October Sky Study Guide – Basic Comprehension

I. Answer the following questions.

1. Who were the six Rocket Boys?
2. Who did Sonny take to the Christmas formal?
3. Who was Sonny’s piano teacher?
4. What was Sonny’s brother’s name?
5. Who was the union leader?
6. Who let Sonny watch the skies with his telescope?
7. What gifts did Sonny’s dad give him for Christmas?
8. Who was Sonny’s science teacher?
9. What two words did Quentin use to describe good situations?
10. Who were the Germans who helped with the mine engineering?
11. Who did Sonny get the moonshine from to make his zincoshine?
12. In what part of the house did Sonny build his rockets?
13. What book from the Bible played an important part in Coalwood Way?

II. Write the word TRUE or FALSE in front of the statement.

_______ 1. Mrs. Dantzler was happy when Sonny quit taking piano lessons.
_______ 2. Sonny was very athletic.
_______ 3. Quentin spoke in very technical language.
_______ 4. Billy quit school and joined the Navy.
_______ 5. Sonny’s mom was painting a beach mural on the wall in their kitchen.
_______ 6. Sonny’s mom went to Myrtle Beach for Christmas.
_______ 7. Ginger went to the Christmas formal with Sonny.
_______ 8. Sonny got straight "A's" on his report card in the fall term of his senior year.
_______ 9. Coalwood didn’t have a Christmas pageant in 1959.
_______ 10. Cuke was never found after he murdered Dreama.
_______ 11. Dreama and Elsie were from Gary.
_______ 12. There was no snow in Coalwood for Christmas, 1959.
13. Chipper arrived back home at Christmas. He was living in the Christmas tree.

14. Little Richard’s church got new windows on the front of the church.

15. Dreama was buried in the cemetery behind Little Richard’s church.

III. Answer the following questions completely.

1. Compare Coalwood and Parsons. How are they alike and what differences exist between them?
2. How do you think Sonny and the other Rocket Boys became so successful?
3. Do you feel Sonny valued education? Give examples from Coalwood Way to support your answer.
4. Is Sonny’s mother, Elsie, like your mother? Describe the likenesses and differences.
5. Would you have liked Sonny to be your friend? Explain your answer.
6. How were Sonny’s excellent writing skills starting to show in Coalwood Way?
7. Should Sonny have felt badly that he didn’t do more to help Dreama? Why or why not?
8. What is the theme of Coalwood Way?