiz compares the movie *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (2005) starring Halle Berry, Michael Ealy and Terrence Howard to the novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston.**

- \_\_\_ 1. In the movie and the book when Janie returns home in muddy overalls, her neighbors do not know she has just  
a. wrestled a pig   b. survived a hurricane   c. waded a swamp   d. built a house
- \_\_\_ 2. In the movie and the book the story of Janie's life is told in  
a. flashback   b. stream of consciousness   c. fable   d. anecdote
- \_\_\_ 3. The movie omits most of Janie's history in Chapter 2 of the book where she says as a child, she played with only white children who called her  
a. Sapphire   b. Honey   c. Alphabet   d. Magnolia

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